

# *Bellview Baptist's A.C.T.S of Worship*

## **Adoration:**

Because “the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations” (Psalm 100:5), we should regularly approach the LORD together, filled with wonder and with humble adoration. Of all the many things that God has called us each to do individually and Bellview Baptist to do corporately, giving him honor and glory is the most ultimate purpose and should be the motivation for everything else we do. This means that our worship services should be oriented toward God and not toward ourselves.

## **Confession:**

Though God “has caused us to be born again to a living hope” (1 Peter 1:3) and “we have been justified by faith” (Romans 5:1), we still struggle with sin. As the Apostle John states, “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us (1 John 1:8). Like Isaiah confessed when confronted by the holy presence of God, we should recognize and confess that we are those “of unclean lips, and [we] dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips” (Isaiah 6:5b).

Thankfully, this does not leave us in despair since we know that “if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:8-9). James also instructs us to “confess your sins to one another and pray for one another” (James 5:16). Therefore, as we come together as a body, we should resonate with King David as he says “I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,’ and you forgave the iniquity of my sin” (Psalm 32:5).

## **Thanksgiving:**

Since Christ has redeemed us and has “now reconciled [us] in his body of flesh by his death” (Colossians 1:22), we have all the reason in the world to be a people of great joy and thanksgiving. Paul could not be any more explicit about how this connects with our singing than in Colossians 3:16. He says, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”

## **Supplication:**

Finally, our time of worship together should also involve our corporate request to the Lord. We see example in Acts 4 of the believers praying together to the Lord for boldness in the face of danger. Jesus also, in the model prayer tells us we should pray that God would “Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil” (Matthew 6:11-13). Beyond this we also have the example of the Psalmists who demonstrate all of the above aspects of worship in their writings, many of which were texts to be sung.

## Characteristics of our Songs

### **True:**

Since we recognize that our songs should help us adore the Lord, we must be diligent to sing songs that are true. The prophets of Baal who entered a face-off with Elijah were quite enthusiastic folks. They went to bizarre lengths in their religious displays before their altar. Considering that they were willing to cut themselves, one could hardly doubt their sincerity. However, their proceedings were abominable, hideous, and powerless and resulted in their deaths. We must let God's Word guide our worship so that it might be true worship. Sincerity does not necessarily make up for saying that which is not true or which is misleading about the Lord or about his revelation. This is why we must be diligent to guard our worship by singing songs which are unmistakably true.

### **Serious:**

To say that our music should be serious does not mean that it should always be characterized by furrowed brows and sour expressions. However, it does mean that we should recognize the greatness of the moment. As the author of Hebrews states, "Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire" (Hebrews 12:28-29). Considering who God is, who we are, and what we are doing when we worship, we should allow no place for the giddy or the cute in our music. There may be a great variety of emotion characterizing the songs of our services considering the different aspects of worship. For instance, songs of confession will probably be most appropriate when with more somber or even sad music. Songs of thanksgiving will probably be characterized more frequently by a cheerful sound. In all of these, however, our music should be characterized by a serious joy.

### **Biblically Rich:**

According to his will and wisdom, God gave us sixty-six books which reveal who he is and teach us to love him and trust him. Therefore, our music should reflect the richness of the themes of Scripture. We should sing songs which discuss who God is, what he is like, and what he has done. Thus, our songs should reflect the doctrine of Scripture and the narrative of Scripture while also celebrating what God has done for us in his salvation.

Considering the fact that God gave the church a book of Psalms, biblically rich worship should also include these. The Psalms often involve themes which we need reminding of, such as God's sovereignty over all things, his deliverance of his people, and his judgment of his enemies.

## Components of our Worship through Music

**Congregation:** All of the body should participate each week singing together in our corporate worship. This is both for the worship of God and the edification of the body.

**Choir:** The choir exists to strengthen the congregational singing and to edify the body through additional God-exalting songs.

**Household:** The ongoing development of the *Bellview Book for Worship* is for the purpose of equipping households with a resource to worship the Lord during the week.

**Solo/Ensembles:** In order to maintain our focus and purpose, these opportunities will primarily be reserved for those involved in the choir or instrumental ministry.