

“The Christian mind has succumbed to the secular drift with a degree of weakness and nervelessness unmatched in Christian history.” (The Christian Mind, p. 3-4). God’s program for building the mind of Christ into the Christian is found in Philippians 4:8. Every Christian is to choose a thought program which will produce a Christian mind. A deliberate choice must be made. Rejecting that which is “untrue, ignoble, wrong, impure, unlovely, unadmirable, and unworthy of praise,” the Christian is to set his mind on that which will please the Lord.

STUDYING THE SCRIPTURES - THE DIVINE POWER FOR A CHRIST-LIKE LIFE

The only source of Christian sanctification is the Word of God (Jn. 17:17; Rom. 10:17). While a Christian may grow in faith by listening to sermons and songs or by reading books and magazines, such growth will only occur as the Word of God is shared or seen in these resources. Real Christian growth will only occur as the believer feeds on the Word of God (Heb. 5:10-14; I Pet. 2:2).

You can never have a Christian mind without reading the Scriptures regularly because you cannot be powerfully influenced by that which you do not know.

1. Study the Bible to avoid sin (Ps. 119:9-11).
2. Study the Bible to see the direction God would have you to take (Ps. 119:130).
3. Study the Bible to provide answers for others who are stumbling (I Pet. 3:15).
4. Study the Bible in order to know Jesus better (Heb. 10:7).
5. Study the Bible to stay spiritually strong (Ps. 119:25, 28).
6. Study the Bible to live a life of hope (Ps. 119:74,81).

Corporate worship ought to be an outgrowth of the believer’s personal walk. The Christian life cannot be sustained with strength on one meal each week. Regardless of how opulent Sunday’s buffet may be, the believer’s walk will only be sustained with strength when daily meals are a priority.



CONNECTING TO COLONIAL’S CORE - 1
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STUDYING THE SCRIPTURES

American churches have become consumer-focused. We have become a country of “Cafeteria-Christians” where people chose their church home based on personal tastes rather than doctrinal distinctives. In 1999, Michael Hamilton observed, “American churchgoers no longer sort themselves out by denomination so much as by musical preference Our new sectarianism is a sectarianism of worship style. The new sectarian creeds are dogmas of worship Increasingly, people choose their churches by the type of worship and music they feature” (Christianity Today, July 12, 1999).

Church attendance in America is dropping precipitously. In an email dated, May 4, 2004, The Barna Group noted that since 1991 there has been a 92% increase in the number of adults in America who do not attend church. Non-attenders went from 39 million to 75 million and the trend continues. Americans are abandoning church.

Professing believers have forgotten that Jesus bought the church with His blood (Acts 20:28). It is His church not ours. Christ’s opinion of the church is the only opinion that really matters (Col. 1:18). Every believer needs to know that Jesus does not take the defiling of His church lightly (I Cor. 3:17).

Because of the ever-increasing pressure for the church to conform to the expectations placed upon it by the world, it is necessary to carefully consider the church’s purpose and to carefully announce its core values.

CONNECTING

COLONIAL'S PURPOSE

Colonial Hills Baptist Church exists to glorify God (Eph. 3:21) by exalting Him in worship (John 4:24) and equipping believers to walk worthy of the Christ (Col. 1:10).

The core values of the church must be grounded in the Word of God (Is. 8:20). When the core values of the church are biblically-based, they will stand the test of time. Though methodology is frequently modified, a biblically-based philosophy of ministry ought to be changeless.

Colonial's core values (our "DNA" – Distinctively Non-Negotiable Attributes) impact our corporate worship and our personal walk.

COLONIAL'S PRACTICE

Our Worship – The DNA of Our Corporate Assembly

1. Scripture-saturated, Savior-centered Preaching - Jn. 17:17
2. Soul-stirring Singing that Glorifies God – Col. 3:16
3. Supplication before the Throne of Grace – Matt. 21:13
4. Sacrificial Giving – I Cor. 16:2
5. Sharing Communion – I Cor. 11:24

Our Walk – The DNA of Our Individual Activity

1. Studying the Scriptures – II Tim. 2:15
2. Speaking the Gospel – Rom. 1:16
3. Serving with Excellence – Rom. 12:11
4. Sweetness in Fellowship – I John 4:7
5. Separated from the World – I John 2:15-17

OUR CORPORATE ASSEMBLY - WORSHIP

As long as Christ-followers live in sin-tainted bodies, they will suffer the consequence of sin-tainted worship (Matt. 28:17). While this fact must be faced, it should not be faced with frustration. Man's highest purpose is to worship God and God has given His word to guide our worship (II Tim. 3:16-17; II Pet. 1:3). We must remember . . .

1. God does not desire worship that is based on imagination (Ex. 32:4-6). Man's imagination will always design a god of convenience.
2. God does not desire worship that is based upon innovation (Lev. 10:1-3). "There seems to be no limit to how far some churches

will go to be 'relevant' and 'contemporary' in their worship services. Nothings, it seems is too profane or too outrageous to be fused with Christian lingo and labeled 'worship' (John MacArthur, *Worship: The Ultimate Priority*, p. 27).

3. God does not desire worship that is based on imitation (Dt. 12:29-32). Christians cannot be syncretistic worshippers.
4. God does not desire worship that is strategically designed for our convenience – I Kings 12:26:31.

When it comes to the matter of worship, it's not about what pleases the one who is worshipping, it's about pleasing the One who is being worshipped (Ps. 96:7-9). In order to assure that God is pleased, worship is must be "regulated" by His revelation (John 4:24).

OUR INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY – WALK

God-honoring corporate worship ought to inspire and aide those who would seek to maintain a God-honoring personal walk. Colonial Hills Baptist Church was founded in 1957. At that time, a Church Covenant was published in order to encourage every member to make a commitment to live-out their faith in the community. Colonial's Church Covenant says, "We . . . engage to maintain family and private devotions." In other words, we make a promise to be "Studying the Scriptures."

A 2012 LifeWay Research poll of over 2,000 Americans who professed to read their Bibles revealed that only 1/3 of them read it every day. The same poll indicated that the average Bible reader owns 3.6 copies of the Bible. The simple truth is that while many Christians own many Bibles, the Bible does not own them. Today's church is filled with Christians without Christian minds. Apart from serious, sustained Bible study, a Christian cannot think Christianly!

STUDYING THE SCRIPTURES - THE DIVINE PROGRAM FOR A CHRIST-LIKE MIND

The only way a Christian can think Christianly is for the Christian to think biblically! General Charles Malik said, "The mind today is in profound trouble, perhaps more than ever before. How to order the mind on sound Christian principles, at the heart of where it is formed and informed, is one of the . . . greatest themes that can be considered" (*The Two Tasks*, p. 32). Harry Blamires, also notes the peril that contemporary Christians face with regard to their thinking.