

What is the Philosophy of Worship New Hope?

#1) God-centeredness: A high priority of the vertical focus of our Sunday morning service. The ultimate aim is to so experience God that he is glorified in our affections.

#2) Expecting the powerful presence of God: We do not just direct ourselves toward him. We earnestly seek his drawing near according to the promise of (James 4:8). We believe that in worship God draws near to us in power, and makes himself know and felt for our good and for the salvation of unbelievers in the midst.

#3) Bible based and Bible saturated: The content of our singing and praying and welcoming and preaching will always conform to the truth of Scripture. The content of God's Word will be woven through all we do in worship and will be the ground of all our appeal to authority.

#4) Head and heart: Worship that aims at kindling and carrying deep, strong, real emotions toward God, but does not manipulate people's emotions by failing to appeal to clear thinking about spiritual things based on shareable evidences outside ourselves.

#5) Earnestness and intensity: Avoiding a trite, flippant, superficial, atmosphere, but instead setting an example of reverence and passion and wonder.

#6) The manifestation of God and the common good: We expect and hope and pray (according to 1 Cor. 12:7) that our focus on the manifesting of God is good for people and that therefore a spirit of love for each other is not incompatible with, but necessary to authentic worship.

#7) The mingling of historic and contemporary music: And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old" (Matt. 13:52)

How then shall we worship as a church?

Three things we should strive for.

1st We should worship together, not just privately.

Privately, YES! But not just privately. Psalm 149:1 says, "Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise in the assembly of the faithful!" We are commanded to sing God's praises in the assembly of the faithful -- in the church!

Some may say, I can worship God better by myself in the mountains or at the Beach. Perhaps you can. And God forbid that any of us should be denied our private encounters with God! But the test whether any experience of God is genuine or is simply an esthetic high is whether it inclines you to obey God. If you don't come away from your private mountain encounter more eager to meet God in the assembly of the faithful, you probably are not meeting God at the Beach. If it were God he would be filling your heart to obey his command to join with his people. It is a command of love, you know.

If the deepest and highest joys could be had in private the songs of heaven would be described as a solo here and a solo there instead of million member choirs. So we should worship God together not just in private.

2nd We should worship God EARNESTLY.

The ascended Lord Jesus Christ said to the church at Laodicea, "Would that you were cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth" (Revelation 3:15-16). Is it not consistent with image to say that lukewarm worship turns the stomach of Christ?

This is why Saturday night and early Sunday morning preparation is so important before you come to worship. We are not naturally hot. We must trim the wick with the word of God. We must seek the breath of his Spirit to blow it into a flame. If we seek him! We must be more earnest in seeking God in worship. We must be less flippant and less frivolous and thoughtless and casual and disrespectful as we approach the chamber of God in the assembly of the faithful. Have you ever thought through the implications of Jeremiah 29:13 where God says, "You will seek me and find me; when you seek me WITH ALL YOUR HEART." There is only one reason to come to this service -- to seek and find GOD! And the Lord God says to you straight from his word every Sunday, "You will find me when you seek me with ALL YOUR HEART!"

Does your arrival time in the service, and your posture and demeanor; and riveted attention and participation -- do they all say WITH ALL MY HEART DO I SEEK YOU O MY GOD? If not, Jeremiah 29:13 offers you no encouragement that you will meet him. we should worship together earnestly?

3rd Finally we should worship EXPRESSIVELY.

The spirit of worship New Hope is so different than what many people are used to that they don't know quite what to make of it. Often wrong conclusions are jumped to.

The goal is to meet God together. Every part of the service is designed either to channel God's reality to you or to channel your affections to God.

Let it out! Be expressive. Visitors need to know whether anyone here really agrees with and loves what this preacher is saying and the Worship team is singing. Your nods and ummhms and Amens and your posture of attention bear witness that this is a shared message, not just a one man stand.

I dream of the day when the doctrines of sovereign grace and the spirit of worship are so deeply prized and so deeply shared by the family of God in this place that we will feel, as though with one mind and one heart, the moment for utter silence and the exact moment for shouts of acclamation.

For the Lord is in his holy temple! Let all the earth keep silence before him. AND the Lord is GREAT and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are idols; but the Lord made the heavens. Honor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary. Majesty! Worship his majesty! Unto Jesus be all glory power and praise.