

## MBC Worship Convictions

Worshipping the Lord constitutes the ultimate priority of believers, the supreme act of every Christian. To exalt and magnify the Creator God is our highest calling. It is why God created us, why He saved us, and why He will ultimately take us to heaven to be with Him. Worship is the theme of Scripture, the theme of eternity, and the theme of redemptive history. And because worship is at the center of everything Scripture commands of us, we must understand what it is and engage in it properly.

To that end, our desire at Maranatha Bible Church is that our worship on Sundays (and throughout the week) would parallel **the kind of worship that occurs in heaven**. Whatever worship is like in heaven, it must also be like in the church since God dwells, not only in heaven, but in the church (**Eph 2:19-22**). Presumably, whatever worship is taking place in heaven is being done correctly by perfect angels and perfected saints, all worshipping a perfect God in a perfect place. Thus, we desire to emulate the kind of worship that we see described in Scripture and modeled by those who are currently worshipping the Lord around His throne.

Nowhere in Scripture is this kind of worship better depicted than in the heavenly scene described by the apostle John in **Revelation 4-5**. The following principles, gleaned from this passage, help us understand the kind of worship that pleases the Lord (rather than us) and characterize the manner in which we aim to approach the worship of the living God at MBC. How tragic it would be to get to heaven and find out that we have not been worshipping the Lord correctly. Therefore, these principles must regulate and govern our worship to ensure that it is a fragrant aroma to Him, both now and forever!

### It is God-Centered

At its most basic, fundamental level, worship is praise and honor and glory directed to God. Worship is to Him! He is the primary audience! From **Revelation 4:8-11**, **we** learn that worship in heaven is thoroughly preoccupied with God in that all who dwell there are radically committed to Him as the object of their worship. Thus, we conclude that true worship in the church must be theocentric not anthropocentric. At MBC, our great desire is that when someone participates in our services, they leave with a keen awareness that worship is not about us, but solely about and to Him!

## It is Theologically-Driven

Worship is to God, but it is also about God, driven by a deep understanding of who He is. In fact, worship is primarily in response to God's nature and attributes. As [Revelation 4:8](#) and [11](#) indicate, worship in heaven occurs in response to God's holiness, His sovereignty, His eternality, and the fact that He is Creator of all things. This is not mindless, emotional, empty worship that is just worked up and manufactured by manipulating the setting to get people to "feel" a certain way. Rather, heavenly worship is theologically-informed, theologically-driven, and theologically-propelled such that it is an orchestrated response to revelation. Thus, at MBC theology must drive our doxology and the fires of worship must be fueled by a right and deep understanding of God's character.

## It is Christ-Focused

Heavenly worship is profoundly committed to the person of Jesus Christ because it recognizes that He is the only being in the entire universe qualified to take the scroll from the hand of God and open its seals ([Rev 5:1-5](#)). Those who worship around the throne in heaven fall down before the Lion of Judah, the Root of David, and the Lamb ([Rev 5:5-6](#)). And what is true in heaven must be true on earth in the church as well. True and genuine worship always focuses on Christ. He is the basis of our praise, the reason we can worship, the One to whom all honor and glory is due. Thus, at MBC our earnest expectation is that when we gather together, Jesus Christ is our singular focus!

## It is Gospel-Saturated

Not only is worship in heaven to Christ, it is also about Him. Specifically, the living creatures, the elders, the angelic realm, and all the saints worship Christ in response to His work at Calvary. Heavenly worship is shaped by the contours of Christ's redeeming work, namely that He is the Lamb that was slain and purchased for God with His blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation ([Rev 5:6, 9-](#)

10, 12). Not surprisingly, these truths provide the fuel for heavenly worship which for all eternity will resound in response to His costly sacrifice. Likewise, our hope and intention at MBC is that our worship services be infused with and informed by the work of Christ for us as a re-presentation of the Gospel. Our worship must be permeated by the weighty, grand, and majestic matters of the Gospel to produce in us a deep awareness of the glories of Christ.

## It is Corporately-Expressed

Heavenly worship is corporate, congregational, and expressed as a community of believers and heavenly beings; it is not an individualistic, rogue, lone-ranger kind of worship. Notably absent in the worship in heaven is any mention of individuals expressing their worship in private or on their own (see [Rev 4:4, 6-11](#); [5:8-14](#)). No “I” or “me” is found in these passages. This principle, then, puts a premium on the importance of believers gathered together for the purpose of worshipping the Lord. While worship can and should take place outside of the Sunday service, the weekly corporate gathering serves as the pinnacle of our worship since true worship is, at its core, inherently communal and corporate. Because the core of our faith is expressed not as individuals, but as a church body, God is most glorified when His worship is most public. Therefore, rather than minimizing corporate worship as is frequently done today in the US, we at MBC aim to elevate it.