

# The Purpose of West Hampden Baptist Church: The Exaltation of the Savior

*Psalm 135:1-7; Psalm 96:7-9; & John 4:23-24*

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Introduction: Our church constitution provides us with a Statement of Purpose. It reads, “The purpose of this church shall be to glorify God...” I would like to summarize again what is stated there this way: “West Hampden Baptist Church exists to exalt the Savior, to evangelize the sinner, & to edify the saint.” We have previously considered a proposed mission statement for our church that says, “We are to have a genuine commitment to the Great Commandment & to the Great Commission.” This morning we will look at the first of the reasons given in our purpose statement, “to exalt the Savior.” What does it mean to “exalt the Savior”? This has to do with our worship & desire to glorify God. Warren Wiersbe defines worship as, “The believer’s response of all that he is – mind, emotions, will, & body – to all that God is & says & does.” Hence, the ultimate purpose of our church is to glorify God & honor Him. Consider with me this morning the exaltation of the Savior (in later messages we shall look at the evangelization of the sinner & the edification of the saint). Our worship must acclaim the right Person, accomplish the right purpose, & accept the right pattern. I exhort you here today, “*O magnify the LORD with me, & let us exalt His name together*” (Psalm 34:3).

I. Our worship must **acclaim** the right **Person** > Psalm 135:1-7  
(“acclaim” – “to greet with loud approval” – to focus upon)

A. Note the why of our focus upon the Lord:

1. Because of Who He is – Our Creator, Preserver, & Redeemer.
2. Because of what He deserves – He is worthy (cf. Rev. 4:4, 6, 11).

Summary: The Lord is to be the center of our attention; He is the guest of honor!

B. Note the what of our focus upon the Lord:

1. True worship focuses on God’s goodness (Psalm 135:1-4, seen in His choice of Israel; “*peculiar*” – a people of His own possession).
  - a. The goodness of His provision – salvation, sustaining grace, etc. (Psalm 84:11-12).
  - b. The goodness of His protection – Psalm 34:7 & cf. Psalm 23.
2. True worship focuses on God’s greatness (Psalm 135:5-7, seen in His creation of all things).
  - a. The greatness of His sovereignty – Psalm 103:19.
  - b. The greatness of His majesty – Psalm 98:1.

II. Our worship must **accomplish** the right **purpose** > Psalm 96:7-9  
(Our direction in the matter of worship must be to render what He expects.)

A. True worship is giving (ascribing) glory to God:

[Note: We have nothing of value to “give” to God. He has everything He “needs.”]

1. It involves the *declaration* that the Lord is full of glory (cf. the “Doxology”).
2. It involves the *participation* that the worshipers must offer.

B. True worship is giving, not getting gain for oneself (though we do benefit when we worship the Lord properly):

Compare the following questions:

1. “Did you get anything out of the service today?”

Gary Reimers writes: “If worship is giving something to God, what does ‘getting something out of the service’ have to do with it? Our self-oriented society finds such a question normal & important, but when it comes to worship it is actually sinful & irrelevant.”

2. “Did God get anything out of your worship today?”

Reimers then says: “Now instead of considering himself to be the rightful recipient of benefits, the worshiper sees himself as one who is responsible to give benefits to another. Of course, whenever God’s people do what is right in obedience to God’s Word, they receive a ‘blessing’ of some sort.”

Summary: God is our “audience” – we should seek His approval in all that we do, including our music. Worship is to give Him glory & honor. “His approval means everything, because giving Him glory is the very purpose of worship” (Reimers). Contrast the difference between an “auditorium” & a “sanctuary.” Is there *passive* observation or *active* participation?

III. Our worship must **accept** the right **pattern** > John 4:23-24

A. True worship must be spiritual – “*in spirit*”:

1. That which is **expressed** from the heart to the Lord.

a. There is the danger of mindless, mechanical worship- outward only.

b. There is the goal of the inward part (“*spirit*”) reflected in the motions of the body.

2. That which is **examined** in the heart by the Lord.

a. Man can only evaluate & examine what takes place outwardly.

b. God can evaluate what takes place in the heart – genuine worship.

B. True worship must be Scriptural – “*in truth*”:

[The words “*spirit*” & “*truth*” share one preposition (“*in*”); this speaks of their dependence upon each other – one cannot exist in isolation. True worship requires both.]

1. That which is done the way God says – proper **method**.

2. That which is done to please God – proper **motivation**.

Summary: Compare “seeker-sensitive” churches – we should focus on God as the “Seeker.” Does this church exist to give people what they desire or do we exist to give God what He desires & deserves? Remember, God still seeks worshippers!

Conclusion: The *essence* of true worship is therefore acclaiming the right Person, accomplishing the right purpose, & accepting the right pattern. We shall consider, starting tonight, the *elements* of true worship (preparation, praise, prayer, presentation, & preaching). Examine your own heart this morning. Have you come today to worship God in spirit & truth? What has God received from your worship today? I trust you have received both blessing & benefit from the service. But most of all, you must evaluate the service & your own heart in light of that which God requires. Has He been pleased with what you have offered? True worship requires a heart right with God. How is your heart today? Are you at peace with God (Romans 5:1; Hebrews 11:6)? If not, why not get that settled this morning? If so, “May all that we do, say, or think as individual believers and as a local body of believers, bring glory to our Lord Jesus Christ” (SBC constitution). Might we all be able to say upon leaving here this morning, “We have magnified the Lord & have exalted His name together!”