

principle of considering another's needs before one's OWN.

(Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Rom 12:10; Phil. 2:2-3)

9. Worship should promote the edification of the body.

Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification. (Rom. 14:19)

We must fight the rampant individualism of our age and of our natures, and actively encourage the building up of the body.

(Eph. 4:15-16; 5:19-21; Col. 3:12-17)

THEREFORE: We will not seek to promote our personal agendas or preferences in worship, but rather prayerfully and deliberately seek the good of the body as a whole.

10. Young and old need each other.

Young men and maidens, old men and children: Let them praise the name of the Lord, for His name alone is exalted. (Psa. 148:12-13)

The diversity of the body of Christ must include the mixing of generations. Young people are to honour and learn from the stability and heritage of their elders, while the young can add new energy and fresh expressions of worship.

(Psa. 79:13; 149:1; Tit. 2:2-8)

THEREFORE: We will respect the special contributions of young and old, and seek to involved and engage all groups in our services. We will blend traditional and contemporary worship.

Finally then, brethren, we request and exhort you in the Lord

11. These things must be taught and re-taught.

Jesus that as you received from us instruction as to how you ought to walk and please God that you excel still more. (1 Thes. 4:1)

The above truths are important elements of Christian understanding and discipleship and must be consistently taught if they are to lodge in hearts and change attitudes and behaviours. (2 Pet. 1:12-13)

THEREFORE: We will teach these principles and exhort one another to grow in these areas. We will seek to model these truths before one another in our congregation, and as an example to our community.

This document is an attempt to crystallize some guiding principles of worship from Scripture (in the absence of detailed prescriptions for worship in the pages of the New Testament). The Elders of BFCF have embraced these principles as a biblical foundation to guide our church's practice of corporate worship. Corporate worship involves attitudes and acts of praise and adoration in response to God for His greatness, goodness, and grace - including praying, preaching, singing, giving, etc. - at the invitation and under the authority of the Word of God.



Worship

Black Forest Christian Fellowship

Bahnhofstraße 2

79400 Kandern

Germany

Phone: (0)7626 - 97 72 80

Web Site: www.bfcf.de

Black Forest Christian Fellowship

**BIBLICAL
PRINCIPLES OF
WORSHIP**

1. God's glory, and our joyful celebration of it in worship, should be the focus and goal of life and ministry.

Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. (1 Cor. 10:31)

Worship is an end itself. By definition other types of ministry have horizontal, man-focused aspects; worship is purely vertically focused. It is the primary purpose for which God created us and is our highest endeavour and greatest fulfillment. (Isa. 43:6-7; Psa. 16:11; Matt. 22:35-38; 1 Pet. 4:11)

THEREFORE: We shall give worship careful focus and attention in the life of this church. We will relate all of our activities to it and to the goal of magnifying the glory of God. We will make explicit God's glory as our most important pursuit, aim and preoccupation.

2. Worship is first and foremost for God.

Worship God (Rev. 1:9:10;22:9)

God is the subject and object of worship. As God, He is absolutely unique and the only One worthy of our praise; as Creator, He alone is deserving of the worship of His creatures and of His creation. (Rom. 11:36; Psa. 148:1-13)

THEREFORE: We will focus on glorifying the Lord in our worship, and in offering up a suitable and appropriate sacrifice of praise to His name. Our supreme motivation in our worship will be His pleasure rather than our own fulfillment or enjoyment.

3. The Word must be central in our worship.

Praise Him according to His Excellent greatness. (Psa. 150:2)

Worship is our creaturely response to God's self-revelation. We are responsible to praise Him as He really is, not as we would suppose or hope Him to be. God has revealed Himself and His glory through the inspired Scriptures. (Ps. 56:4; 138:2)

THEREFORE: We will read the Word, pray the Word, preach the Word, sing the Word in our corporate and private worship. We will allow the Word to invite us to worship, to provide the context and motivation for our worship, to inform and enrich and fuel our worship. We will avoid just singing men's thoughts about God

in the absence of what He has told us about Himself in Scripture.

4. Worship is the responsibility of all God's people.

So we Your people and the sheep of Your pasture will give thanks to You forever. (Psa. 79:13)

Worship is what we do, not something we watch. An important expression of the priesthood of all believers is every individual has a vital role to play in the corporate worship of the church. (Psa. 107:32; Rom. 15:5-6)

THEREFORE: We will whole-heartedly participate in worship in every way possible: by encouraging week-long worship and spiritual preparation for corporate worship, by enhancing the physical environment for worship, by selecting the music for worship (using substantial, singable, mostly familiar songs), by giving opportunity for corporate prayer and Scripture reading, etc.

5. Our worship is acceptable in and through Christ our High Priest.

In the midst of the assembly I will sing Your praise. (Heb. 2:12)

Jesus Christ is the Leader of our worship. We come in Him and by His worthiness into God's presence, and He gathers up our modest worship into His own perfect offering. (Heb. 8:1-2; 10:19-22)

THEREFORE: We will strive for excellence in our worship, but not see technical expertise or artistic merit as ends in themselves, or as a means to gain God's favour or acceptance. We will encourage a mindset of service rather than performance among our worship leaders, realizing that ultimately our worship is pleasing to God only because we come through Christ.

6. Worship is the response of our entire lives to God.

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. (Rom. 12:1)

Worship is not just a weekly event, but rather a way of living in dependence upon and gratitude towards our

Lord. While corporate worship is an important expression of that walk of worship, it must be fueled by lives of personal and private devotion and faithfulness. (John 4:21-24; 1 Cor. 10:31)

THEREFORE: We will teach the importance of and promote a lifestyle of worship. We will magnify the glory of God as the focus and goal of all of life. We will treat corporate worship not as an interruption of everyday life, but rather as a gathered celebration of the God who makes life worth living.

7. God is much more concerned with our heart than with the form of worship.

I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice. (Hos. 6:6)

The N.T. (in contrast to the O.T.) is remarkably non-prescriptive when it comes to the shape and form of corporate worship services; we can only assume that God intended to allow considerable freedom in these areas. Both Testaments are very clear about how seriously God takes the heart attitude and motivation of one's worship. (2 Chron. 30:18-20; Mark 12:33)

THEREFORE: We will stress the inward reality of worship and remain flexible in our approach to form.

8. Worship should promote the unity of the body.

Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with another according to Christ Jesus, so that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom. 15:5-6)

The Body of Christ is not an affinity group, but rather a disparate band of saved sinners only the Spirit can unify. Worship has great potential to facilitate or to hinder this unity, according to the motivations and priorities of the individuals involved. (Rom. 15:5-6; Eph. 4:1-6; Heb. 10:23-25)

THEREFORE: We will exult in our diversity and seek to learn from one another various expressions of worship. We will avoid novelty for its own sake and will strive to keep the health of the whole body in mind. We will seek to resist our natural selfishness and tendency towards self-promotion and model the

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