

Timeless & Temporary

Two equal and opposite dangers face churches in every generation who are seeking to maintain healthy corporate worship: on the one hand, we are tempted to change what is timeless; on the other hand, we are tempted to refuse to change what is temporary.

Godly leaders must be very clear on what is timeless in corporate worship—the Scripture, God, Christ, human sinfulness, the Gospel, and the like. Godly leaders must also recognize that every generation and every culture has its heart language which enables its people to worship with passion, and that that heart language is constantly evolving in its outward forms.



To change the timeless matters of the Christian faith is to betray the gospel itself and become reeds swayed by the wind of public opinion. To cling to temporary forms when their time is done is to become stubborn traditionalists whose local churches will soon become obsolete—old inflexible wineskins which rupture with the new wine of the Spirit.

One single force drives church leaders in each of these opposite dangers: fear of man. The remedy is to derive clarity from Scripture and courage from the Spirit to stand firm on what is timeless and lovingly change in due time what must change.



Worship Core Values

WORSHIP PRINCIPLE

DESCRIPTION

SCRIPTURE

**Vertical
(God-centered)**

Relentlessly pursuing and delighting corporately in the God of the Bible as an all satisfying end in Himself; emphasizing and promoting a sense of the presence of God and fellowship with God; focus on both "light" (truth) and "heat" (passion)

Psalm 63:1-3
Psalm 34:3
John 4:24

**Gospel
& Christ Exalting**

Displaying and delighting in the excellencies of Christ, so that Jesus and His death and resurrection are at the center; focusing on and savoring together the truth and sweetness of the gospel as the power of God for our full salvation from sin

Revelation 5:1-14
Romans 1:16
Philippians 3:3

Bible Saturated

Striving to ensure that all elements of worship be a ministry of the Word (preaching the Word, praying the Word, singing the Word, etc.)

2 Timothy 3:16-17

**Horizontal
(Edifying)**

All things done for building up, nourishing faith, and promoting maturity in Christ; equipping the saints for ministry and ongoing obedience to the Word; containing elements of informality, hospitality, and community, in order to welcome one another graciously as God has welcomed us

Ephesians 4:11-13
Hebrews 3:12-14
Hebrews 10:24-25
Romans 15:7

Joyful

Offering to the Lord a joyful sacrifice; celebrating Christ's victory for us over sin and death; joyfully anticipating our eternity with Him in the new heavens and the new earth

Psalm 100:1-2
Philippians 4:4

Therapeutic

Seeking to heal the wandering Christian from the idols that have temporarily captured his heart; instilling a sense of wonder and amazement—God as superior to any lesser attraction

Philippians 3:8
1 John 2:15-17
1 John 5:21

**Culturally
Engaging**

Recognizing that every generation and culture has a heart language that enables them to worship God in spirit and truth; making the service intelligible and seeker sensible; explaining difficult concepts; employing music that does not conflict with an atmosphere of majesty and holiness

1 Cor. 14:23-25
Isaiah 60:11-13
Rev. 21:24-27

**Showing
Deference**

Worship services implemented with a desire to enhance the unity of the church and not put an obstacle in a brother's way; recognizing the meeting is for corporate response to God, not just individual; showing deference to others in multiple ways, including music style decisions

Philippians 2:3-4
Romans 14:17-19
Psalm 34:3

**Excellent
& Orderly**

Pursuing "undistracting" excellence; recognizing worship should be glorious, as God is glorious, and orderly, as God is orderly

1 Cor. 14:33, 40
Psalm 66:2
Psalm 33:3

Participatory

The chief musical "sound" of worship is the congregation singing; each member encouraged to prepare him/herself for holy participation in corporate worship

Psalm 111:1-3
Colossians 3:16
Exodus 19:10-11
Matthew 15:7-9

All of Life

Remembering that worship should continue in private, in our families and homes, and in everyday life, not just on Sunday mornings

Romans 12:1-2