

RIGHT WORSHIP NEEDS TO BE EXPLAINED

“Connecting to Colonial’s Core: Discovering the DNA of our Ministry” is a series designed to detail the Distinctively Nonnegotiable Attributes of our church in order to assure the rightness of our worship.

Colonial Hills 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).

Because the core values of Colonial Hills Baptist Church are biblically-based, they endure the test of time and the winds of cultural change. While we are open to modifying methodologies, we are committed to a biblically-based philosophy of ministry. We will concentrate on . . .

Our Worship – The DNA of our Corporate Assembly.

1. Scripture-saturated, Savior-centered Preaching – John 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 5:15-17



CONNECTING TO COLONIAL'S CORE - 1

PASTOR PHELPS

DISCOVERING OUR DNA

American churches are consumer-focused. Personal preferences push aside sacred traditions. Denominational labels are erased only to be replaced by market-driven descriptors. The “old-fashioned religion” is now declared hopelessly out-dated as culturally-relevant, need-based ministries are created.

As churches continue their trajectory of confusing changes, Christians need to be warned that the church is not ours – it is His! Jesus bought the church with His blood (Acts 20:28) and is purifying it in order to present the church and all her members as a beautiful bride “not having spot or wrinkle” (Eph. 5:27). The Lord of the church does not take lightly the defiling of the church (I Cor. 3:17).

Life is filled with changes and churches that are alive should be filled with changes too. But we must always remember that when change occurs in the body of Christ (Eph. 1:23; Col. 1:4), Jesus’ opinion of the merits of the change is the only opinion that matters. He is the only head of the body (Col. 1:18). Jesus wants us to make changes that are holy (I Pet. 1:16). A holy church cannot conform to the unholy world (Rom. 12:1-2).

Over the next several weeks, we will spend time discovering *Connecting to Colonial’s Core* and *Discovering our DNA (Distinctively Nonnegotiable Attributes)*. Our attention will be on the collective core which makes up our worship.

CONNECTING

RIGHT WORSHIP IS NOT ALWAYS EASY

Cain's approach to worship was not right and he made a mess of things (Gen. 4). The Old Testament is filled with examples of wrong worship. Getting worship right is not always easy.

In Matthew 28, the resurrected Savior is meeting with His eleven disciples (v. 16) prior to the ascension. In verse 17, we read, "And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted." Two problems stand out in this early worship service:

- A problem with quantity (v. 16). Only eleven worshippers gathered.
- A problem with quality (v. 17). "Some of them doubted."

RIGHT WORSHIP IS ALWAYS ESSENTIAL

"Most would agree, in theology if not in practice, that worshiping God is man's most important function and the reason for existence" (The Glory Due His Name, Gary Reimers, p. 58). While the Christian's body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 6:19-20), making worship possible all the time, the gathering of believer's together to worship God is not only the highlight of the week, it is the highlight of life. We are created to worship. Because worship is our highest purpose, we must be able to describe what it is in order to avoid the danger of wrong worship.

A DESCRIPTION OF RIGHT WORSHIP IS FOUND IN THE BIBLE.

1. Right Worship Must Focus on the Right Person (Ps. 135:1-6). Worship is fundamentally theo-centric (v. 1-2) focusing on God's goodness (v. 3-4) and his greatness (v. 5-6).

In Revelation 4 heavenly worship is pictured. The throne of God is found in the center of concentric circles of worshippers (v. 4, 6) who worship God by saying, "thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory!" It's well for us to notice that the word "worship" is closely tied to the word "worthy." Real worship recognizes the worth of God and declares of His glory. Can you imagine one of worshipping angels turning to John and asking John how the heavenly worship service could make him feel more special?

2. Right Worship Must Accomplish the Right Purpose. Psalm 96:7-8 says, "Give unto the LORD, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength. Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts."

Just as in Revelation 4, we discover that right worship is giving God glory. But how do we give God something when He has everything? Real worship does not contribute anything to God but it must attribute something to Him. Real worship is the process

of declaring that God is full of glory. As we understand the right purpose of worship, we come to understand that the right question is not, "Did you get anything out of today's service?" but rather, "Did *God* get anything out of your worship today?" The purpose of worship is not to get but to give.

3. Right Worship Must Conform to the Right Pattern. In John 4:23-24, Jesus speaks about the future of worship. Leaving the Old Testament patterns which required worshippers to come to a place (the Temple), Jesus tells of a day in which there would be two essential ingredients which would form the right pattern of worship "spirit and truth."

- Worship requires the active participation of the inner man (spirit). Mindless, mechanical rituals cannot be called worship!
- Worship requires truth which is found in the Bible (John 17:17). To worship in truth requires that worship be regulated by the Bible.

A DANGER OF WRONG WORSHIP IS FOUND IN THE BIBLE.

Wrong worship is repeatedly and consistently punished in the Old Testament. God, through examples like that of Cain (Gen. 4), Nadab and Abihu (Ex. 6), Hophni and Phinehas (I Sam. 2), teaches that wrong worship is not to be taken lightly. In Exodus 20, God expands on His warning against wrong worship.

1. God Declares His Disdain for Wrong Worship. The first two of the Ten Commandments deal with worship.
 - Commandment 1: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," prohibits worshipping the wrong God the right way.
 - Commandment 2: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image . . . thou shalt not bow down to them, nor serve them," prohibits worshipping the right God the wrong way.
2. God Declares the Danger of Wrong Worship. Exodus 20:5b says, "For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me."
 - God punishes the children of those who participate in false worship. The word to "visit" in Exodus 20:5b, speaks of God's direct activity and can be translated "to punish." God punished the families of Dathan and Abiram in Numbers 16 for their wrong worship.
 - God blesses the children of those who participate in faithful worship. In Exodus 20:6, God promises to show "mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments." The word translated "mercy" can also be translated "loving kindness." God blessed the family of Abraham because Abraham worshipped the right way (Gen. 22:16-18).