

**CORNERSTONE BAPTIST CHURCH  
PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY  
MEDIA AND SOUND**

**Guiding Scriptures**

“Your testimonies are wonderful; therefore my soul observes them.  
The *unfolding* of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.”  
**Psalms 119:129-130**

“Let *the Word* of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. **Whatever you do in word or deed, *do all in the name of the Lord* Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.”**  
**Colossians 3:16-17**

**Necessity of Sound Reinforcement**

- **Proclamational Necessity for Gospel Preaching**
- **Informational Necessity for Church Ministries**
- **Musical Necessity for Artistic Offerings**
- **Qualitative Necessity for Worship**

I believe the presentational quality of media and sound should enhance the communication or “unfolding” of God’s words for the congregation and can be used of the Spirit of God in His influence over every aspect of corporate worship (even aesthetic aspects) to contribute to the enlightenment of His people in truth. I believe there were aesthetic as well as symbolic reasons for everything God commanded to be done in the design and fabrication of the Tabernacle and Temple. We should give careful consideration to the ways in which aesthetic, as well as acoustic, properties enhance or at least influence (both negatively and positively) the people of God in their experience of corporate worship.

**Necessities of Visual Media**

- **Advancing an Atmosphere of Worship**
- **Advancing the Ministries of the Church**
- **Aesthetically Pleasing Design**
- **Appropriate Content and Design**
- **Assisting Communication in the Church**
- **Attentive to the Presentation of Text**
- **Auxiliary to Printed Media and Music**

Does the overall effect of media employment encourage those gathered to honor the Lord and his Word or is it a distraction; perhaps even a detriment to the message being conveyed? **Media must inform and may *inspire* worshipful consideration of text.**

## Supportive Scriptures

You shall make a veil of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen; it shall be made with cherubim, the work of a skillful workman. You shall hang it on four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold, their hooks also being of gold, on four sockets of silver. You shall hang up the veil under the clasps, and shall bring in the ark of the testimony there within the veil; and *the veil shall serve for you as a partition* between the holy place and the holy of holies. Exodus 26:31-33

And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, *for glory and for beauty*. You shall speak to all the skillful, whom I have filled with a spirit of skill, that they make Aaron's garments to consecrate him for my priesthood. Exodus 28:2-3

The LORD said to Moses, "See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri . . . *I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with ability and intelligence, with knowledge and all craftsmanship, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold, silver, and bronze, in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, to work in every craft. And behold, I have appointed with him Oholiab . . . and I have given to all able men ability, that they may make all that I have commanded you.*" Exodus 31:1-6

And when the priests came out of the Holy Place (for all the priests who were present had consecrated themselves, without regard to their divisions, and all the Levitical singers, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, their sons and kinsmen, arrayed in fine linen, with cymbals, harps, and lyres, stood east of the altar with 120 priests who were trumpeters; and *it was the duty of the trumpeters and singers to make themselves heard in unison in praise and thanksgiving to the LORD*), and when the song was raised, with trumpets and cymbals and other musical instruments, in praise to the LORD, "For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever," the house, the house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God. 2 Chronicles 5:11-13

Yet *even* lifeless things, either flute or harp, in producing a sound, if they do not produce a distinction in the tones, how will it be known what is played on the flute or on the harp? For if the bugle produces an indistinct sound, who will prepare himself for battle? So also you, *unless you utter by the tongue speech that is clear, how will it be known what is spoken?* For you will be speaking into the air. 1 Corinthians 14:7-9

What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up. If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret. But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in church and speak to himself and to God. Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said. If a revelation is made to another sitting there, let the first be silent. For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged, and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets. For God is not a God of confusion but of peace. 1 Corinthians 14:26-33

## Consideration of Media Applications

### ▪ Advertising Potential in the Church

The role of media in contemporary culture has progressed far beyond the realm of mere advertising, entertainment and general communication. Visual media with all of its association to social media in particular is now the dominant means of communication. The written word is now undoubtedly considered to be an antiquated form of communication. While do not yield to this perspective because of our allegiance to the written Word of God, we must not turn a blind eye to the realities and benefits of visual communication. We should seek to employ visual media meaningfully and proactively to communicate with our congregations. Principle among the applications of visual media is advertising. We can disseminate information about the ministries of our church in far more effective ways than spoken announcements. We can communicate some of the essence and significance of forthcoming events. We can generate enthusiasm about these events and perpetuate that enthusiasm more broadly by making the information transmittable through personal media devices. We can even provide provocative perspective on ministry that has taken place previously. In the latter sense, media may substantiate or substitute for first-person testimony concerning the Lord's work among His people or the presentation of the Gospel.

### ▪ Aesthetically Pleasing Design

God is the Creator of all things beautiful, glorious, impressive, and spiritually provocative. It is therefore permissible and I would argue beneficial to employ color, graphics, motion, photography, texture, etc. in visual media. In so doing, media may adorn and enhance the truth of the texts being read or sung all-the-while reflecting the creativity of the Creator God we gather to worship.

### ▪ Appropriate Content and Design

Not all visual enhancement is helpful. Our culture is replete with imagery that is not only inappropriate but annoying, offensive and ugly. When crafting backgrounds, employing motion, utilizing font style and size ask yourself the following: "Is this – the media you've crafted – appropriate for this context?" The content may change from one context to another. That which is appealing and supportive to worship in a youth setting will differ greatly from that which is employed in a traditional Sunday morning worship service. Design the media for the immediate context in which it is to be displayed.

### ▪ Attentive to the Presentation of Text

This axiom is subsidiary to no other. We are people who have been redeemed as a result of God's Word to us. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We have *seen His glory*." "Faith comes from hearing and hearing by the Word of Christ." Great attention must be given to every aspect of the Word that is heard and read. Is the grammar and syntax of the text correct? Is the actual text bright, clear, legible, uncluttered? Is it displayed in a timely fashion which its proclamation? Is it arranged in such a way that it accentuates or suggests the poetic or emotive flow of the content?

Is it supported by an appealing, yet non-distracting background? All these considerations must be made to insure the best presentation of text that is so closely tied to eternal truth.

- **Auxiliary to Printed Media/Music**

Contrary to what has been conveyed above, I do not believe visual media is exclusive to the use of printed media, particularly hymnbooks and most significantly Bibles. We are a people of the Word; who use it for edification and instruction, who should study it perpetually and who cherish its availability to us in printed form. We are also the beneficiaries of a heritage of Christian hymnody and song that has substantiated and codified the truths of Scripture in a way that they can be effectively read and sung by God's people. We would be wise to gain a deeper acquaintance with what has been written about God in poetic form and commit it to memory alongside the Scriptures that we might broaden our understanding of Christian doctrine and truth. Bibles and occasionally even collections of hymns and songs should be employed in the corporate gathering of God's people as well as the visual media that may facilitate and inform of our experience of meaningful worship.

## **Synopsis**

Do you utilize visual media and sound reinforcement in worship? Can it be more of a distraction than a compliment to the corporate gathering? In such a sonically influenced and visually oriented age can media and sound make a meaningful difference in the quality of our worship and the proclamation of the Gospel? These and many more questions will be addressed in this relevant session.