

TWELFTH ANNUAL  
"LABOURERS TOGETHER WITH GOD"  
LECTURESHIP, 2004

# WORSHIP

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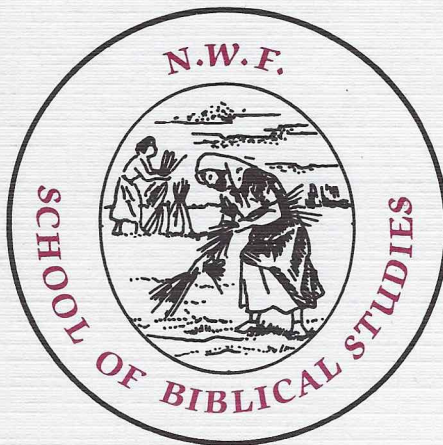
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**TWELFTH ANNUAL  
"LABOURERS TOGETHER WITH GOD"  
LECTURESHIP**

**September 19-23, 2004**

**THEME:  
WORSHIP**

**Editor:  
Kenneth Burleson**

**This book is FREE**  
Presented by the Church of Christ at Milestone

**The Church of Christ at Milestone**  
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## FORWARD

The theme for the twelfth annual “Labourers Together With God Lectureship” is “WORSHIP.” This book contains twenty eight lessons pertaining to worship. The lectureship was hosted by the church of Christ at Milestone, September 19-23, 2004.

We are glad that we can provide the book free of charge to those who attend the lectureship.

The lessons in this book cover the five items of worship, innovations in worship, how one is to worship, examples of negative and positive worship, the importance of worship, the object of our worship, worship in the different dispensations of time, preparing for worship, ways to improve our worship and many more.

We hope these lessons will cause each reader to be more aware of our need to worship God and the importance of worshipping Him acceptably. If this is accomplished, then our desired result will be fulfilled.

*Kenneth Burleson  
September, 2004*

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# Importance Of The Topic

*Jimmy W. Bates*

1. **“Worship God”** — A great and important theme.
  - a. Important to God. I Chron. 16:29; Psalm 29:2; 66:4; 96:9; Matt. 4:10; John 4:23,24; Rev. 22:9
  - b. Important to Man. Psalm 95:1-7; 122:1
    - 1) Man was created with a need to worship.
    - 2) Satisfies a spiritual longing.
    - 4) To “worship God” is the greatest opportunity and privilege known to man!
  - c. An important and needed study.
    - 1) The worship of God is a constant theme throughout the Bible.
    - 2) A theme that deserves and demands our diligent study of what is and is not acceptable worship to God.
2. The **focus** of this lesson is to show the integral relationship of acceptable worship (individual and congregational) with the worshiper’s acceptable relationship to God.
  - a. One who is not in favor with God **cannot** offer acceptable worship to God.
  - b. Man’s ability to worship God acceptably has always been tied to God’s plan of redemption for man.
  - c. To worship God acceptably, one must maintain **favor** with God.
  - d. Worshiping God regularly in God’s specified way helps one maintain fellowship and favor with God.

## DISCUSSION:

- I. **THE WORSHIP OF CAIN AND ABEL (Gen. 4:1-16, 25, 26).**
  - A. Two men came to worship God.
    1. Abel’s worship was accepted.
    2. Cain’s worship was rejected.
    3. The fundamental principles involved in their worship are still involved in our worship today.
  - B. Two classes of people represented (I John 3:11,12; Compare Matt. 7:13,14; 12:30).
    1. **Righteous** — in favor with God (worship accepted).
    2. **Evil** — out of favor with God (worship rejected).
  - C. Religious people in both these groups.
    1. Cain was religious, but his religion was not acceptable.
    2. Acceptable worship requires more than just satisfying the impulse to practice religion (Acts 10:34,35).
  - D. How do we determine if we are in favor with God that our worship may be acceptable to Him?
    1. Both Cain and Abel share a common problem with all other accountable people...

- a. We're all sinners (Rom. 3:23), and therefore unworthy to come into the presence of God (Isa. 59:1,2).
  - b. Neither Cain nor Abel was worthy to come in worship before the presence of God.
  - c. Luke 18:9-14 — The man who was really welcomed into the House of God was the man who understood his true condition—that he didn't deserve to be there.
2. Must be **reconciled** to God—come back in His favor.
    - a. Before the sinner can be reconciled to God, he must be justified.
      - 1) We cannot be justified on the basis of our innocence — we're all guilty.
      - 2) The only way this justification can take place is for God to forgive our sin.
      - 3) The worshiper must recognize his need for **forgiveness**.
    - b. The Lord makes it possible for us to come back into favor with God.
      - 1) II Cor. 5:17-21; Rom. 4:6-8
      - 2) The only way we can approach God in worship is to be forgiven of sin.
3. Forgiveness requires an **Atonement**. We must make up to God — come to Him with an **offering**.
    - a. God in every dispensation has specified what that offering was to be and with what **attitude** it was to be brought.
    - b. When Cain brought his offering to God, he brought it as a man who felt no need for forgiveness. It was not what God specified and it was not brought as an offering for sin – as an atonement.
    - c. When Abel brought his offering to God, he brought it as a broken hearted sinner — as a man who knew he didn't deserve to be there. He brought what God told him to bring (Heb. 11:4), and in the attitude He told him to bring it.
    - d. When God redeemed the Israelites from Egyptian bondage (Exodus 12:8), He established with them a system of worship (priesthood and sacrifices) through which they could maintain His fellowship and favor.
      - 1) Leviticus 1-7 discuss five major sacrifices:
        - a) The Burnt Offering
        - b) The Meat or Meal Offering
        - c) The Peace Offering
        - d) The Sin Offering
        - e) The Trespass Offering
      - 2) The underlying principle in all these offerings was "**atonement**" which was necessary for the worshiper to remain in favor with God.



- 3) These offerings also indicated:
  - a) A consecration of life,
  - b) An acknowledgment of sin,
  - c) A recognition of the dignity, majesty, and authority of God,
  - d) The desire to obtain God’s blessings and favors
  - e) Peace and fellowship with God.
- 4) These were the basis for the nation of Israel to approach God.
- e. These sacrifices pointed to the atoning blood of Jesus Christ.
  - 1) These animal sacrifices were imperfect, temporary; they could not do what needed to be done to make complete atonement for sin (Heb. 10:1-4).
  - 2) What Abel brought was what God told him to bring, but it was not the final, total, perfect sacrifice.
  - 3) In Gen. 22, God told Abraham to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice. When Isaac asked where the sacrifice was, Abraham said, *“My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering...”* (Gen. 22:8).
    - a) James 2:21,22 says it was on that occasion that Abraham’s faith was made perfect.
    - b) Abraham saw what God was planning to do.
  - 4) God would provide a perfect atonement – a perfect sacrifice that would be acceptable once and for all.
    - a) Heb. 9:12-14, 22
    - b) Leviticus 17:11, *“For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.”*
    - c) God decided that the shedding of blood would be the proper atonement for sin. (Abel offered a blood sacrifice and Cain did not).
    - d) The atoning blood of Christ allows us to come into the presence of God to worship (Rev. 1:5; Acts 22:16).
  - 5) When we come into the assembly, into the presence of God to worship Him, we come as sinners under the blood of Christ; acknowledging our own unworthiness to be there but thankful that God has made it possible through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ.
4. The faithful Christian today, having been redeemed by the blood of Christ (Eph. 1:7), and continuing to “walk in the light” (I John 1:7), being in fellowship and favor with

God, has the great privilege of coming in the presence of God to pay honor, reverence, respect, and homage in worship to Him.

## II. ONE CAN FALL OUT OF FAVOR WITH GOD AND LOSE THE PRIVILEGE OF WORSHIP.

- A. The worship of Israel became an **abomination** (Isa.1:1-15).
1. Because of their sin and rebellion (vs.2-4).
  2. They were continuing to bring their offerings (worship) as if nothing were wrong.
  3. God was tired of it! They were missing the point of worship.
    - a. The offerings brought were suppose to be an acknowledgment of their sin and a plea for forgiveness.
    - b. They came with their sacrifices to make atonement, but they didn't come acknowledging their unworthiness and seeking forgiveness; therefore their offerings had no meaning.
- B. **Saul** (I Sam. 15:15, 21-25).
1. Saul fell out of favor with God.
  2. The Lord has no delight in offerings and sacrifices of the **rebellious worshiper**.
  3. Sin causes one to lose the privilege of worship (v.25).
  4. Compare Micah 6:6-8
- C. The **Scribes and Pharisees** were out of favor with God (Matt. 15:1-9).
1. They transgressed God's law by their own traditions.
  2. The result: their worship was vain.
- D. Matt. 5:23,24
1. If one has sinned against a brother, he has fallen out of favor with God.
  2. Be reconciled – then worship.

## III. THE IMPORTANCE OF WORSHIP TO MAINTAINING FAVOR WITH GOD.

- A. The Lord demands that we remain separate from the world and its ways (II Cor. 6:14-18; Rom. 12:2).
1. Two groups: the **righteous** and the **evil**.
    - a. God approves and accepts the righteous and delights in their worship.
    - b. He rejects the evil.
  2. Those in the **evil group** have always sought to persecute those who try to live right.
    - a. Jesus said, "*...ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake; but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.*" (Matt. 10:22)
    - b. II Tim. 3:12, "*Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*"

c. Matt. 5:10-12

B. Gen. 4. Cain went out from the presence of the Lord and established a different kind of society – one without God.

1. The righteous – Abel, Seth, and those that followed – lived in an evil, hostile world.

a. They needed all the help they could get to serve God and be faithful to Him in an evil world that was against them.

b. We live in that same kind of world today.

2. In that kind of environment, Gen. 4:26 reads, “...then began men to call upon the name of the Lord.”

a. All through the Old Testament, God arranged for His people to come together to do the things He specified in order for them to receive the strength they needed to live faithful in an evil world.

b. It’s no different today than it has been all through the years.

1) The worship assembly is a divine coming together, an assembly arranged by the Lord for His people, so we can encourage one another to live for Him in this evil world.

2) The acts of worship are different today, but the fundamental purpose and attitude remains the same.

3. At the heart of coming together to worship God is to receive the strength we need from God to live like He wants us to live in this evil world and maintain favor and fellowship with Him.

a. One of the first signs indicating a person is growing tired of God and falling out of favor with Him is an indifferent attitude toward the worship assemblies of the church.

b. Acts 2:42-47; Heb. 10:24,25

**CONCLUSION:**

1. Do you come into the worship assembly – into the presence of God – as a redeemed (forgiven) sinner?

a. Have you contacted the atoning blood of Christ for your sins?

b. Rom. 1:16; 10:17; John 8:24; Luke 13:3; Rom. 10:9,10; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:1-5,17,18; Acts 22:16

2. Do you come with the proper attitude, knowing that you are not worthy, but you trust in God to the point that you are willing to do the things He has specified – “by faith”?

3. Do you realize the need to “come together” regularly with the people of God to receive the strength to live like God wants you to live in this evil world?

4. Do you realize the necessity of maintaining favor with God to be able to worship God in an acceptable way?

~~~~~



# Worship

## Crucial Terms and Definitions

*Alan Adams*

1. Generally speaking, people intuitively grasp the fundamental ideas behind worship.
  - a. It involves emotions (fear, reverence, awe) manifested in some requisite demeanor.
  - b. It involves some manifestation of obeisance; a movement of the body, a posture implying submission.
  - c. It involves some specific act which itself implies supplication or acknowledgment of comparative superiority and greatness inherent in the object of worship.
  - d. Even an inebriated man in Taipei once manifested this intuitive perception of worship.
    1. He entered our assembly place one Wednesday evening.
    2. He fixed his eyes on the communion table.
    3. Thinking it an altar, he walked forward and prostrated himself before it.
  - e. Anterior to the Cross, the Gentile world "*worshipped and served the creature rather than the creator*" (Rom. 1:25).
    1. Paul need not have, thus did not, engage in an abstract discussion of worship.
    3. He, and those whom he addressed, knew what he meant.
2. Diverse views and approaches to worship tend to go in opposite directions.
  - a. Some think worship to be entirely content oriented: all about correct forms and procedures.
  - b. Some think worship to be entirely intent oriented: all about correct feelings, motives, and sincerity.
  - c. Inasmuch, as per our lectureship theme, we are to "worship God" (Rev. 19:10; 22:9; cf. 1 Cor. 14:25), it behooves us to achieve clarity in the matter.
  - d. Thus, our lesson will be more inductive in nature, considering specific words, incidental words, inherent elements of, and important aspects of worship.

### DISCUSSION:

#### I. WORDS.

- A. Inspiration is about "words" which "the spirit teacheth" (1 Cor. 2:10ff); thus, to know about worship, we must consider words.
- B. Nouns
  1. *latreia*: Religious service based in worship (cf. Rom. 12:1-2)

2. *threiskeia*: Religion; religious service or worship (James 1:26-27)

C. Verbs

1. *latreuo*: Carry out religious duties in a spirit of worship (Heb. 9:14)
2. *sebo*; *sebozomai*: Worship, venerate, adore (Mark 7:7; Acts 17:23)
3. *proskuneo*: obeisance to; kissing the hand toward; an act of reverence paid to deity (John 4:20).

## II. INCIDENTAL WORDS.

A. Not only are there explicit terms to be considered, but there are implied and related words or concepts as well.

B. Nouns

1. Place (John 4:20)
2. Object (John 4:24; cf. Acts 17:23)

C. Verbs

1. Come, Go (Exodus 24:1; Matt. 2:2; Gen. 22:5)
2. Present, offer (Rom. 12:1,2; Matt. 2:11; Heb. 9:9)

D. Prepositions

1. Before, *enopian*; *emprosten*: In the sight of; in front of (Acts 10:33; Rev. 4:10; 10:4; cf. John 20:30)
2. To; unto (Acts 16:25; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16)

## III. INTEGRAL ELEMENTS.

A. A consideration of both explicit and implicit matters concerning worship will give rise to several integral elements of worship; things such as,

B. Intent (Matt. 2:2,8; Acts 8:27): A specific thing I set out to do.

C. Pattern (Acts 17:23; John 4:22): Something that can be done with knowledge it is correct; conversely it can be done ignorantly.

D. Goal (Gen. 22:5; Acts 8:27,28): Something, having done, I have a sense of accomplishment.

E. Emotion (Heb. 12:28): Fear, love, joy, awe; these all attend one's approaching God (cf. Jer. 5:22)

F. Demeanor (cf. 1 Cor. 14:25)

## IV. ASPECTS.

A. Individual: (1 Cor. 14:25; Acts 8:27)

1. Individuals may and should daily and repeatedly "worship" God.
2. In other words, with intent, emotion, demeanor, and according to pattern, pay reverence to Deity.

B. Corporate (Acts 10:33; 1 Cor. 11-14; 16)

1. Assembled or gathered people may "with one mind" worship God (cf. Acts 4:24).

2. Christians come together "in the church [assembly]" (1 Cor. 11:18; 14:19).

### CONCLUSION:

1. Worship is both specific and transitive, as well as absolute.
2. Six variants of the word are found in 183 verse in the Bible.
3. Worship is an idea that permeates the Christian life (Rom. 12:1,2)
  - a. Too many Christians are like the Jewish leaders and their "corban" duplicity (cf. Mark 7:11).
  - b. They "present" their bodies to God, but still use them for themselves.
4. We must "worship God."

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## The "All of Life is Worship" Doctrine

*Victor M. Eskew*

1. It is indeed a best seller. It has been hailed as a masterpiece. It has crossed religious boundaries. It is causing sweeping changes in many churches. What is it? It is the book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, by Rick Warren.
  - a. This writer knows it has been used extensively by the Southwest church of Christ in Jonesboro, Arkansas.
  - b. It was also used by several Baptist Churches in the area of Northeast Arkansas.
2. The book is filled with false doctrine. On the Dedication page, the doctrine of predestination is taught. "This book is dedicated to you. Before you were born, God planned this moment in your life. It is no accident that you are holding this book."
3. This book is pertinent to our discussion because within its pages is set forth the concept that "all of life" is worship.
  - a. "Anything you do that brings pleasure to God is an act of worship" (p.64).
  - b. "Worship is not part of your life; it is your life. Worship is not just for church services" (p.66).
  - c. "Every activity can be transformed into an act of worship when you do it for the praise, glory, and pleasure of God" (p.67).
  - d. "Any act of obedience is also an act of worship" (p.73).
  - e. "Today we often feel we must 'get away' from our daily routine in order to worship God, but that is only because we haven't learned to practice his presence all the time. Brother



Lawrence found it easy to worship God through the common tasks of life; he didn't have to go away for special spiritual retreats" (p.88).

4. Rick Warren represents those in the Community Church movement and the evangelical circle. However, he is not the only one to advocate the "all of life is worship" doctrine.
  - a. The Christian Church has taught it in an attempt to justify the use of instrumental music in worship.
  - b. Many liberal brethren in the church have taken hold of it also. Their desire is to fellowship all the denominations that acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord. To do this, they must accept the heretical practices of the sects. Accepting the "all of life is worship" doctrine is one way they can do this.
  - c. Others who teach this doctrine are good brethren who are mistaken in the way they define certain terms. Brother Buster Dobbs is one who falls into this category.
5. In this lesson we want to accomplish two tasks.
  - a. We will examine the main arguments of the "all of life is worship" advocates and provide answers to them.
  - b. We will examine what the Bible teaches about the concept of worship. These concepts also destroy the "all of life is worship" doctrine.

## DISCUSSION:

### I. THE ARGUMENTS "FOR" THE ALL OF LIFE IS WORSHIP DOCTRINE.

- A. Argument #1: The definition of "*latría*" and its cognates.
  1. The argument is that "*latría*" can be translated both "serve" and "worship."
  2. The primary verse under consideration is Rom. 12:1.
    - a. KJV: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (NOTE: The word "service" is the Greek word "*latría*").
    - b. Other versions translate "*latría*" as "worship."
      - 1) NASV: "your spiritual service of worship."
      - 2) NIV: "your spiritual act of worship."
      - 3) ESV: "which is your spiritual worship."
    - c. Quote: "Such devoted service to God is clearly worship. It involves all we do. Whether we are earning a living for our family, or seeking lawful entertainment and recreation, it is to be done in the name of the Lord. As holy, royal priests we make an offering to the father through the son in everything we do" (Contending For The Faith, "*Is All Of Life Worship*," Buster Dobbs, December, 1998, p.7).
  3. Answers to this argument.

- a. The primary definition of this word is not worship. All forms of the word come from "*latron*," which means "reward" or "wages" and "*latris*," which means "hireling, more generally servant."
- 1) "*Latria*," (Rom. 12:1) is never translated "worship" in any other verse in the KJV (John 16:2; Rom. 9:4; Heb. 9:1,4). Kittel's comments: "The concrete idea of sacrifice seems always to cling to the noun no less than to the verb. This is also true in the last verse (R.12:1). Though the use here is metaphorical. The service which Christians are to offer consists in the fashioning of their inner lives and their outward physical conduct in a way which plainly distinguishes them from the world and which corresponds to the will of God. This is plainly the living sacrifice which they have to offer" (Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Kittel, ed., Vol. IV, p.65).
  - 2) Hugo McCord comments on Rom. 12:1. "It is true that in certain contexts that the Greek word in Romans 12:1 (*latreuo*) is properly rendered as worship (Romans 9:4). But in itself the word only means serve, whether this service is toward God or men (cf. *latris*, a hired servant; *latron*, hire pay). Sometimes the word refers to a lifetime of service to God (Acts 24:14; Heb. 12:28), and the context of Romans 12:1 shows one's offering his body as a living sacrifice is a lifetime of service not of meditation (which is what worship is)."
- b. The Greek word translated "worship" in the KJV is "*latreuo*," a form of "*latria*." It is translated "worship" three times (Acts 7:42; Acts 24:14; Phil 3:3) and "worshippers" once (Heb. 10:2). Every other time is translated as serve. When it is translated as "worship," an object of worship is always in view. When an object is not present, service is the appropriate translation of the word.
- c. If worship is always inherent in the root words "*latron*" and "*latris*," problems exist in other passages that use forms of these words (Rom. 15:27; II Cor. 9:12; Phil. 2:17, 25, 30; Heb. 1:14). In these passages, men would be worshipping men and even angels (Heb. 1:14) would be worshippers of men.
- B. Argument #2: Jesus changed the entire concept of worship in John 4:19-24.
1. The text: "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. ... The hour

cometh, and now is, when true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: ... God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. “

2. The argument: “It was in his scandalous discussion with the Samaritan Woman that Jesus announced the revolutionary kind of worship that God is seeking in his worshippers (John 4:21-24). But now the place of worship is the very life of the believer. So worship is a round the clock affair! Truth worship would never again be confined to time and place. Truth worship, inaugurated by the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, is in spirit and in truth. Some have incorrectly interpreted this to mean ‘in sincerity and according to God’s word.’ What would be new about that? Worship now embraces all of life — not merely a few sacred hours a week. Every moment is now charged with meaning and purpose all life is worship” (Dave Hogan as quoted in *God Hath Spoken, Affirming Truth and Reproving Error*, Curtis Cates, ed., “Everything One Does Is Worship Error,” Larry Powers, p.518).
3. The answers to this argument.
  - a. Jesus did not announce anything new in this passage except the cessation of worship in a prescribed holy place. This was a unique concept. Both Jews and Samaritans were tied to their cities of worship. They were often called there for special occasions of worship. No longer would such journeys be necessary under the New Covenant. Men would be worshiping in many places throughout the world.
  - b. If those who hold to the “all of life is worship” doctrine were consistent with what they say this passage teaches, they would never gather at a church building on the Lord’s Day at 10:00 a.m. for worship. This, they say, is the very thing Jesus was saying would come to an end.
- C. Argument #3: The Temple and the Priests Argument.
  1. The argument stated: Those who set forth this argument first make an assumption that everything the priests did in the tabernacle or temple area was worship. This assumption is then moved into the New Testament concepts of temple and priests. Lindsay Garmon writes: “But we live in a time when the holy place is your life, everything you do. Your life is the worship place. You are a temple today, I Cor. 6. You are a priest. Every Christian is a priest. You’ve got a temple. You’ve got a priest. Who dwells in you, the temple? God’s Spirit. You’ve got God’s presence. You’ve got a priest there. And

you've got a temple. You know what takes place all the time? Worship. All the time. The worship place is your life" (As quoted in Studies in John, Dub McClish, ed., "Is All Of Life Worship?", Daniel Denham, p.566).

2. Answer: This argument must declare that everything the priests did in the tabernacle, 24 hours each day, seven days each week was worship. This would include the sleep of the priests and the days they were sick. This, however, cannot be done. There are two words in the Hebrew language that are translated "to minister" or "to serve" — "*sharat*" and "*abad.*" Both words describe actions of the Levites in the books of Exodus and Numbers. This service could include worship, but that is not the particular meaning of the words. The point is that not all that was done in the temple was worship. Much of what was done was service. That same principle applies under the New Covenant. We use our bodies to serve and to worship, two distinct actions.

## II. A STUDY OF WORSHIP AND ITS APPLICATION TO THE "ALL OF LIFE IS WORSHIP" DOCTRINE.

### A. Worship involves the heart of man, the inner man.

1. John 4:24; Psalm 42:1, 2.
2. If "all" of life is worship, there are many things we do that would cause our worship to be vain because our heart is not in it (i.e., sleeping, being sick in bed, the elimination of body waste, picking dirt out of one's toe nails, etc.).

### B. Worship involves a deliberate choice and conscious direction of focused attention on the part of the worshiper.

1. The worshiper chooses what he will worship: Idols (I King 9:6-7), Satan (Matt. 4:8-9), Angels (Col. 2:8), Men (Acts 10:25-26), the creature (Rom. 1:25), God (John 4:24; Rev. 7:11).
2. Once the object is chosen, the worshiper must focus his attention on the object in order to worship it (Isa. 44:13-17).
3. In the "all of life is worship" doctrine, there does not have to be the direction of attention upon the object to be worshiped (i.e., playing softball, change a dirty diaper, watching television).

### C. Worship has a clear beginning point and stopping point.

1. "And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you" (Gen. 22:5).
2. "And it was so, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshiped, and returned into the host of Israel, and said,

- Arise; for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian” (Judges 7:15).
3. “And they arose up in the morning early, and worshiped before the Lord, and returned, and came to their house in Ramah” (I Sam. 1:19).
  4. “Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him” (Matt. 2:2).
  5. “And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship” (Acts 8:27).
  6. See also Isa. 66:23; Zech. 14:16; Matt. 15:25; Acts 24:11; Heb. 11:21; Rev. 3:9; Rev. 15:4.
- D. Worship is often distinguished from service in the Bible.
1. Exodus 20:5; Deut. 4:19; 8:19; 11:16; 17:3; 29:26; 30:17; I Kings 9:6; 9:9; 16:31; II Kings 21:3; 21:21; II Chron. 7:19, 22; 33:3; Jer. 8:2; 13:10; 16:11; 22:9; 25:6; Matt. 4:10; Rom. 1:25
  3. In Acts 24:11, Paul went up to Jerusalem to worship, but in Acts 26:7, he served God night and day.
- E. Worship is homage and adoration paid to God through definite acts that He has prescribed.
1. The true worshiper will worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:24). Truth is the Word of God (John 17:17).
  2. In the first century, Christians assembled upon the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). They were exhorted not to forsake this assembly (Heb. 10:25). In this assembly, the Lord’s supper was eaten (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 11:20-34), the Word was preached (I Cor. 14:5, 9, 19, 29-31), prayers were offered and singing took place (I Cor. 14:15), and the brethren gave of their means as God had prospered them (I Cor. 16:1-2). (NOTE: The assembly with the five items of worship are mentioned with regard to the church in Corinth. In I Corinthians 11-14, Paul legislated at length about the assembly. Why would Paul have to do this if everything one does is worship? Paul should have left this church alone without laying down any rules or guidelines whatsoever. But, he did not choose to do this. Perhaps he had never heard of the “all of life is worship” doctrine).
  3. When one changes or perverts the actions of worship that God has commanded, his worship is vain (Matt. 15:19; see also Gen. 4:1-7).

## CONCLUSION:

1. Those who advocate that all of life is worship usually have ulterior motives for using this doctrine. They want to do as they

- please, when they please, and want to believe that God is pleased with them.
2. God was not pleased with Cain. "But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect" (Gen. 4:5). The remedy was to do as God required. "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door" (Gen. 4:7).
  3. Matt. 7:21-23
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## Things Which Invalidate Worship

*Kenneth Burlison*

1. This lesson does not deal with innovations and unauthorized acts in worship, these are dealt with in other lessons.
2. This lesson will deal with specific things in our personal lives which, though we worship, yet our worship is invalidated.

### DISCUSSION:

#### I. INDIFFERENCE.

- A. Definition: "Lack of concern, interest, or feeling; apathy." (Webster's World Dictionary; second college edition)
- B. "Woe to them that are at ease." Amos 6:1
- C. We must be concerned about our own soul and the souls of others. Matt. 16:26; Prov. 11:30
- D. It is manifest in our failure to prepare for worship.
- E. It is manifest in our lack of Bible study. II Tim. 2:15

#### II. WORLDLINESS. I John 2:15-17; II Tim. 4:10

- A. Definition: "Devoted to or concerned with the affairs, pleasures of this world."
- B. It keeps our prayers from being answered. Isa. 59:1,2; I Peter 3:12; I Peter 3:7; James 4:1-3
- C. There are many things involved in worldliness.
  1. Drunkenness. Eph. 5:18; Prov. 23:29-35
  2. Immodest apparel. I Tim. 2:9,10
  3. The modern dance. Gal. 5:19-21. "lasciviousness and revellings."
  4. Cursing. Exodus 20:7
  5. Fornication and adultery. Matt. 19:9; Gal. 5:19-21
- D. Our minds should be set on things above, the spiritual rather than the physical. Col. 3:1,2

**III. HYPOCRISY.**

- A. Definition: "A pretending to be what one is not, a pretense of virtue and piety. Mimicry, acting a part. Stage player."
- B. Example. Matt. 23:25,26; Rom. 2:21-23; Isa. 65:5

**IV. FORSAKING THE ASSEMBLING TOGETHER.**

- A. Heb. 10:24-26; Acts 20:7
- B. It preaches a message that there is nothing to it.
- C. It leaves an empty seat.
- D. It says, "I don't care."

**V. HATE.**

- A. Definition: "To have strong dislike or ill-will for; loath; despise. To dislike or wish to avoid."
- B. How can one worship God while hating one created in the image of God. You can't. I John 4:20; Gen. 1:26, 27; I John 2:9,11; 3:15

**VI. HOLDING GRUDGES.**

- A. Definition: "To envy and resent; to give with reluctance; a strong, continued feeling of hostility or ill-will against someone over a real or fancied grievance."
- B. We are not to hold grudges. James 5:9
- C. To Murmur. Psalm 59:15
- D. To keep anger. Lev. 19:18
- E. We are not to give with reluctance. II Cor. 9:7

**VII. IGNORANCE.**

- A. Defined: "The lack of knowledge. It could be general or on some particular subject."
- B. The lack of knowledge is the result of the lack of study. II Tim. 2:15; I Tim. 4:13; Acts 17:22,23
- D. Ignorance has allowed many to be led into false ideas and practices regarding worship, therefore, a need for our study of the theme of this lectureship.

**VIII. DIVISIONS.**

- A. Definition: "A dividing or being divided, separation; a separation into groups."
- B. I Cor. 1:10-13; I Cor. 11:18-20

NOTE: All definitions are from Webster's World Dictionary; second college edition.

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# Praying as Worship

*Clint Harper*

1. 1 Thess. 5:17, "Pray without ceasing." Phil. 4:1-7; 1 Thess. 5

## DISCUSSION:

### I. THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER.

- A. The importance of private prayer. What can/does it accomplish for us?
1. Draws us closer to God.
    - a. Impossible to draw closer to God without speaking to Him.
    - b. Psalm 73:28; Heb. 10:19-22; James 4:8
    - c. Most effective setting to draw closer is in privacy. Matt. 6:6
  2. Teaches us how to pray.
    - a. We do not begin the walk as full-grown Christians.
    - b. 1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 3:18; Heb. 5:13-14
  3. Teaches your family.
    - a. We teach our families by example more than word.
    - b. Eph. 6:4; Matt. 5:13-16
- D. The importance of public prayer. What can/does it accomplish for us?
1. Draws us closer to God and brethren.
    - a. We use our closeness with God to become closer still.
    - b. We show our love and concern for brethren by approaching the Throne on behalf of those around us.
    - c. 1 Thess. 5:25; 2 Thess. 3:1-2; 1:11-12; Heb. 13:18; James 5:13-16
  2. Teaches others
    - a. How to (or not to) pray. Implies there are right and wrong ways.
    - b. Luke 11:1-4 The proper (or improper) attitudes and elements.
  3. Our public prayers can:
    - a. Comfort those who are broken hearted.
    - b. Encourage those who are burdened.
    - c. Exhort those who need to be warned.

### II. ELEMENTS AND ATTITUDES THAT SHOULD BE PRESENT IN PRAYER. Matt. 6:5-15

#### A. Elements:

1. To be addressed to the Father. Col. 3:17
2. Show your respect for the Father (Praise Him; Thank Him). 1 Thess. 5:18
3. Make your requests known to the Father. Phil. 4:6



4. Petition the Throne for forgiveness where and when appropriate. 1 John 1:9

B. Attitudes:

1. Purpose of the prayer: Is it to be seen of men or to be seen of God?
2. Sincerity. 2 Cor. 1:11-12
3. Humbleness. 1 Peter 5:6-7
4. Confidence. Heb. 4:16

III. POINTS TO PONDER.

A. What Should Be Requested of God

1. The Forgiveness of Sins. Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:9
2. The Forgiveness of Sins for others. Luke 23:34; Acts 7:60
3. The Wisdom of God. James 1:5-6
4. Relief from Bitter Experiences. Matt. 26:39
5. Our Daily Bread. Matt. 6:11
6. Laborers in the Vineyard. Matt. 9:38
7. Laborers Already Working. Eph. 6:19
8. For Mercy. Heb. 4:16
9. For the Sick. James 5:14-15
10. Deliverance from Temptation. Matt. 6:13
11. For Them that Despitely Use Us. Matt. 5:44
12. In Everything. Phil. 4:6
13. For Rulers and Authorities. 1 Tim. 2:1-3

B. Remember:

1. To whom you are praying.
2. The reason you are praying.
3. To be sincere.
4. To have thanksgiving, petition, supplication, and confession.
5. The group or audience.
6. The “model prayer” spoken by Christ Himself.
7. To speak well.

CONCLUSION:

1. Prayer needs to be looked upon as a privilege, not a burden or even a duty.
2. 1 Tim. 2:1-6

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# Positive Examples of Worship

*Jeff Bates*

1. There is a great need in today's society for a series of studies concerning worship.
  - a. God desires to be worshiped by each of us. (John 4:23)
  - b. There are many in our nation, however, who are worshipping God in vain. (Matt. 15:9)
  - c. This study is needed so that our worship will be acceptable and pleasing to God.
2. There are numerous examples of worshipers in the Bible, both in the Old and New Testaments.
  - a. This lesson looks specifically at positive examples of worship.
  - b. When is an example of worship is positive?
3. Is it always positive when the worshiper is pleased?
  - a. In our society, even in the religious world, worship centers around the worshiper, instead of God. (Rom. 1:25)
  - b. As proof of this fact, consider the arguments given for the use of instrumental music, choirs, and hand clapping in worship.
    - 1) It makes the singing sound so much better to me.
    - 2) It makes me feel so good about my worship.
    - 3) God would not hinder me from using my talents.
    - 4) Where does the Bible say I cannot use these things in my worship?
  - c. Most individuals are not satisfied with their worship if they are not "emotionally hyped." They have erroneously equated "emotionalism" with "spirituality."
4. "Worship" is "to make obeisance, do reverence to" (Vine's). It is "to prostrate oneself in homage" (Strong's Dictionary).
  - a. When I worship God, I humble myself to His wishes that I may reverence Him.
  - b. Therefore, by definition, God is to be the center of our worship. We are not to be the center of our own worship.
5. A positive example of worship is one in which God is pleased.
  - a. God demands that our worship be "in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24)
  - b. When we faithfully worship God in spirit and in truth, we will be spiritually encouraged and uplifted (Heb. 10:24,25).
  - c. This spiritual encouragement, unlike mere emotionalism, will strengthen one as a Christian.
6. Let us study a few Biblical examples of some whose worship was pleasing and acceptable to God.

## DISCUSSION:

- I. ABEL'S WORSHIP IS POSITIVE (Gen. 4:1-4).
  - A. God was pleased with Abel's worship.

1. *“And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering.”* (Gen. 4:4)
  2. *“By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts.”* (Heb. 11:4)
- B. Abel offered to God “of the firstlings of his flock.” (Gen. 4:4)
1. Abel’s offering was by faith (Heb. 11:4), and faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17).
  2. This indicates that Abel had been instructed of God what to offer, and he followed the will of God making no substitutions.
  3. By strictly following the commandments of God, Abel was counted righteous. (Heb. 11:4; Psalm 119:172)
  4. We must not substitute in our worship to God.
    - a. We must not substitute humming for singing. (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16)
    - b. We must not substitute entertainment for the preaching and teaching of the Word of God. (Acts 20:7)
    - c. We must not substitute for the unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine in the Lord’s supper. (Matt. 26:26-29)
- C. Abel offered to God “of the fat thereof.” (Gen. 4:4)
1. This indicates Abel offered the best animal that he had.
  2. He did not offer to God that which he could not use, an animal with some type of blemish, for he knew God would not accept such an offering. (Deut. 15:21)
  3. Each time we assemble with the saints to worship, we must offer our best unto God.
    - a. We must sing with the spirit and with the understanding (1 Cor. 14:15), not with a half-hearted effort.
    - b. We must give as God has prospered us (1 Cor. 16:2), and as we planned in our hearts (2 Cor. 9:7). We should not give at the last minute that which is left in our pockets.
- D. Abel, “being dead, yet speaketh.” (Heb. 11:4)

## II. ABRAHAM’S WORSHIP IS POSITIVE (Gen. 22:1-18).

- A. God was pleased with Abraham’s worship, saying to him *“for now I know that thou fearest God.”* (Gen. 22:12)
- B. Abraham worshiped exactly as God commanded.
  1. He worshiped on a mountain of Moriah. (22:2,3,9)
  2. He offered for a burnt offering his son Isaac, in whom all of the promises of God were to be fulfilled. (22:2,9,10)
- C. How could Abraham thrust a knife into his son Isaac?
  1. He had faith in the promises God made, and in God’s ability to raise Isaac from the dead. (Heb. 11:17-19)
  2. *“I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.”* (Gen. 22:5)

3. *"My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering."* (Gen. 22:8)

- D. We must worship God exactly as He has commanded, even if we do not fully understand why God has commanded something, and no matter how difficult it may be to obey.

### III. DAVID'S WORSHIP IS POSITIVE (2 Sam. 12:15-23).

- A. David had lost his son born to Bathsheba as a result of the sin he had committed. (2 Sam. 12:13,14)
- B. David worshiped God despite the loss of his child.
1. He did not blame God.
  2. His mourning for his child did not keep him from worshiping God. (Matt. 8:22)
- C. We must not allow the circumstances of life to keep us from focusing on our worship, that we may worship "in spirit."

### IV. THE WORSHIP OF SHADRACH, MESHACH, AND ABED-NEGO IS A POSITIVE EXAMPLE (Daniel 3).

- A. King Nebuchadnezzar had commanded everyone in his kingdom to fall down and worship the image he had set up.
- B. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, knowing that only the one true and living God is to be worshiped, would not obey the king's decree.
1. They did not allow others to influence them to sin.
    - a. *"All the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshiped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up."* (Dan. 3:7)
    - b. There were even Jews who worshiped the golden image, for it was told Nebuchadnezzar that "certain Jews" had not regarded his command. (Dan. 3:12)
  2. They did not allow the King's threat of death to cause them to sin.
    - a. Those who would not worship the image were sentenced to die in a fiery furnace. (Dan. 3:13-15)
    - b. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego had faith in God's ability to deliver them (Dan. 3:17).
    - c. They were not sure whether God's will was to deliver them or not, but their allegiance was to God. (Dan. 3:18)
- C. We should not allow others to influence us to worship gods that do not exist, nor to worship the God of heaven in a manner he has not authorized. (1 Cor. 15:33)

### V. THE PEOPLE OF EZRA'S DAY ARE A POSITIVE EXAMPLE OF WORSHIP (Neh. 8:1-12).

- A. They were united in their worship for they *"gathered themselves together as one man."* (8:1) (1 Cor. 1:10-13)

- B. They demonstrated great respect for God and for His Word in their worship.
  - 1. *“The ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law.”* (8:3)
  - 2. *“And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood up.”* (8:5)
  - 3. *“They bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground.”* (8:6)
  - 4. *“For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law.”* (8:9)
  - 5. You don’t read here of the Ezra wearing a clown suit, or performing “gymnastics” for Christ, or any other such disrespectful, irreverent, nonsense.
- C. They were intent on understanding the law of God. (8:7,8,12)

**VI. THE ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH IS A POSITIVE EXAMPLE OF WORSHIP (Acts 8:26-39).**

- A. He had come to Jerusalem to worship under the old covenant system, however the new covenant of Jesus Christ was already in force.
- B. The Lord sent Phillip to preach Jesus to the eunuch. (8:35)
- C. After learning the truth, the eunuch obeyed.
  - 1. He gave up Judaism, the religion of his parents, the religion by which he lived, to accept Christianity.
  - 2. He was sincere in his desire to please God.
- D. He went away rejoicing, because he knew he was right with God. (8:39)

**CONCLUSION:**

- 1. These are all positive examples of worship for us in the attitudes they demonstrated.
- 2. Most of these worshiped God under the law of Moses.
  - a. There were items of worship they were commanded to follow, that we must not use in our worship because we are not authorized to do so.
  - b. When Christ died on the cross, the law of Moses with its system of worship and service died with him. (Col. 2:14)
- 3. They are still examples for us in that their worship strictly adhered to the law of God under which they lived.
- 4. If our worship is to be pleasing and acceptable in the sight of God, we must follow these examples and worship him “in Spirit and in truth.” (John 4:24)



# Benefits of Worship

*Paul Curless*

1. In every dispensation (Patriarchal, Mosaic, and Christian), God has always required His creation to worship Him.
2. Our worship is either pleasing to Him or not pleasing to Him.
  - a. Worship is pleasing to God only when we follow the pattern. *"But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you"* (Rom. 6:17).
    - 1) The word form is from *tupos*, meaning pattern.
    - 2) So there is a pattern or form that must be followed in order for our worship to be pleasing to God.
    - 3) Paul commanded that we must *"prove all things; hold fast that which is good"* (I Thess. 5:21). Faithful Christians must hold fast the New Testament pattern, which is good.
    - 4) God has given a pattern for worship. *"Hold fast the form (pattern) of sound words..."* (2 Tim. 1:13).
  - b. God has decreed the acts to be rendered in worship.
  - c. To be acceptable to Him, we must express our devotion through the means divine wisdom has prescribed.
3. The word "worship" (*proskuneo*) means to "prostrate oneself in homage" (Strongs). Another word for worship (*sebomai*) means "to revere, adore: devout, religious worship."
4. The English word means the "act of paying divine honor to duty; religious reverence and homage... to pay honors to, to adore... To perform acts of homage and adoration; especially to perform religious service" (Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary).
5. Some worship is unacceptable:
  - a. Replacing what God has said with the doctrines of men (Matt. 15:9). This results in "vain worship."
  - b. It is vitally important to worship God as He has directed in the pages of the New Testament.
6. There are many great benefits for worshipping God as his faithful children (John 9:31).

## DISCUSSION:

### I. POSITIVE BENEFITS OF TRUE WORSHIP.

#### A. Almighty God has always commanded worship.

1. As the faithful in Christ gather to worship, we must clear our minds from all worldly problems, thoughts, physical earthly difficulties of life and concentrate on showing forth honor and reverence to God through His Son (Matt. 17:5; I Tim. 2:5).

2. Our main concern is to please God, not man and remember; “those who have assembled to worship are not the audience – God is.” We are the participants.
    - a. In all five acts of Lord’s Day worship, the faithful Christian is a participant!
      - 1) The word “audience” refers to:
        - a) Those who watch—not to those who participate;
        - b) Those who observe – not to those who perform;
        - c) To spectators – not to participators;
        - d) To those in the grandstands – not to those on the playing field.
      - 2) Therefore, during the five acts of Lord’s Day worship: singing (Eph. 5:19), praying (Acts 2:42), teaching/preaching (Acts 20:7), Lord’s supper (Acts 20:7, I Cor. 11:23-26), and giving (I Cor. 16:1-2); we are without question “the audience.”
    - b. Cornelius had it right: “...*Now therefore are we all here present before God...*” (Acts 10:33).
  3. As the faithful Christian worships God in spirit and in truth (John 4:24) as an active participant, we have peace of mind that God sees, hears, and is pleased, therefore providing a great blessing and benefit to us.
- B. True worship is designed to please God rather than man; this is seen in Jesus’ condemnation of the scribes and Pharisees: they worshiped “*to be seen of men*” (Matt. 23:5).
1. We worship God by attending all services to please Him and are richly benefitted as a result.
    - a. We commune with God.
      - 1) The very nature of worship demands an expression that involves a personal relationship (John 4:24; I John 3:1-3; 2 Cor. 6:17-18).
      - b. We express our sincere feelings. The book of Psalms shows the proper disposition. “*I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord*” (Psalm 122:1).
    2. “*O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker. For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand, today if ye will hear his voice*” (Psalm 95:6-7).
    3. To praise God: “*By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually...*” (Heb. 13:15).
      - a. If one is cheerful and has the right attitude, he can praise God.
      - b. If one is suffering, he can pray to God. “*Is any among you afflicted (suffering)? Let him pray...*” (James 5:13; Phil. 4:6)

- C. It is a great benefit to assemble together enabling us to build one another up in the most holy faith (Heb. 10:24-26; Acts 20:32).
1. No saint who truly wants heaven as their eternal home will forsake the assembly when conditions are under their control.
    - a. To miss services is not a sin, but to forsake is. When you could have been present and chose not to be – that's sin and needs to be repented of (I John 1:7-10).
    - b. I am fearful that some Christians will put family (a family situation) job, sports, or entertainment ahead of God when it comes to assembling (Matt. 6:33). Brethren this should not be.
- D. Christians benefit by helping weak members (Rom. 14:1)
1. There seems to be many weak and lukewarm members who need the Christian fellowship just to keep them going. *"Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men"* (I Thess. 5:14).
    - a) We benefit by helping those who haven't grown enough to overcome the things of the world (I John 2:15-17). Often the new convert, and sometimes older members, need lots of attention} in the growing process (I Peter 2:2).
      - 1) Let us never forget that one soul is worth more than the whole world. *"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"* (Matt. 16:26)
      - 2) In showing brotherly love to the weak member before, during, and after the worship services will help them in the short term; but will also benefit us in the long term. Knowing that eventually they will become stronger and that just maybe we have saved a soul from death (James 5:19- 20).
      - 3) Always remember, Jesus came to *"...seek and to save that which was lost"* (Luke 19:10). For us to continue having that positive attitude will classify us as doing good works; which will not be forgotten (Rev. 14:13).

## II. PREPARING FOR ETERNITY — A GREAT BENEFIT.

- A. Our most important benefit is knowing that as a faithful worshiper we are preparing for eternity.
1. Unfortunately the majority of religious people will miss out on heaven (Matt. 7:13-14).



2. God would have all His creation to enter heaven but few will, only because they refused to do the Father's will (Matt. 7:21-23; 2 Peter 3:9).
  3. Worshiping God according to divine authority is pleasing to Him and beneficial to us (Col. 3:17).
- B. Heaven is the eternal home of the faithful Christian.
1. We must never forget that we are pilgrims passing through this world (Heb. 11:13).
  2. Heaven is our headquarters. *"For our conversation (citizenship ASV) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ"* (Phil. 3:20).
  3. Let us not forget the words of Jesus to his apostles just before His crucifixion recorded in John 14:1-3, *"Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions, if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."*
  4. If we keep the faith by enduring the trials of life, the crown of life will be ours (James 1:12).
    - a. This crown is for all those that love Him (John 14:15).
    - b. Only those who obey, love Him.
  5. As the Lord informed the church meeting in Smyrna, so He informs us also *"...be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life"* (Rev. 2:10).
    - a. Heaven is a promise to the faithful few.
    - b. Those who refuse to obey the Gospel (2 Thess. 1:8-9) will *"...go away unto everlasting punishment"* (Matt. 25:26). Eternal life is a great benefit extended only to the faithful, IN Christ (Eph. 1:3).
  6. Be involved in good works by encouraging all to be obedient to God's commands and be faithful in our worship to Him; to do otherwise would be destructive to one's soul.
    - a. It would be wonderful if at the end of our lives we could say: *"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only but unto all them also that love his appearing"* (2 Tim. 4:7- 8).
    - b. If we obey and are faithful until the end, having the right, positive attitude about worship, we can say what the apostle Paul stated.

## CONCLUSION:

1. The following are a few benefits of worship:
  - a. Knowing that we are pleasing to God.

- b. It is a command to assemble and show honor and reverence to our Creator.
  - c. Shows our love for God and the brethren.
  - d. We receive edification and encouragement when worshiping.
  - e. It reminds us that we are not the audience, God is; and we are to be active participants.
  - f. We are able to commune with God through His Son by worshiping in spirit and in truth.
  - g. We give strength to the weak brethren while helping them to grow IN Christ.
  - h. We set the proper example by being present at all worship services; if at all possible!
  - i. We are showing those around about us that God must come first in our lives.
  - j. We are preparing for eternity.
2. The best benefit of worship is knowing that heaven will be ours if we remain faithful. *"Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know your labour is not in vain in the Lord"* (I Cor. 15:58).
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## Singing as Worship

*Cade K. Somers*

- 1. As long as man has existed, songs have been used as a form of expressing feelings, adoration, praise and ideals.
  - a. Adam's words in Gen. 2:23 are possibly the first recorded song lyrics.
  - b. Jabal (7th generation of Cain) is the first explicitly recorded musician (Gen. 4:21).
  - c. The patriarchs sang (Gen. 31:27; Job 21:12; 29:13).
  - d. Moses and the children of Israel sang (Exodus 15:1).
  - e. Solomon had his 3000 proverbs and 1005 songs (1 Kings 4:32).
  - f. David was well-known for his songs (2 Chron. 29:30; Psalm. 101:1; 108:1; 138:1).
- 2. Several psalms are dedicated to singing.
  - a. *"I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high"* (Psalm 7:17).
  - b. *"Sing praises to the LORD, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings"* (Psalm 9:11).

3. As much as the New Testament church is different from what many denominations teach and practice, there is predominately one known fact regarding the church of which they are aware—mechanical instruments of music are absent from worship.
4. Spiritual growth involves growth in knowledge, wisdom and service. It includes the improvement of worship to God.
  - a. We seek decent and orderly worship (1 Cor. 14:40).
  - b. We seek better mind-sets during and regarding worship (cf. 1 Cor. 11:28).
  - c. We seek purer hearts offered in worship (cf. 2 Peter 3:14).

### DISCUSSION:

#### I. “SOUNDING BRASS AND TINKLING CYMBALS” (1 Cor. 13:1).

- A. This phrase is analogous to spiritual gift possession without love.
  1. However, inference suggests vanity in that which cannot be understood.
  2. The vital point is understanding. Understanding is essential when it comes to several things:
    - a. Interpreting the Word of God (Acts 8:30,31)
    - b. Faith (Rom. 10:17)
    - c. Forgiveness of sins (Ignorance unacceptable.
    - d. Lev. 4; 5:15,18; 15:24-31)
- B. The content sung must be understood mentally (1 Cor. 14:15).
  1. This negates synthetic instrumentation such as “ooh-ing” and “ah-ing.” (i.e. “His Grace Reaches Me”)
  2. The playing or imitating of mechanical instruments has no implicit interpretation, meaning or definition.
  3. Lyrics containing false doctrine should not be sung.
    - a. “Jesus is Coming Soon” (verse 1 alludes to a rapture, Heb. 12:5-11; verse 2 refers to signs which do not exist, Matt. 24:36-51)
    - b. “Just a Little Talk with Jesus” (False regarding plan of salvation)
    - c. “Tell it to Jesus Alone” (No authority to pray to Jesus, Matt. 6:8; 1 Peter 5:6-8)
  4. Secular songs should be kept secular (i.e. God Bless America, America the Beautiful).
  5. In constant evaluation of self, in singing to God, he ought to ask himself, “Can I truly sing this song?”
    - a. Do I understand the words?
    - b. Do I believe the words to be true and will I act upon the statements and imperatives therein?
    - c. Am I living faithfully to the Lord? If not, what will be the effect of singing this song?
- C. The content sung must be understood audibly.

1. Whispering cannot be heard and yelling is obstructive.
2. We speak one to another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs (Eph. 5:18,19).
  - a. "Yourselves" (*heautois*) – This Greek word is in the 2nd person reflexive tense; thus, it indicates the active involvement of the whole assembly.
  - b. Conjunctive effort imperative for purpose of edification and to promote purity in heart.
3. In singing, teach and admonish one another (Col. 3:16).
  - a. Again, the reflexive pronoun is used.
  - b. Words put to melody are beneficial in remembering information that otherwise may be difficult to memorize. Books of Bible, Bible figures, events and concepts are commonly taught in songs.
  - c. Lyrics of admonishment: "Careless soul why will you linger," "Wake up you shepherds, don't scatter the sheep," "Angry Words! O let them never..."

## II. PARTICIPANTS AND PARTICIPATION.

- A. In congregational worship, singing is authorized as one of five acts of worship. It must be approached carefully and attentively (Col. 3:17).
  1. Worship is a designated and set aside act on a foreknown location and during a foreknown time (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor.16:2; Heb. 10:25).
  2. All Christians are required to be participants in singing.
    - a. Mark Twain: "People who have heard me sing, say I don't."
    - b. Aesthetic appeal has less importance to God than man; however, He does expect the best we can do (cf. Exodus 22:29; Num. 18:12,13; 1 Peter 2:5).
  3. Chrysostom represented the common perception of the early church, saying, "It was the ancient custom, as it is still with us, for all to come together, and unitedly join in singing. The young and the old, rich and poor, male and female, bond and free, all join in one song.. All worldly distinctions here cease and the whole congregation form one general chorus." [Mattox, F. W. *The Eternal Kingdom: A History of the Church* (Delight, AR: Gospel Light Publishing Company, 1961).]
  4. Non-Christian participation is not discouraged. Though vain, it serves as a teaching tool.
- B. Outside of corporate worship, one can still sing spiritual songs; however, he must consider what God does and does not authorize.
  1. A spiritual song in the worship assembly is still a spiritual song outside of the worship assembly. Some attempt to argue otherwise.

2. Scriptures regarding singing do not specify in or out of the congregational assembly (Eph. 5:18,19; Col. 3:16).
3. Paul and Silas' singing in prison is not a sufficient argument (Acts 16:25). The prisoners' hearing them does not imply a performance.
4. It is hypocritical for Christians to teach against choruses, solos and mechanical instruments of music in the worship assembly and then turn around, offering concerts and permitting all the same to exist, so long as someone has led the closing prayer.

### III. EXPRESSIVE INPUT AND OUTPUT.

#### A. Sincerity shows.

1. Paul saw the faith, love and patience of the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 1:3).
2. Timothy witnessed the same of them and reported it to Paul (1 Thess. 3:6).
3. God has given us reason to sing. (James 5:13)
  - a. He has dealt bountifully (Psalm 13:6).
  - b. He has offered peace (John 14:27; Phil. 4:6,7).
  - c. Grace has been extended to the obedient (1 Cor. 1:4; 2 Cor. 6:1).
  - d. One song reads, "I sing because I'm happy. I sing because I'm free. His eye is on the sparrow, and I know he cares for me."
  - e. Isaiah prophesied of the resounding voices blending harmoniously in song in the church of the Lord (Isa. 26:1-19). Note the contrast between Moab and Zion.
    - 1) The cities—Moab: undeservedly praised (25:2,12); Zion: warranted praise (26:1)
    - 2) The people—Moab: prideful and wicked (25:10, 11); Zion: truthseekers, righteous and faithful (26:2,3,7)
4. Some people emphasize dramatic output instead of sincere input (Matt. 6:2,5).
5. However, Paul used a participial phrase, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord, to modify the "teaching" and "admonishing...in songs" (Col. 3:16). This phrase tells us with what input we are to sing spiritual songs. To sing with "grace" is to sing with joy or pleasure.

#### B. Selective styles

1. The hymn designated to prepare minds for the Lord's supper should not be something upbeat, bright, and cheery. It was a solemn occasion when Jesus died, and such a preparatory song should show that.
2. Songs of great joy, such as "Sing and Be Happy" and "There's within My Heart a Melody" should not be sung as the drone of a funeral dirge.

3. "Swiftly We're Turning" is oft sung the opposite—slowly.
  4. Spiritual battle-hymns should be sung as such: "There's a Royal Banner" and "Onward Christian Soldiers."
- C. Selective hymns
1. Proper timing
    - a. "Oh Why Not Tonight" is not a hymn for Sunday morning worship.
    - b. "God Be with You" not a good opening song.
  2. Proper occasions
    - a. Baptism: Select hymns that focus upon the decision made to become a Christian, the joy found therein, and the new life ahead of the one being baptized. "O Happy Day", "Trust and Obey", "Have Thine Own Way."
    - b. Invitation: Select hymns posing questions to those in attendance. Themed songs of judgment and the status of souls are appropriate. "There's a Great Day Coming", "Are You Ready?", "Prepare to Meet Thy God"

#### CONCLUSION:

1. Singing is not only an outlet to personal emotions. It strengthens self and edifies those with whom one sings.
  2. Most importantly, it is an authorized avenue to worship God and be pleasing to Him (Psalm 147:11; Psalm 19:14; Eccl. 12:13).
  3. Let us develop the mentality of the psalmist who wrote, "*I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise unto my God while I have my being*" (Psalm 104:33).
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## Worship and Entertainment: Examined and Contrasted

*Tom House*

1. The church, as it exists in the 21st century, finds itself in a serious dilemma.
  - a. On one side, it has leaders who want the church to grow, but:
    1. Either do not have the knowledge, courage, or will to implement the necessary elements to perform the task;
    2. Or, in order to merely amass the numbers, they will resort to the "contemporary," the "progressive" or "non-traditional" methods.

- b. On the other side, there are those who are completely indifferent when it involves the growth of the church.
  1. This indifference translates into the disposition of those who worship in these congregations.
  2. There is no enthusiasm in the work or worship, and consequently there is no reason for anyone having visited, to find an incentive to return.
2. Most church leaders realize that one of the number of methods for the church's capability to attract attention will be its member's enthusiasm for its worship.
  - a. Can it be said of those in the church by those in the community, that members of the church of Christ are seen to be determined and enthusiastic about going to worship?
  - b. Or, do they see or hear in the members of the church the inclination to be somewhere else at worship times?
3. Many congregations of the Lord's church today, find themselves in the strange position of feeling the need to "compete" for souls.
  - a. The question commonly asked is, "how do we reach people today when the denominations provide such elaborate entertainment in their worship?"
  - b. It certainly cannot be argued that the glitz and glamour is appealing to the masses, for it is evident in their numbers.
4. Some pertinent questions to be asked are:
  - a. What approach is the church to take regarding its worship?
  - b. What attitude should the church possess about its worship?
  - c. Should we compromise authority to amass the numbers?
5. It is the design of this lesson to examine the efforts men take to make worship entertaining, and to contrast such with what the Bible teaches about scriptural worship.

## **DISCUSSION:**

- I. **THE BIBLICAL CONCEPT OF ENTERTAINMENT; APPROVED AND UNAPPROVED.**
  - A. One should not make the mistake of suggesting that the Bible is silent on the subject of 'entertaining'; it isn't.
  - B. There are some who have made significant efforts to eliminate the concept of 'entertainment' from the Christian's work; a position which is without scriptural foundation.
  - C. That being the case, it prompts the question; 'what does the Bible say on the subject of entertainment?'
    1. The approved.
      - a. First, it involves Christian fellowship.
        - 1) It has been argued by some that the home is exclusive venue for providing social development; an argument based on Romans 14:17. The context of this passage is dealing with the eating of meats sacrificed to idols, and has no real application to the argument. If one were to follow the logic of the

- argument to its consistent end, it would have one argue that it is unscriptural for a Christian to eat and drink at all; which is obviously absurd!
- 2) Note the text in Luke 2:52, as it pertains to Christ. It includes every aspect of human development; intellectual, physical, spiritual, and social. To suggest the church has no part in the social development is to argue that the 'bride' should bear no resemblance to the 'husband.' (Christ). Note the example of the early church. (Acts 2:43-44)
- a. Second, it involves Christian benevolence and kindness.
    - 1) As Paul described the character and responsibilities of a Christian, (Rom. 12), he mentions the "*distributing to the necessity of the saints; given to hospitality.*" (v.13).
    - 2) The word 'hospitality' is from the Geek word '*philonexia*, which means 'hospitableness,' or 'to entertain,' as is also used in Hebrews 13:2.
    - 3) A form of this same word was also used by Paul in Acts 28:7, '*xenizo*,' meaning 'to be a host,' or 'to entertain.'
  2. The unapproved or condemned.
    - a. The Pharisees of Jesus' day exemplified the very disposition which met with the Lord's disapproval.
    - b. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus condemns the Pharisees for their 'showy' behavior while fulfilling what would otherwise be considered as 'righteous' deeds.
      - 1) In the giving of alms, they had trumpets to sound their arrival, in order to make a display of themselves. (Matt. 6:1-4)
      - 2) When they prayed, they prayed long repetitious prayers while standing on street comers. (Matt. 6:5-8)
      - 3) They made great pretense in their appearance, thinking the perception of the people would consider them more spiritual by virtue of their glorious apparel. (Matt. 23:5)
    - c. The church at Corinth made the mistake of turning the Lord's supper into a mere social event, and prompted Paul's condemnation. (1 Cor. 11:19-29)
      - 1) Paul's point is that there is to be the clear distinction between an act of worship and a mere social event.
      - 2) The remembering of the Lord's death, signified by the partaking of the prescribed emblems, is an act



stemming from the heart of man, not the mere outward expression of some grand ceremony.

## II. HOW TRUE WORSHIP IS BEING COMPROMISED BY EFFORTS TO ENTERTAIN.

- A. The primary issue as it pertains to this subject, specifically relates to the matter of authority. (Col. 3:17; 1 Peter 4:11)
- B. The questions paramount to this discussion will be:
  1. What is the purpose of worship?
  2. What are we attempting to achieve in our worship?
- C. To best answer these questions, is to first understand what worship is not designed to be.
  1. The design of worship was never intended to be an outlet for our own innovations. (Gen. 4; Lev. 10; Matt. 15:8-9)
  2. Worship is not designed to provide a venue for self-promotion and exaltation. (Matt.6; 1 Cor. 11; Luke 18:10-14)
- D. The purpose of worship is to-fold:
  1. To honor, praise, and adore Him who made us;
  2. To edify and admonish one another. (Col. 3:16; Heb. 10:24-25)
- E. The question is, can these purposes be met without the entertaining innovations? If it can, then why are there those who feel the need for the changes?
- F. One needs only to investigate the given reasons for the establishment of the “community churches” to understand the purpose of the entertainment innovations.
  1. According to men like Bill Hybel, founder of the Willow Creek Community Church just outside of Chicago (combined weekend services number about 16,000); the reasons people gave in the community for not attending church were: (available from the website)
    - a. They didn’t like being ‘bugged’ for money.
    - b. They found church boring, predictable, and routine.
    - c. They did not think the church was relevant to their lives.
    - d. They thought the message of Christianity was too negative.
  2. So, what was the answer to this dilemma? Hybel essentially says, ‘give the people what they want,’ which was:
    - a. Anonymity
    - b. Truth in very simple terms
    - c. The time to make one’s own decision
    - d. The excellence in programming, creativity, humor, contemporary worship, relevancy, etc.
- G. It is to such a position that Paul directs his comments in 2 Tim. 4:2-4.
- H. What are some of the entertainment innovations which have been employed into the worship in recent years?

1. Praise teams; which are nothing less than choirs; an innovation for the express purpose of simply making the singing more appealing to man's ears.
  2. Worship teams; which essentially divide the congregation into separate assemblies for the purpose of appealing to the particular interests of each particular group, as well as to provide them the liberty to use whatever methods of worship they see fit.
  3. Drama teams; because some feel the preaching and teaching done in conventional means is an insufficient form of instruction in our present society, and hence the need to act out the biblical scenes in order to better understand them.
- I. Some will obviously ask, "What is wrong with these innovations so long as they increase enthusiasm, and get more people involved?"
1. Simply put, there is no authority for innovations. (Col. 3:17)
  2. Whenever men perform an act under the auspices of religion which God has not authorized, the worship is vain. (Matt. 15:8-9)
  3. The fact that one feels the need to entertain in worship, means there is no substance to the teaching; consequently, the worship is based solely on the emotional and not the truth. (John 4:24)

### III. THE CONTRAST — TRUE WORSHIP (John 4:24).

- A. There are three elements to scriptural worship; if anyone of them is not present, it will not meet God's criteria for acceptable worship.
1. There must be the right object—God. (Ex. 20; John 4:24)
    - a. To add the element of entertainment to the worship is to draw one's focus away from the spiritual to the material.
    - b. This particular disposition is descriptive of the ungodly in Rom. 1:25.
  2. There must be the proper attitude or disposition in acceptable worship.
    - a. To add entertainment to worship is the expression of the need for self gratification.
    - b. The innovations are added because "I like them," not because they meet with God's approval.
  3. For worship to be acceptable, it must be "in truth."
    - a. The adding of entertaining innovations undermines and violates the truth.
    - b. The innovations are added because "I want them," not because God authorized them.

**CONCLUSION:**

1. It must be asked; “what are we trying to achieve in worship?”
2. By adding entertaining innovations, man is seeking to please himself.
3. Be mindful, there are ways which seem right to man, but what of their destination? (Prov. 14:12)



## Decency and Orderliness in Worship

I Corinthians 14:40

*Sidney White*

1. We must recognize the importance of this study of “worship:” John 4:24; Acts 17:25.
2. The church at Corinth was plagued with numerous problems. Note the various problems set forth as each chapter of I Corinthians is examined.
3. Corinth was a relatively young church, had an incomplete revelation at this point, and considering the background of the members (I Cor. 6:9-11), one may understand the confusion that existed in some areas.
  - a. Compare Heb. 5:12-14
  - b. We ought to know better today!
4. Thus, the admonition of I Corinthians 14:40.

**DISCUSSION:**

**I. DEFINITION OF TERMS:**

- A. “Decently” – with decorum.
  1. Rom. 13:13 – “honestly” – in contrast to the ungodly lifestyle of those who had not put on Christ.
  2. I Thess. 4:12 – “honestly” – in contrast to idleness, being busybodies and the evils associated therewith.
  3. I Cor. 14:40 – “decently” – in contrast to the confusion in the public assemblies over the use of the spiritual gifts.
- B. “Order” – involves arrangement, to draw to order
  1. Luke 1:8 – proper order or course of the priests; I Chron. 24:19
  2. Col. 2:5 – given a military significance in this context
  3. Involves time, regulation, proportion, self-suppression.
  4. The fact that God is a God of order can be seen in a number of passages; cf. Exodus 12; Josh. 6:1ff; Judges 7

- C. Thus, we are discussing worship that is properly arranged and carried out according to God's order and for the benefit of all present.

## II. A BRIEF STUDY OF THE CONTEXT OF I COR. 14:40:

- A. I Cor. 12-14 is a discussion of the spiritual gifts and the proper priority and use of them, especially tongues and prophesying.
- B. I Cor. 14:26-29 informs that the speakers were limited in number, and even that, in order.
- C. God is not the author of confusion (I Cor. 14:33), thus, the confusion in the Corinthian assemblies resulted from those who were failing to follow God's arrangement of things.
- D. Thus, the admonition of verse 40.

## III. GREAT PRINCIPLES OF I CORINTHIANS 14 RELATIVE TO CHRISTIAN WORSHIP:

- A. Christian worship must never be selfish; but to honor God and for the good of all involved.
1. Note the use of "edify," "edifying," and "edification" as used in this chapter – vs.3, 4, 5, 12, 17, 26.
  2. Sincerity, enthusiasm and group participation can always be combined with order, decency and reverence.
- B. Christian worship must be intelligible; vs. 8-12, 16, 19.
1. Even children and the unschooled should be able to understand.
  2. "Far-out" opinions and complex rhetoric have no place in worship to God.
- C. Christian worship must be free of "innovations" as to practice.
1. In Corinth – unbalanced use of spiritual gifts.
  2. In Corinth – women speaking in public assemblies of the church on an equality with men; cf. I Cor. 11:1ff.
- D. Christian worship must respect proper roles for men and women...avoiding two extremes:
1. 1<sup>st</sup> extreme – men and women having equal roles. The secular world is bleeding over into the church.
  2. 2<sup>nd</sup> extreme – inferiority role of women.
    - a. Cf. Acts 2:17-18 and Joel's prophecy.
    - b. Phil. 4:3 – women were co-laborers with Paul.
    - c. Yet, I Tim. 2:12; difference in duties and functions in certain areas.
- E. Regardless of the liberty of teaching and the enthusiasm of the new life, where Christianity reigns, there will be no disorder.

**IV. SOURCE OF THE CONFUSION, THE DISRUPTION OF DECENCY AND ORDERLINESS IN CORINTH:**

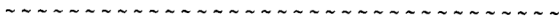
- A. Pride; I Cor. 3:3 (pride causes these sins)
- B. Puffed up; I Cor. 4:6,18,19; 5:2; 8:1; 13:4
- C. Carnally minded; I Cor. 3:1ff
- D. Lack of emphasis on edification; cf. pt. III. A. 1.
- E. Emphasis on the “showy” gifts.

**V. PRINCIPLES THAT WILL PROMOTE WORSHIP DONE DECENTLY AND IN ORDER:**

- A. Recognition of what the church is:
  - 1. The church of the living God; I Tim. 3:15
  - 2. Worships the Eternal One; Acts 17:25
  - 3. Pillar and ground of the truth; I Tim. 3:15
  - 4. The temple of God; I Cor. 3:6
  - 5. The church of Christ; Rom. 16:16
    - a. “My church” – Matt. 16:18
    - b. Bears His name.
    - c. Place of His presence; Matt. 18:20; 28:20
    - d. Redeemed by His blood; I Peter 1:18-19
    - e. His body; I Cor. 12:27
  - 6. The avenue through which the Gospel is carried to the lost.
- B. The importance of everything connected with the church being as free from fault as possible.
  - 1. Organization – qualifications of elders/deacons given for that purpose.
  - 2. Work – spelled out in Eph. 4:12.
  - 3. Worship – see other lessons in this lectureship.
  - 4. If there is no pattern for these things, then each is free to do his own thing.
- C. The vast responsibility that rests upon those who violate the Apostolic command (I Cor. 14:37). A failure to follow God’s arrangement and order makes Him appear to be a God of confusion, which He is not.

**CONCLUSION:**

- 1. Since God is our creator (Acts 17), He is the one who has the right to tell us how He wants to be worshiped.
- 2. God has an order of worship and we must not allow anything to come into that worship that violates His order.
- 3. John 4:24 and I Cor. 14:40 are very parallel in teachings that are to control our worship.



# The Object of Worship

Matthew 4: 10

*Billy Lambert*

1. From the first pair in paradise, to the present hour, man has been and continues to be a worshipping being.
  - a. All men, savage and the civilized have worshiped something.
  - b. It may be the sun, moon, earth or some manufactured deity, but, all men have the desire to worship.
  - c. From the remotest jungles of the world to the sophisticated lifestyle of the so-called civilized world, there has been the inward urge to worship some one or some thing.
2. Worship defined:
  - a. "Worthiness, respect, reverence, paid to divine being," Merriam Webster Collegiate Dictionary p. 1365
  - b. "To prostrate oneself; to kiss the hand (towards) one in token of reverence; to fall upon the knees and touch the ground with the face, head as an expression of profound reverence; to make obience" — Thayer's Greek English Lexicon, p.548.
  - c. Who or what is the object of true worship?

## DISCUSSION:

### I. THINGS FORBIDDEN AS OBJECTS OF WORSHIP.

- A. We are not to worship heavenly bodies (Deut. 4:19).
- B. It is wrong to worship a preacher (Acts 14:11).
- C. Angels are not to be worshiped (Rev. 22:8-9).
- D. No man is worthy of our worship (Acts 12:22).
- E. We are not to worship self (Rom. 1:19-24).

### II. IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO WORSHIP.

- A. Men can worship the wrong god.
  1. Idols (Exodus 20:2-4; Josh. 24:15; Matt. 6:24).
  2. The Athenians (Acts 17:22).
  3. Worshipers of Baal (I Kings 10:21-40).
  4. People of Ephesus (Acts 19:24-35).
- B. Men can worship the right God in the wrong way.
  1. This is done by omitting, substituting and adding to worship (I Peter 4:11; Rev. 22:19; 2 John 9; Prov. 30:6).
  2. Cain and Abel both worshiped the same God but one was wrong (Gen. 4:1-16).
  3. Nadab and Abihu worshiped the right God but did it in the wrong way (Lev. 10:1-2).
- C. Worship is of no avail if one has never obeyed the Gospel.
  1. The example of Cornelius (Acts 10:1-4; 11:14).
  2. The Eunuch worshiped God but needed to obey the Gospel (Acts 8:26-40).

3. Saul worshiped God as a Jew but was wrong (Acts 26:5; 22:3; Gal. 1:13-14).
  4. Lydia worshiped but needed to hear the Gospel (Acts 16:14-15).
- D. One can render worship ineffective by being a child of God yet not living up to the high claims of the Gospel (Phil. 1:27).
1. Ananias and Sapphira's worship was not accepted (Acts 5:1-10).
  2. Simon's worship would not have benefited him nor pleased God in his backslidden state (Acts 8:18-22).

### III. GOD ALONE IS THE OBJECT OF WORSHIP (Ex. 20:3).

- A. God is worthy of our worship, He made us (Psalm 95:6).
- B. He is worthy of our praise because He is a God of loving kindness (Psalm 115:1).
- C. His omnipotence makes Him worthy to be the sole object of worship (Psalm 115:3).
- D. The fact that He is our helper makes Him the logical object of worship (Psalm 115:9).
- E. Since God blesses man, He is the one to whom our praise and devotion should be directed (Psalm 115:13).

### IV. IT IS GOOD TO WORSHIP GOD (Psalm 73:28).

- A. Because He requires and expects it (Matt. 4:10).
  1. An estimated 40% of Americans never attend any type of worship service.
  2. Absenteeism is a serious problem in the Lord's church.
  3. If we could only realize what God has done for us, we would never consider being absent from a single service (Mark 5:1-18, "prayed that he might be with him").
- B. Because we are drawn away from the world (I John 2:15-17; James 4:4; Rom. 12:1-2).
- C. Because we can be near our Father (James 4:7-8).
  1. We become like that which we worship.
  2. A child may idolize his or her father. We say that the child is the image of the parent.
  3. We are to be partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4).
  4. When we worship and adore God, we take on His attributes: kindness, love, gentleness, mercy, etc.
- D. Because it helps us escape the downward path.
  1. Jonah's flight from God took him downward (Jonah 1:1-3).
  2. A failure to worship God results in a drifting away from Him (Heb. 2:1 ASV; 10:19-29).
- E. Because it promotes unity (I Cor. 1:10; Phil. 1:27).
  1. Unity is good (Psalm 133:1).

2. The closer we are to God, the closer we are to one another (I John 1:3-7).
  3. The person who cares little for worship cares little for the unity of the church.
- F. Because I need God's presence (Psalm 73:23), His guidance (Psalm 73:24) and His strength (Psalm 73:26).
- V. **MAKING WORSHIP GOD-CENTERED.**
- A. Much of the clamor for change in the church focuses on worship.
    1. Innovations such as instrumental music, solos, praise teams, choirs, etc. are being brought into the services.
    2. Whatever is done in worship must be authorized of God, (not what is appealing to the worshipers).
  - B. God desires man to worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:24; 17:17).
    1. Worship in spirit and in truth is God-centered. (I Chron. 16:23-29).
    2. True worship is directed to God (Psalm 90:2).
    3. True worship is designed to give honor and glory to God (Psalm 95:1-7), not just to please the whims and fancy of the people.
      - a. "I like it," says one, as an excuse for some new thing being introduced into worship.
      - b. The correct thing to ask is, "Does God like it?"
  - C. May we be content to worship God alone (Matt. 4:10).

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## **Preaching/Hearing as Worship**

*Randy McQuade*

1. The preaching of the Gospel brings salvation. Mark 16:15-16; Rom. 1:16-17; I Cor. 1:18
2. One must hear, however, in order to benefit from its saving power. Rom. 10:13-17
3. Therefore, preaching and hearing are linked together.
4. In the context of worship, preaching and hearing constitute the same act.
  - a. The only distinction is the point of view (who is doing what).
  - b. Obviously, all cannot preach; however, someone must preach for there to be hearers.
5. Preaching/hearing is in fact one of the five acts of acceptable worship in scripture.



**DISCUSSION:****I. PREACHING/HEARING IS TO BE DONE IN THE ASSEMBLY DURING WORSHIP.****A. Nehemiah 8**

1. All were gathered together (v.1-2).
2. Ezra read the book of the law (vs.3-4) while the people stood with respect (v.5) and worshiped (v.6).
3. The law was proclaimed by the preacher and heard by the people (vs.8-12).

**B. Acts 20:7**

1. The disciples were gathered on the first day of the week (the designated time for worship).
2. They had come together to eat the Lord's supper (which is also to be done as worship in the assembly).
3. Paul preached and the congregation heard.

**C. The epistles (Word of God) were to be read, and thereby heard, in the assemblies (Col. 4:16; I Thess. 5:27).****D. That preaching is to take place in the assembly is also implied in the following verses.**

1. A woman is to be silent and is not permitted to teach (I Tim. 2:11-12). Surely this does not mean that she can never open her mouth. Her silence is in regard to the assembly (cf. I Cor. 14:34-35).
2. If a woman is commanded not to teach in the assembly, we can understand that teaching is in fact going on during the assembly.

**II. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PREACHER IN WORSHIP.****A. Preach the word (I Tim. 4:2).**

1. Reprove: convict, convince, tell a fault.
2. Rebuke: censure or admonish.
3. Exhort: to call near, invite.

**B. Declare all the counsel of God (Acts 20:26-27).****C. Not show partiality (I Tim. 5:21).****D. Don't allow the fear of men to govern what he preaches (Acts 4:19-20; Amos 7:14-16; Ezek. 3:17-18).****III. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HEARERS IN WORSHIP.****A. Be on time.****B. Be attentive.****C. Do not cause unnecessary distractions for other hearers.****D. Have the right attitude (Psalm 122:1; John 4:24).****IV. FALSE IDEAS, ACTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF PREACHERS IN WORSHIP.****A. Arrogance (Gal. 6:3).**

1. A preacher is a mere servant of the congregation, not "the boss."

2. Even when right, do not use the Gospel merely to win an argument or to prove a point (II Peter 3:16), but rather to save souls (James 5:19-20).

B. Hobby riding.

1. Must preach the whole Gospel.
2. Just as we need different types of food for our essential nutrients, we cannot survive on just one element of our spiritual food (Matt. 4:10; I Peter 2:2; cf. Heb. 5:12-14).

C. The big performance.

1. Preaching is a grave responsibility not to be taken lightly (James 3:1).
2. The purpose of preaching is not to entertain, it is to save souls!
  - a. Some pander to our entertainment crazed society by diluting the word until it is barely recognizable. Sometimes the preaching of the word gives the hearers joy, but it must also prick the heart when necessary. Many preachers give in, however, to the many voices crying, "*speak unto us smooth things*" (Isaiah 30:10).
  - b. Still other preachers feel they must solicit applause and "amens." "Amen" is a statement of agreement, and should not be squeezed out of people. If one strongly agrees, it should be said, but asking for it is like asking for a pat on the back. Applause is appropriate for ball games, stage performances and such, but not the worship of God. First of all, it is not authorized for use in worship. Secondly, it shows appreciation for the "performer" (in this case the preacher). Our main focus should be the message rather than the messenger.
  - c. Some even begin to sing in the middle of their sermons. Singing is a beautiful act of worship in itself and does not need to accompany preaching. Preaching, on the other hand, does not need to be "jazzed up" with a little bit of singing.
3. Those gathered are not an "audience" of people anxious to see the next show, but brethren concerned about their souls, the souls of others, and pleasing God through acceptable worship.

V. **FALSE IDEAS, ACTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF HEARERS IN WORSHIP.**

- A. Desiring "the big entertaining performance" in the first place (II Tim. 4:3-4).
- B. Not paying attention. Has mind on other things: (Where are we going to eat for lunch? I wonder who's winning the game right now etc.) picking preacher apart for mannerisms or

mistakes in grammar and pronunciation, while missing the entire message.

- C. Being more concerned with the sermon's length than its content.
  - 1. Sometimes it is just not possible to say what all needs to be said in 20-30 minutes.
  - 2. Some brethren should be glad they do not have Paul as their preacher (Acts 20:7).
- D. Not receiving the word (James 1:21).
- E. Receiving it well, but not carrying it out (James 1:22-25).

**CONCLUSION:**

- 1. Preaching/hearing is an essential part of worship.
- 2. Preaching/hearing, like all acts of worship, should not be done flippantly and thoughtlessly.
- 3. The hearers should be just as serious in their duty to hear as the preacher is in his to preach.

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## Negative Examples of Worship

*Walter W. Pigg*

- 1. There are many positive examples of worship in the Bible.
  - a. From early on, men have been taught to worship God.
  - b. This is what God requires and desires of men to please Him.
  - c. God has instructed men, through His word, as to how to worship Him acceptably.
- 2. Some recorded examples of worship are negative — unacceptable to God.
  - a. We need to learn from those examples what constitutes negative worship.
  - b. Only by knowing what negative worship is can we fully understand positive worship.
- 3. Our purpose is to examine a number of negative examples of worship. It is tragic to turn the exalted privilege of true worship into negative worship.
- 4. Not only are negative examples of worship recorded in God's word, negative worship is occurring now, even among our own brethren, as it occurred among the Israelites.
- 5. Our first example of negative worship.

**DISCUSSION:**

- 1. **CAIN'S EXAMPLE OF NEGATIVE WORSHIP.**
  - A. The record of Cain's worship, Gen. 4:3-5.

1. Cain brought an offering of "the fruit of the ground" (v.3).
2. Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock and the fat (v.4).
  - a. The Lord had respect to Abel and his offering (v.5).
  - b. The Lord did not respect Cain and his offering (v.5).
- B. Cain was very wroth and his countenance fell (v.5).
  1. The Lord asks Cain why his countenance has fallen (v.6).
    - a. This suggests some kind of wrong on Cain's part — that his offering is not accepted as was Abel's.
  2. The Lord reminds Cain: "*If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?*" (v.7) Not to do well means, "sin lieth at the door" (v.7).
- C. Abel's acceptance and Cain's rejection angers Cain.
  1. Today, when negative worship is pointed out, in accordance with Galatians 6:1, the negative worshiper may become angry toward the positive worshiper.
  2. The positive worshiper is often criticized by the negative worshiper. Unkind and even evil things may be said unjustly.
- D. Why was Cain's worship negative and rejected?
  1. It was lacking in faith. God is not pleased without faith (Heb. 11:6).
  2. This is made clear by the writer of Hebrews: "*By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh*" (Heb. 11:4).
  3. Worship offered by man's will and not by faith in God is vain. God's word, the basis of faith (Rom. 10:17), must authorize worship for it to be acceptable.
  4. Some of the worship being offered today, like Cain's, is not by faith. It is vain.

## II. THE ISRAELITES, AARON AND THE GOLDEN CALF.

- A. The record of Aaron and the Israelites idolatry (Exodus 32:1-6).
  1. The Israelites had witnessed God's help and protection time after time.
    - a. Why would they now go astray, even to the point of idolatry and the accompanying sins?
    - b. But this was not their first time to turn from God (Josh. 24:14-15).
  2. They had promised, "*All the words which the Lord hath said we will do*" (Exodus 24:3). But they have broken that promise.
    - a. Even with those who claim to serve God, promises are often made only to be broken. One actually

pledges self to do the will of God when becoming a Christian.

- B. The worshipping of the golden calf.
  - 1. They asked Aaron to make them gods. Their reason? They don't know what has happened to Moses.
  - 2. Aaron does not correct the people but rather assists them to engage in idolatry. Aaron avoids telling the truth when he said of the gold given him by the people, *"So they gave it me: then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf"* (Exodus 32:24). A failure to accept responsibility.
  - 3. The people, up early in the morning, have their hearts in the vain activity.
    - a. The worship of a man-made god, the calf, was only part of their disobedience.
    - b. *"The people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play."* Quoted in I Cor. 10:7 as an example. "Play" suggests fornication and adulterous intercourse which would typically frequent the worship of idols.
- C. God's displeasure with the idolatry of the Israelites.
  - 1. God tells Moses the people have "corrupted themselves" and worshiped "a molten calf" (Exodus 32:8). The Lord told Moses he had seen the people, and they were a "stiff-necked people" (v.9).
  - 2. God deals deadly with the transgressors.
    - a. Moses related the word of the Lord, *"Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor"* (Exodus 32:27).
    - b. *"There fell of the people that day, about three thousand men"* (v.28).

### III. NADAB AND ABIHU: A NEGATIVE EXAMPLE OF WORSHIP.

- A. The record of their negative worship (Lev. 10:1-2).
  - 1. Nadab and Abihu were not without proper instruction with regard to worship.
    - a. Leviticus 9, records the action of Moses and Aaron offering acceptable worship, immediately before their unauthorized action.
    - b. A fire came out "from before the Lord" and consumed the sacrifice they offered according to the Lord's instructions (v.24).
    - c. The people were filled with awe at the glory of the Lord in the sacrifice.
- B. The offering of "strange fire" by Nadab and Abihu.

1. That the fire was "strange" is that it was alien, that which the Lord had not commanded.
  2. Nadab and Abihu were acting on their own, ignoring the Lord's authority.
  3. They had no right to act on what the Lord did not say, but rather on what the Lord commanded. Silence does not authorize action. The same thing is true today. Sin is a transgression of God's law and silence doesn't authorize action (I John 3:4).
- C. The severe penalty of disobeying God.
1. Man must not trifle with God's instructions. "Little things" in man's sight may be "big things" in God's sight.
  2. Here is an example of priest, men of authority, choosing their own way over God's authorized way.
    - a. What of elders, men of authority over the congregation, who reject God's way to please men? This is happening quite often.
    - b. What of preachers who are leading their hearers into error?
- D. The reaction to the Lord's swift and severe punishment.
1. *"Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace"* (Lev. 10:3).
  2. Man must accept God's punishment for evil, regardless of who is involved.
    - a. Some will not accept God's disapproval of friends and family, even when they are clearly in error.
    - b. Efforts are some times made to change God's law to suit men.

#### IV. AHAZIAH'S WORSHIP OF BAAL.

- A. *"Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned two years over Israel. And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin: For he served Baal, and worshipped him, and provoked to anger the Lord God of Israel, according to all that his father had done."* (I Kings 22:51-53)
1. A background of negative worshipers is likely to produce others likewise. Hardly could there have been worse examples than that of Ahab and his wife, Jezebel. Jeroboam was known for his calf-worship.
  2. In our time, it is very likely that those from a liberal background will remain so.
- B. The Lord's response to the negative worship of Ahaziah.

1. Ahaziah “*provoked to anger the Lord God of Israel*” (v.53).
  2. Ahaziah had continued the destruction of Israel, in opposition to the Lord.
- C. Will not those who engage in false worship in our time provoke the anger of our Lord? That they have followed the example of erring brethren will not excuse them.

#### V. THE WICKEDNESS OF MANASSEH (2 Kings 21:1-18).

- A. The abominations of Manasseh enumerated. (vs.1-5)
1. The people harkened not to the Lord, “*and Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than did the nations whom the Lord destroyed before the children of Israel*” (v.9).
- B. The Lord’s response to Manasseh’s wickedness, including his negative worship.
1. “*Because Manasseh king of Judah hath done these abominations, and hath done wickedly above all that the Amorites did, which were before him, and hath made Judah also to sin with his idols: I am bringing such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle*” (vs.11-12).
  2. The people had provoked the Lord to anger by doing that which was “evil in the sight of the Lord.”
- C. We should be reminded by these “things written aforetime” (Rom. 15:4), that God is no less pleased with false or negative worship in our time. Such is a transgression of the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9), and God and Christ will not abide with us under such circumstances.

#### VI. THE NEGATIVE WORSHIP OF THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES.

- A. Christ reminds the scribes and Pharisees of what Isaiah had prophesied of them:
1. “*This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*” (Matt. 15:7-9).
  2. Christ had asked them, “*Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?*” (Matt. 15:3)
  3. Learning from his disciples that the Pharisees were offended, Christ responded by saying, “*Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch*” (Matt. 15:13-14).
  4. Those who worship today after the dictates of men may expect the same as the Pharisees and scribes.
    - a. Their worship is vain.

- b. In much of today's supposedly Christian religion, the "commandments of men" carry more weight than the word of the Lord.

## VII. NEGATIVE WORSHIP OF ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA.

- A. The account of their negative worship (Acts 5:1-2).
  - 1. Peter reveals that they were being dishonest: "*But peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost and to keep back part of the price of the land?*" (Acts 5:3).
- B. Giving of the price of the land was worship, as is our giving.
  - 1. They were not bound to give all the price of the land, but they lied about what they did give.
  - 2. "*Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God*" (v.4).
- C. The negative worship of Ananias and Sapphira was immediately punished by death.
  - 1. "*And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost*" (v.5).
  - 2. Peter said of Sapphira, "*Then she fell down straitway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost*" (v.10).
- D. Shouldn't this example remind us that we could engage in negative worship by lying?

## VIII. THE NEGATIVE WORSHIP OF THE GENTILES.

- A. The Gentiles "*professing themselves to be wise, they became fools*" (Rom. 1:22).
  - 1. The invisible things from creation were proof of God's existence (Rom. 1:20).
  - 2. But they "*changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things*" (v.23).
- B. In this condition, God "*gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves*" (v.24).
  - 1. The Gentiles "*changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen*" (v.25).
  - 2. God gives them up "*unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lusts one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and having received themselves that recompence which was meet*" (vs.26-27).
    - a. Here we see a foundation for homosexuality.
    - b. Lack of belief in God.



**IX. CORNELIUS WORSHIPS PETER (1 Cor. 10).**

- A. Cornelius, a Gentile, was a centurion of the Italian band.
  - 1. He was *“a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always”* (v.2). Cornelius would have been under the law of patriarchy.
  - 2. Cornelius had a vision, in which he was told to send men to Joppa and call for Simon Peter (vs.3-5).
  - 3. When Peter asked the men why they had come, *“they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report of all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee”* (v.22).
- B. *“And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him”* (v.25).
  - 1. Peter’s response to Cornelius: *“But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man”* (v.26).
  - 2. This tells us that man is not to be worshiped. Jesus said to the devil: *“Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve”* (Matt. 4:10).
- C. The worship of men is a common occurrence in our time.
  - 1. The Catholics and various cults are prime examples.
  - 2. There is a danger among our own people, that individuals are followed almost to the extent of being worshiped.

**CONCLUSION:**

- 1. The worship of God is a high and exalted privilege for His people. We can thank God that He has informed us as how to worship Him acceptably.
- 2. The danger of engaging in false worship, which is vain, is great.
- 3. The penalty of false worship is the loss of one’s soul. Under the old law the penalty for worshipping “other gods” or “any of the host of heaven” which God has “not commanded” was death by stoning (Deut. 17:2-5).
- 4. In view of all the efforts to interfere with the worship of God in our country, we need to be alert and more determined than ever to remain faithful to our God whom we worship.
- 5. We must remember that to worship God acceptably, we must worship according to what God says and not on the basis of what He does not say, or silence.



# Vain Worship

Matthew 15:9

Roger A. Scully Jr.

1. Worship is two-sided, as is all our service to God.
  - a. We must follow God's word, as given us in Holy Writ, with a sense of formalism.
  - b. And, we must follow it from the heart with dedication and conviction.
2. When we turn our attention to the Law of Moses, we find written therein, "*Thou shalt fear Jehovah...and Him shalt thou serve*" (Deut. 6:13). But, if we look back just prior to this imperative we find the statement, "*Thou shalt love Jehovah with all thy heart...soul...and might*" (Deut. 6:5); thus showing obedience and sincerity are contingent one upon the other.
  - a. However, when we look to the times of Hezekiah and Josiah, reformists, we find one without the other, which caused their worship and service to God to be vain.
  - b. As Hailey says, "They substituted empty formalism in their public worship for true service from the heart."
  - c. Though Hezekiah and Josiah destroyed the "high places" (cf. 2 Kings 18:3-4; 23:19), thus removing the external objects of worship, the people had "taken their idols into their heart" (Ezek. 14:3).
  - d. So it is, then, when we look to Jeremiah 3:10, under the reign of Josiah, we read the people turned to God "feignedly," and not with their "whole heart."
  - e. In Isaiah 29:13, under the reign of Hezekiah (Jesus quotes from this), we read how the people "removed their heart far" from Jehovah, and "their fear of [Jehovah] is a commandment of men which hath been taught them."
    - 1) This is to say that the people drew near to God in worship, praising and honoring Him, but they removed their hearts far from Him because of a lack of sincerity, dedication, and conviction (cf. Ezek. 14:3).
    - 2) Their fear of Jehovah, which is to say, their views of Jehovah, were not derived from His word, but rather were drawn from the doctrines of men (cf. Eccl. 12:13).
3. With this in mind, we now focus our attention to Matt. 15:1-9.
  - a. Herein we find Jesus, as often times, in a discussion with the Pharisees and Scribes, which is concluded with the Lord applying Isaiah 29:13 to those with whom He spake.
  - c. Herein lies a problem:
    - 1) Hypocrisy. Live like a heathen all week and come to worship God on Sunday and expect Him to accept it.

- 2) Come to worship, but hearts not in it—no focus. Appearing to be close to God, but heart far from Him.
  - 3) Being presumptuous with the worship of God. Taking liberty where there is no liberty to be taken.
  - 4) Binding where God has not bound.
4. We hope to examine the discussion of Matt. 15:1-9 to have a better understanding of vain worship and how to avoid it.

## DISCUSSION:

### I. DEFINITION.

#### A. Technical definition.

1. Vain, *maten*, manipulation or folly; having no purpose, fruitless and empty.
2. Worship, *sebomai*, revere; adore.
3. Vain worship — Fruitless homage paid, or adoration given; a manipulation of paying homage.
4. Worshipping God, and God not accepting it because it is not done properly, either in doctrine or disposition.

#### B. Textual definition.

1. Transgress because of your tradition. v.3
2. Made void because of placing manmade tradition above God's word. v.6
3. Draw close to God in action, but not with proper disposition of the mind/heart. v.8
4. Teaching for doctrines the precepts of men. v.9
5. Having now established what is meant by vain worship, let us turn out attention the text.

### II. ANNOTATION.

#### A. Transgression (vs.1-3).

1. Pharisees and Scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem, probably sent by the Sanhedrin.
2. They came attacking the practice of Jesus' disciples, thus attacking Jesus himself.
3. Jesus does not deny the disciples transgressed something. Notice the term "also." But, what they transgressed was not the commandments of God. It was the traditions of the elders, which were manmade.
4. The Pharisees and Scribes, on the other hand, transgressed the commandments of God.
  - a. How so? By binding their tradition appearing to be religious, but having their hearts far from God.
  - b. All of these practices gave an appearance that they were holy.
  - c. Nothing wrong with washing hands, unless binding it religiously causing salvation to be contingent thereon. Hand washing was harmless, and did not interfere with any of God's commandments until it

was made an addition and bound, or when it was done just to look religious (cf. Matt. 6:1-6).

5. Keep in mind the true focus — the hypocrisy of heart.

B. Explanation (vs.4-6).

1. Jesus sets out a principle, as pertaining to human tradition, using, as an example, their neglect of the Law concerning parents, and their manmade tradition they hid under the cloak "corban."

2. The Law of Moses taught that once the parents became dependant, they were the responsibility of the children (cf. Exodus 20:12; Deut. 5:16).

a. However, the Pharisees managed to create a "loophole" with a tradition calling it "corban" (cf. Mark 7:11), which means, "consecrated to the temple, or to God."

b. Therefore, they were able to say their belongings could not be used for the care of their parents, however, they, themselves, would continue to use them until their death, at which time their belongings were dedicated to the treasury.

C. Rejection (vs.6-9).

1. Jesus then explained, in verse 6, that they made the word of God of "none effect" by removing it and placing their tradition in its place.

2. Honor with the lips speaks of the appearance they gave of being close to God (cf. Isa. 29:13).

3. But, in reality they were far from Him.

a. Looked close to God by:

1) Saying corban.

2) By upholding manmade traditions.

3) Giving the appearance they were doing what was right.

b. Far from God by:

1) Not upholding His commandments.

2) Binding where He had not bound, thus adding to His word (vs.3,5-9).

3) Placing their traditions above them.

4) Desiring to look holy to other men.

5) Lacked sincerity, dedication, and conviction (vs.7-9,18). cf. Rev. 3:1

c. Look close by a profession of godliness, but far with works (Titus 1:16).

d. Look close by holding a form of godliness, but far by denying the power thereof (2 Tim. 3:5).

e. Look close by learning, but far by not coming to knowledge of the truth (2 Tim. 3:7).

**III. EXEMPLIFICATION.**

- A. Prescribed examples.
  - 1. Gen. 4:3-5; Heb. 11:4
  - 2. Lev. 10:1,2 — sin of presumption.
  - 3. More pertaining to our study:
    - a. Jer. 3:1-10
    - b. Joel 2:13,14 — extrapolate.
    - c. 1 Cor. 11:20-22, 27-29 — heart problem.
    - d. Romans 2:28,29 — extrapolate.
    - e. And, our text for this hour.
- B. Present day examples (application).
  - 1. Lack of attentiveness (cf. Acts 10:33).
    - a. Can't wait for sermon to end.
    - b. Mind elsewhere.
    - c. No involvement — Just come and take up space and leave thinking, "I did my duty for the week."
    - d. Don't speak, don't smile, sigh, don't listen, sleep, watch the clock, rolling eyes, etc.
    - e. "As long as I take the Lord's supper I'm ok."
  - 2. Act one way when at home and another when come in to worship God and expect Him to accept it.
    - a. 1 Peter 1:13-25.
      - 1) Focus — v.13.
      - 2) Faithful in every matter of life — vs.14-16.
      - 3) What's the motivation? — vs.17-19.
    - b. Heb. 10:19-25
      - 1) True heart.
      - 2) Faith without doubt.
      - 3) Cleansed.
    - c. Watching things, listening to things, language.
    - d. Company kept — 1 Cor. 15:33.
  - 3. Heart problem. Each act of worship must involve the heart:
    - a. Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:16 — singing.
    - b. Gal. 4:16 — reception of God's word.
    - c. 2 Cor. 9:6,7 — giving.
    - d. 1 Cor. 11:20-22, 27-29 — Lord's supper.
    - e. 1 Cor. 14:15 — prayer.
  - 4. Heresy. (All dealt with in other lessons).
    - a. Additions.
    - b. Ignore authority.
    - c. Binding where God has not bound.

**IV. PREVENTION.**

- A. Have aspiration/conviction — desire to do what is right.
- B. Have right attitude. (Neh. 8; Read — React)
- C. Having hearts focused and kept pure.  
Matt. 15:18-20; James 1:14,15; 1 Peter 1:22

**CONCLUSION:**

1. Throughout the course of this study we have shown:
  - a. What vain worship is.
  - b. Biblical examples of such.
  - c. Various ways we could be guilty of it.
  - d. Ways to prevent it.
2. Not only must we worship God by the prescribed method, but it must be done with the proper disposition of the heart, and not to be seen of men.
3. Matthew 23:25-28. Let not this be said of any of us.

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## **Sinful Innovations in Worship**

*Gilbert Gough*

1. By "sinful" we mean any action or attitude that is a violation of the law of God (I John 3:4).
2. By "innovation" we mean "1. The act of innovating. 2. That which is newly introduced; a change." (The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language)
3. By "worship" we mean "praise, adoration, veneration of Deity."
4. There are certain innovations of man that we appreciate: computers and the Internet, cell phones, new technologies in television viewing.
5. However, innovations of man have no place in the worship of God because God has legislated the how, when, where, why and who of worship (Matt. 4:10; John 4:24).
6. There is an authority problem, perhaps a rebellious problem, when it comes to inventing new ways to worship God.
  - a. The real issue with sinful innovations of man in worship is the rejection of God's Word. It is like:
  - b. The period of the Judges — *"In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes"* (Judges 17:7; cf. 21:25).
  - c. What Paul wrote — *"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God"* (Rom. 10:3).
7. Jesus recognized only two sources of authority in spiritual matters (Matt. 21:23-27).
  - a. Despite the dilemma of the chief priests and elders, the answer to whether John's baptism was from heaven or of men was obvious.

- b. The authority for John's baptism was from heaven (John 1:6; Matt. 3:14, 15; Luke 7:29, 30).
- c. Likewise, innovations of man are either from heaven or of men. Do these innovations rest upon Divine authority or human whims?
- d. In the first of the man-originated innovations we shall examine, we shall see God's authority principle and man's rejection of it.

## DISCUSSION:

### I. MECHANICAL INSTRUMENTS OF MUSIC IN WORSHIP.

A. Man's attitude toward the Bible will determine if man will use innovations of his own choosing in worship to God or if he will be determined to follow God's directive.

1. In the Reformation Period, there was a contrasting attitude toward Bible authority between Martin Luther and John Zwingli.

a. Luther held the view that whatever was not specifically forbidden in the Scriptures might be employed in Christian worship.

b. Zwingli believed in the absolute authority of the Scriptures, affirming that what the Scriptures did not authorize was forbidden in Christian worship.

2. This contrast caused disturbance to unity of Christians on into the Restoration Period of the church with the introduction of the melodeon into the worship of the church in Midway, Kentucky around 1860.

3. In 1868, Benjamin Franklin (the preacher, not the politician) guessed there were 10,000 congregations and not over 50 were using mechanical instruments.

4. By 1906, the church would divide itself from the Christian church that had denominationalized itself which advocated precisely what Martin Luther taught.

B. Using mechanical instruments of music in worship is absolutely sinful because there is absolutely NO biblical authority for their use.

1. First, we must have authority for all we do in worship to God and in our daily living before Him (Col. 3:17).

2. Second, using mechanical instruments in worship to God is not of faith, and "*whatsoever is not of faith is sin*" (Rom. 14:23; cf. II Cor. 5:17; Rom. 10:17; Heb. 11:6).

3. Third, Jesus set the divine standard for acceptable worship of God in John 4:24 ( "in spirit and in truth"), but there is no truth taught regarding the use of a mechanical instrument being used in worship.

4. Fourth, the main argument, whether realized or not, for the use of musical instruments is "I like it, therefore I

am going to use it", thus, showing they are pleasing self rather than God (Heb. 11:6; Gal. 1:10; I Thess. 4:1).

- C. The kind of music God desires, yea authorizes, in worship is congregational singing as reflected in the reciprocal pronouns as used in Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16.

## II. USING WOMEN TO LEAD IN WORSHIP.

- A. Eventually, social, moral and religious tendencies of the world will sooner or later affect the Lord's church.

1. The Equal Rights/Women's Liberation Movement of the past quarter of a century has had an impact not only on society, but on the church as well.
2. This movement has caused many women to clamor for equal positions in the organization and worship leadership in many denominations and even in the church.
3. There is a steady movement in the liberal Independent Christian Church. They appoint women as deaconesses, who along with deacons, equally vote with elders. Women are employed as choir directors, song directors, soloists, and youth directors.
4. The Lord's church historically, has scripturally resisted allowing women to occupy public leadership roles in the church's organization and public worship where men are present because such innovations are without biblical authority, in fact, there are explicit prohibitive passages regarding such.

- B. There are three principal passages on the subject of the women's role which refute the liberal's escapades.

### 1. I Tim. 2:8-15

- a. It is usually conceded that Paul is describing a public worship setting, an assembly, yet Paul sets forth the principle that applies "everywhere" (v.8).
- b. The word for "men" in verse 8 is *aner* and is distinctive in its masculinity as Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words states it "is never used of the female sex."
- c. In the previous verses, Paul had referred to men in general (vs.1,4,5) *anthropos* (meaning mankind).
- d. The role of men is to pray, lead in prayer (v.8);
- e. But the role of women is addressed in verses 9-12. Summary as follows:
  - 1) Modest in dress, adornment, and behavior;
  - 2) Rather than leading prayer or teaching in men's presence, they are to learn in quietness (silence) and submission.
  - 3) They are forbidden to teach (deliver a discourse) including preaching.



- 4) They are forbidden to place themselves in a role of authority or “have dominion” (ASV) over a man.
  - 5) They are to be in quietness. It does not mean absolute silence, but has to do with inner tranquility, meekness, not boisterous or disturbing.
2. I Cor. 11:2-16
- a. Some brethren believe this is a public worship setting, but not as definite as I Timothy 2; others believe that it is a mixed gathering not on the Lord’s Day for edification; others believe two meetings are discussed, one for the men and another for the women; and others contend the miraculous was going on in this text and does not apply to us today.
  - b. Whatever type of meeting is being discussed, there are scriptural and lasting principles to be learned.
    - 1) Paul’s teaching is part of the “ordinances” (tradition) which he had already delivered to them of which they were to “keep” (v.2; hold fast, ASV).
    - 2) V.3 teaches God is the head of Christ, Christ is the head of man, and man is the head of woman.
    - 3) Man is not to dishonor his head (Christ) and woman is not to dishonor (man) (vs.4,7).
    - 4) While the veil is embedded in the custom and culture of the time (the veil today says nothing of whether she honors her husband or not), the idea of the subordination of woman to man is not embedded in either culture or custom; it is based upon God’s order of things revealed in the Scriptures going back to creation.
    - 5) The significant principle is that women are not to exercise authority or dominion over men in this spiritual setting.
3. I Cor. 14:26-36
- a. This assembly is obviously a mixed assembly where prophesying, speaking in tongues and interpretation of tongues were being done.
  - b. Again, some good brethren think that since miraculous gifts are being used and we cannot duplicate that today, therefore what this passage says has no application to us.
  - c. However, aspects of scriptural worship were being used which suggests a worship service “in the church” (cf. vs.28,33,35). [All first century worship services had to use miracles for edification because the word of God was not yet in its completed form.]
    - 1) There was edifying by use of prophecy (vs.3,26).
    - 2) There was praying (v.15).
    - 3) There was singing (v.15).

- 4) There was the Lord's supper in the age of miracles (11:17-34).
- 5) There was giving in the age of miracles (16:1, 2).
- d. Yes, we cannot duplicate the miraculous of the first century, but we can understand certain abiding principles that bear on men and women's roles in the worship setting.
  - 1) Verse 33 explains that these instructions apply universally; "in all churches."
  - 2) Verse 34: women are to keep silence; they are not permitted to speak but to be in subjection.
  - 3) Then v.35 says rather than speaking out of turn over their prophet husbands, women are told to ask their husbands at home.
  - 4) Then, application to all women is given at the end of v.35: "*It is a shame for women to speak in the church*" or assume a leadership role in the presence of the men.
4. Summarizing: The core principle is evident in these passages pertaining to the worship assembly; God has assigned the role of leadership to men and has forbidden women to occupy such leadership roles.
  - a. We are not always given the reasons why God orders the things He does.
  - b. Sometimes God's reasons are given and here are some reasons why women are to be in subjection.
    - 1) First inspired reason as given in I Timothy 2 & I Corinthians 11: Man (Adam) created before woman (Eve): God's order from creation.
    - 2) Second inspired reason is Adam was not deceived (beguiled, ASV) by Satan, but Eve was and fell into transgression (I Tim. 2:14).
      - a) Did not Adam sin also? Yes! We might not understand why sin entering in the world prevails on this principle, but it does.
      - b) Woman introduced sin into the world, and immediately God told her, "*thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee*" (Gen. 3:16). Here is the link between sin brought into the world and woman being in subjection to the man.
    - 3) Third inspired reason: Man is the head of woman as a part of God's divine order (I Cor. 11:3; cf. Eph. 5:22-23).
    - 4) Fourth inspired reason: In I Cor. 11:9, "*Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.*"

5) Remember, Paul's teachings *"are the commandments of the Lord"* (I Cor. 14:37).

### III. DIVIDED ASSEMBLIES.

- A. Generally, when we think of divided assemblies we generally think of "children's church" or "junior worship" where the children are removed from the assembly to have their own "worship service."
1. But for purposes for this lesson, we speak of "children's church" and the other innovations of brethren who have "divided the assembly" (this is accommodative language, because it is an absurdity to speak of a "divided assembly;" contradiction of terms) by children's church, house churches, etc.
  2. There is absolutely no authority for tampering with and changing God's arrangement for the saints assembling themselves together (Heb. 10:25).
- B. The early church assembled together as God prescribed.
1. They assembled together for the Lord's supper (I Cor. 11:20) and they were condemned when they had division (I Cor. 11:17-20).
  2. Paul also wrote regarding the worship assembly in I Cor. 14:23, 26, *"If therefore the whole church be come together into one place...when ye come together..."*
  3. In Hebrews 2:12, the Scripture says, *"Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."*
  4. The Hebrews writer followed up by commanding, *"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching"* (Heb. 10:24,25).
  5. The approved action is seen in the church: *"came together to break bread"* (Acts 20:7), *"where they were gathered together"* (Acts 20:8).
- C. If the church continues to divide itself, it will be to its undoing.
1. How many times can the church divide until it no longer is a congregation?
  2. How are elders to oversee the flock if the flock is divided? Are we going to divide the eldership?

### CONCLUSION:

1. Where and when will the sinful innovations of men cease? When men are determined to return to God's plan and pattern for New Testament worship.

2. Special singing groups (like A capella) and choirs, quartets, duets and solos are performance based. They want to entertain and make MONEY and claim they are doing this to the glory of God. The denominations have been doing this for years and decades. Where is God's authority for these practices?
3. Theatrical, dramatic performances (to a great degree) and skits and puppeteering are practiced all over the brotherhood. The Bible teaches to "preach the word" (II Tim. 4:2), it does not say "act it out." Where is the authority for this innovation?
4. Every act of worship authorized by God (singing, praying, Lord's supper, teaching, and giving) have been perverted by the innovations of man.

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## The Nature of Worship

*Roger D. Campbell*

1. Man is, by nature, a worshiping being. He may engage in false worship, or he may engage in God-pleasing worship, but in general, human beings are worshipers.
2. Men who engage in worship are often extremely sincere, devoted, and zealous in their worship activities. Yet, if they are not familiar with what the Bible reveals about worship, or they choose to disregard what they know God's word says about worship, then eventually they will have false concepts about worship that will lead them into false worship itself.
3. God desires that all humans be "true worshipers" (John 4:23).
4. To say there are "true worshipers" implies "true worship."
5. Let us be clear on this point: true worship from true worshipers requires true understanding of the true nature of worship.
6. In view of the above point, it is obvious that it is in order for us to consider from a biblical standpoint the nature of worship.
7. "Nature" is defined as "the inherent character or basic constitution of a person or thing: essence" [*Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*, 1988].
8. We will, in fact, be examining the nature of *true* worship, i.e., worship that is Scriptural and thus, pleasing to God.
9. If a person that is unfamiliar with the nature of true worship were to ask, "Just what is worship like, and how can it be characterized," how could we answer? Let's see.

**TRUE WORSHIP...**

**DISCUSSION:****I. IS PRIMARILY A SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY.**

- A. In part, worship does involve some physical aspects.
  - 1. With our ears, we hear the word (Rev. 2:7).
  - 2. With our mouths, we eat bread (1 Cor. 11:23,24).
  - 3. With our eyes, we read the Scriptures (Rev. 1:3).
  - 4. With our hands, we turn Bibles and songbooks.
- B. We recognize that some physical matters can influence the worship environment, such as heat or cold, flickering lights, the noise of thunder, or a loud baby.
- C. Yet, we must never lose sight of the fact that worship is primarily a spiritual activity.
  - 1. It is directed to the God of heaven, Who is a spiritual being (Rev. 4:8,11; John 4:24).
  - 2. “Come let us worship...” (Psalm 95:6).
- D. Worship is to be offered “in spirit” (John 4:24) — from a heart that is in love with the One we worship (Mark 12:30).

**II. IS ALWAYS A MATTER OF THE LESSER (MAN) WORSHIPING THE GREATER (GOD).**

- A. God is the Almighty (Gen. 17:1), the Creator of heaven and earth (Acts 17:24).
- B. In contrast, man is not omnipotent, and is a created being. Thus, man needs to learn his place.
- C. Man must see himself, not as Jehovah’s equal, and certainly not His superior, but as lower than He is.
- D. In view of this, man needs to come before God with humility and a submissive spirit (Luke 18:13,14).
- E. Worship is a privilege, is it not? How amazing that God is interested in each one that worships Him! Worship is a duty (John 4:23,24), but also an honor.

**III. IS A SERIOUS ENDEAVOR.**

- A. Remember Nadab and Abihu? (Lev. 10:1,2)
- B. Worship is not nap time or play time. It is not entertainment or “performance” time. It is also not a “Hee-Haw” comedy hour.
- C. When we break bread in remembrance of Jesus’ death, is that not a serious matter? (1 Cor. 11:20-22,26-28)
  - 1. The sin that led to His death was a serious matter.
  - 2. The pain He endured was serious pain.
  - 3. Our reconciliation to God was brought about by the blood of the Lamb (Rom. 5:8-11). That is serious!
- D. What about prayer? Is it not a serious matter when we speak to our heavenly Father? (Matt. 6:9,13)
- E. Preaching the word and the study that it involves — is this not a serious matter? (cf. Neh. 8:1-3,5; 9:3)
- F. Singing spiritual songs is a serious affair, too.

1. We praise the Lord when we sing (Heb. 2:12).
2. We speak when we sing (Eph. 5:19).
3. We teach and admonish when we sing (Col. 3:16).

#### IV. IS A MENTAL ACTIVITY.

- A. Worship is to be from the heart (Mark 7:6,7; Eph. 5:19).
- B. It requires conscious effort.
  1. We cannot worship when we are asleep or even half-asleep, fading in and out.
  2. When we worship we are not a robot or on "auto pilot," just going through the motions.
- C. It requires concentration (1 Cor. 11:24,25).
- D. It requires continuous focus on what we are doing. What is worship? Paying homage to God.
- E. Because worship is a mental activity, we need to strive to be mentally prepared for worship ahead of time.

#### V. IS AN INDIVIDUAL OR PERSONAL ACTIVITY.

- A. In an assembly, we offer our worship together. Also, as a family, we might worship together at home.
- B. Yet, in every instance of true worship, whether such involves one person or many, it is still an individual matter. Each person must offer his/her own worship.
- C. Who is commanded to sing? (Col. 1:2; 3:16).
- D. Who is commanded to take the Lord's supper? (1 Cor. 11:23-25)
- E. Who is commanded to give? (1 Cor. 16:1,2)
- F. Worship cannot be done by proxy. "I won't be there, so you go ahead and worship for me," how 'bout that?
- G. What do "true worshipers" do?
  1. They worship.
  2. In order to be a true worshiper, I must worship.
  3. If I do not worship, and thus am not a true worshiper, then I cannot please the Lord.
- H. When we worship we are active, not passive.
  1. Worship is not something that is done "to" us or "for" us, rather it is what we offer or give to God.
  2. In worship, we are giving praise and glory to the Lord, as if we were before His very throne.
- I. God's children do not come together to observe others worship, but to "join in" the worship themselves.
- J. *I personally* must be "into" worship every time.

#### VI. IS A VOLUNTARY ACTIVITY.

- A. We are commanded to worship, but not forced.
- B. There must be a *willingness* to worship (Luke 5:5).
- C. In addition, there must also be a *desire* to worship (Psalm 122:1; 84:2,10; 2 Cor. 9:6,7).

- D. Worship is more than a “got to” affair. It is a “get to” matter.
- E. When I choose *not* to assemble with the saints, that, too, is a voluntary action — the wrong kind!

## VII. CAN INVOLVE REPETITION.

- A. In one sense, our worship to God is a case of “same old, same old.” Why? Because there are no “new” scriptural acts of worship for us in our generation.
- B. According to the N.T. pattern, Christians engage in the same five acts of worship each first day of the week.
- C. Some have suggested that to partake of the Lord’s supper each Sunday would cause it to become too common place, and it would lose its meaning.
  - 1. Do singing and praying lose their significance when we engage in them each Lord’s day? No.
  - 2. Have we come to dislike the thought of depositing a check in the bank because we do it on a weekly basis, so it is repetitious for us? I don’t think so!
- D. “We sing the same old songs over and over.” Why do some people listen to some popular songs over and over? Because they love them. So, it is not a question of repetition, but rather of one’s outlook.
- E. “But traditional worship is so boring.” Enter “contemporary worship” with its juiced up approach.
  - 1. Worship is either scriptural or unscriptural, period.
  - 2. New songs are not necessarily better. The same is true of some that are old-time favorites.
  - 3. God saw fit to give us a pattern for Sunday worship that includes five acts of worship, no more, and no less. What to do? Let us be satisfied with the pattern! (cf. Matt. 5:6; John 6:35). Let us come humbly before Him (James 4:10).
- F. Question: When we have repetition in the patriotic songs we sing, do we become bored? Do they get old? If not, why should repetition in spiritual songs bother us?
- G. Question: Do we grow weary of talking to our same old parents on the phone? If not, they why should we be disenchanted by the idea of praying in each assembly?
- H. In view of the above, two thoughts stand out:
  - 1. In some aspects of worship, there is repetition because the Lord’s pattern is limited to five acts.
  - 2. Repetition is not detestable. It is not “a bummer.”

## CONCLUSION:

- 1. We have noted that true worship...
  - a. Is primarily a spiritual activity;
  - b. Is always a matter of the lesser worshiping the greater;
  - c. Is a serious endeavor;

- d. Is a mental activity;
  - e. Is a personal or individual activity;
  - f. Is a voluntary activity;
  - g. Can involve repetition.
2. May we always look at the opportunity to worship the God of heaven as a great privilege and glorious occasion.
- 

## Giving as Worship

I Cor. 16:1, 2

*Guyton Montgomery*

1. One of the greatest privileges offered to man is the opportunity to come before God and worship Him.
  - a. Many do not recognize the value of this opportunity and often forsake worshiping God in order to pursue other interests.
  - b. Others treat worship as a play time, nap time, or as a necessary evil.
2. Worship can be acceptable or unacceptable.
  - a. Consider the worship of Cain & Abel (Gen. 4:1-5). Both came before God in order to worship and offered up sacrifices. Abel's worship was acceptable while Cain's was not.
  - b. Consider the words of Christ. "*But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*" (Matt. 15:9). If worship is in vain, it is of no profit and hence, is unacceptable to God.
3. For worship to be acceptable to God we must worship Him in spirit and in truth (John 4:24).
4. It is essential that we examine each aspect of our worship, according to the scriptures, and ensure we are worshiping in the proper spirit and truth.
  - a. This is especially true when it comes to our giving.
  - b. Out of the five acts of worship, "giving" is probably the least thought about by the majority of Christians.

### DISCUSSION:

#### I. PRAISE.

- A. Giving as Worship in the Old Testament (Rom. 15:4).
  1. The first instance of worship involved giving (Gen. 4:3-8).
  2. The Holy Spirit confirmed that worship to God involved giving (1 Chron. 16:27-29).
  3. God demanded giving as a part of worship to Him with the sacrifices in the Old Testament.



- a. The burnt offering (Lev. 1:1-17).
  - b. The meat offering, peace offering (Lev. 3:1-17).
  - c. The sin offering, trespass offering (Lev. 4-5:19).
  - d. The incense.
- B. Giving as Worship in the New Testament.
- 1. The wise men came to Jesus to give him gifts as a part of their worship (Matt. 2:11).
  - 2. The specific command is given in 1 Cor. 16:1,2.
    - a. Paul wrote the church at Corinth commanding them to “lay by in store” upon the first day of the week.
    - b. Questions and answers should be considered.
      - 1) **Why** the commandment to give? For the collection of the saints. This does not mean we are not able to use the collection for other areas of work (Gal. 6:10). See point below entitled “provisions.”
      - 2) **When** were they to give? Upon the first day of the week?
      - 3) **Why** the first day of the week? Because that was the day the church assembled to worship (Acts 20:7). See point 2 under drawing it all together.
    - c. Drawing it all together.
      - 1) They were already gathering together upon the first day of the week in order to worship.
      - 2) Paul instructs them that while they are worshipping, they are to make “laying by in store” (contribution, giving) a part of their worship.
- B. As an act of worship, giving is governed by a set of laws.

## II. PRINCIPLES.

- A. Periodic (1 Cor. 16:2a).
  - 1. *“Upon the first day of the week.”*
  - 2. It is not a spontaneous, whenever you feel like it, event.
  - 3. It is to be each first day of the week.
    - a. The Greek word *“kata”* is used in the distributive case which indicates it is each and every first day of the week.
    - b. This is also how we know we are to partake of the Lord’s supper each first day of the week.
- B. Personal (1 Cor. 16:2b).
  - 1. *“Let every one of you...”*
  - 2. Each individual has the responsibility to give back to the Lord that which he has prospered (II Cor. 9:7).
- C. Purposed (1 Cor. 16:2c).
  - 1. *“...Lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him.”*
  - 2. This does not describe the individual that reaches into the pocket book or billfold as the basket is being passed around and pulls out whatever is there.

3. This involves knowing how much you have prospered from the Lord and giving back to the Lord as much as possible (Prov. 10:4, 22; II Cor. 9:6, 7).

D. Purely motivated.

1. *"So let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver"* (II Cor. 9:7b).
2. An individual should never give grudgingly (Deut. 15:7-11; Prov. 11:25; Rom. 12:8).
3. Compare Barnabas with Ananias and Sapphira (Acts. 4:36-5:11).

### III. PROVISIONS.

- A. It is important that one understands what is provided by their giving.

B. Fulfillment of Matt. 28:18-20 & Mark 16:15,16.

1. To go into all the world preaching the Gospel requires financial support. Bibles, correspondence courses, postage, songbooks, tracts. Airfares, advertising, etc
2. Muzzle not the ox that treadeth out the corn (Deut. 25:4). This applies to preachers (1 Cor. 9:1-15). This applies to elders (I Tim. 5:15-21).

C. Pay the bills.

D. Benevolence.

1. Christians have a responsibility to help those in need (Eph. 4:28; I Tim. 6:17-19). Consider the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). Consider what Christ said in Matthew 25: 31-46.
2. In order to perform these benevolent works, it is necessary to have financial support.

### IV. PROBLEMS.

- A. There are many misconceptions regarding our giving in worship. It is important for us to discuss these errors.

1. Our giving on Sunday is the same as tithing.

- a. Tithing is the "tenth part both of the produce of the land and of the increase of the flock, enjoined in the Mosaic law to be devoted by every Israelite to the servants of the sanctuary, and to the hospitable meals provided on the festivals for the poor and needy" (McClintock and Strong, Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature).
- b. Scriptures regarding tithes (Lev. 27:30-33; Num. 18:21-32; Deut. 12:5-18; 14:29; 26:12-14).
- c. Tithes, as a part of the Old Law, were done away with when the Old Law was put away (Col. 2:11-16; Gal. 1:6-9, 2:21, 5:4).

2. Our giving on Sunday entitles us to run the church.

- a. It is the elders who have the responsibility of overseeing the work of the church (Acts 20:28; Eph. 4:11; I Peter 5:1, 2).
- b. We are to support the elders and the work of the church. It is sinful if we withhold our contribution or give our contribution in order to manipulate the elders into doing what we want!
- 3. The more we give the more spiritual we are.
  - a. The more spiritual one, the more they will try to give.
  - b. However, just because one gives a large sum does not mean they are spiritual.
  - c. Consider the example of the widow and the two mites (Mark 12:42-44; Luke 21:1-4 cf. II Cor. 8:12).
- 4. Our giving on Sunday exempts us from faithful service.
  - a. Many think they can make up for neglecting to live the Christian life through their contribution.
  - b. The Lord expects EVERYONE to be faithful to him (Heb. 9:14, 12:28; Titus 1:16; 1 Peter 2:9).

**CONCLUSION:**

- 1. Each one should want their worship to be pleasing to God.
- 2. It is important that we examine each aspect of our worship to ensure it is acceptable to God.
- 3. Let us always look toward our giving in the proper spirit and as a privilege and not a necessity (2 Cor. 9:7).

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## Worship In Spirit

*Tom Snyder*

*“God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24).*

- 1. As we study things pertaining to worship, there is one small word that makes this study of immense importance: **“must.”**
  - a. The word “must” takes it out of the optional and makes it a necessity; makes it imperative.
  - b. Makes what an imperative?
    - 1) Must worship — if this were all that was said, then there would be great freedom in worship — just so long as we worship;
    - 2) Must worship in spirit and in truth.
  - c. We have modifiers, spirit and truth, which tell us the manner of worship required of us.

- d. The conjunction "and" makes the two distinct but equally necessary.
2. Since God requires this of us we must have an adequate understanding of these terms.
3. This lesson will deal with — "worship in spirit."

## DISCUSSION:

### I. WORSHIP IN SPIRIT DETERMINED.

- A. We start with the background to this verse:
  1. The Samaritan woman at the well. John 4:6-7
  2. Jesus sparks her interest: by just speaking to her (v.9), offering "living water" (v.10).
  3. She soon perceives Jesus to be a prophet. vs.11-19
  4. Hence a question is asked concerning worship. v.20
- B. There is a discussion of the place of worship:
  1. "In this mountain" and "in Jerusalem" are the places under consideration.
  2. We have a choice given in the two prepositional phrases.
  3. These are very literal and definite locations at which men had been and were worshipping.
  4. Jesus said of these two places that: (vs.21-22)
    - a. One of ignorance, Mt. Gerizim, that is not established of God, but by man;
    - b. One of authority, Jerusalem, established by God.
- C. New place of worship. v.23
  1. The *time*: "Now is."
  2. The *class* of worship: It is "true worship."
  3. The *object* of worship: Worship directed to the Father.
  4. The *nature* of worship: It is in spirit and in truth.
  5. The *purpose* of worship: Worship the Father seeks.
- D. Reason of new place of worship. v.24
  1. God is a spirit not flesh.
  2. He is not restricted to a place.
  3. As the Gospel is to go into all the world to all people, a new worship not restricted to place will be required — one that suits the very nature of God.
- E. What must then be determined is how we get into spirit and into truth that we may worship as God would have us.

### II. WORSHIP IN SPIRIT DEFINED.

- A. The word "spirit" is used in a number of ways as it pertains to our discussion:
  1. The Bible speaks of "spirit" as it pertains to attitude or disposition:
    - a. Contrite spirit, Psalm 34:18
    - b. Right spirit, Psalm 51:10
    - c. Humble spirit, Prov. 29:23
    - d. Patient spirit, Eccl. 7:8

- e. Grieved spirit, Isa. 54:6
  - f. Broken spirit, Prov. 17:22
  - g. Spirit of whoredoms, Hosea 5:4
  - h. Haughty spirit, Prov. 16:18
  - i. Poor spirit, Matt. 5:3
2. The Bible speaks of “spirit” as it pertains to emotions or feelings:
- a. Grieved in spirit, Isa. 54:6.
  - b. Joyful spirit, Luke 10:21.
  - c. Troubled spirit, John 13:21.
  - d. Relieved spirit, Gen. 45:27.
  - e. Anguished spirit, Exodus 6:9.
  - f. Jealous spirit, Num. 5:14.
  - g. Sorrowful spirit, 1 Sam. 1:15.
  - h. Sad spirit, 1 Kings 21:5.
3. The Bible also reveals that this “spirit” is in our control.
- a. We can “rule” our “spirit,” Prov. 16:32; 25:28.
  - b. God told sinful Israel to change their old heart and spirit to a new heart and spirit, Ezek 18:31.
  - c. Paul told the Roman Christians to be “fervent in spirit,” Rom 12:11.
  - d. Anyone who says they can’t change their “spirit” to worship or even live in the manner of godliness is just ignorant of God’s righteousness

### III. WORSHIP IN SPIRIT DEVELOPED.

- A. The new “place” of worship — in spirit and in truth;
- 1. Preposition “in” is used again.
  - 2. The object of the preposition has changed, not in Jerusalem or any other place but, in spirit and in truth.
  - 3. This does not negate the physical aspects of worship. While we are in the flesh we are subject to worship according to the dictates of the flesh.
    - a. We meet together at a “place” to worship.
    - b. We sing songs.
    - c. We speak or we hear.
    - d. We partake of the physical elements i.e. unleavened bread and fruit of the vine.
- B. We have a “NEW” way of taking of these things.
- 1. While we meet at a location and have may a “church building,” these things are not holy. What is holy is the NEW temple, 1 Cor. 3:16-19.
  - 2. The songs we sing are of man but we have a NEW way of using them. The songs are to be spiritual songs with the instrument of the heart, Eph 5:19; Col 3:16.
  - 3. The words we speak and hear are also NEW (John 6:63). We are to proclaim only the oracles of God (1 Peter 4:11).

4. Even the monies (contribution) takes a NEW and better understanding. Paul spoke of this contrast (Rom. 15:26-27). But also the spirit of giving is given (2 Cor 9:7).
  5. The Lord's supper is NEW as is spoken by Jesus, (Matt. 26:29). The elements do not become spiritual by some miracle, but they speak of great spiritual things and the manner in which we partake is to be that which befits the spiritual nature of this feast of God (1 Cor. 11:25-29).
- C. We live in the flesh but our thinking is to be spiritual, and the nature of worship is to help us so think and practice this Christian life. And, if we cannot worship God in spirit, what makes us think we can ever be spiritual before the Father (1 Peter 2:5; 1 Cor. 3:1; Gal. 6:1).

#### IV. WORSHIP IN SPIRIT DESCRIBED.

- A. The Bible exemplifies the manner of worship:
1. Abel went in the "spirit" of faith, Gen. 4:4; Heb 11:4.
  2. Abraham went in "spirit" of faith, Gen. 22:1-14.
  3. David was glad to worship, Psalm 122:1.
  4. Hezekiah worshiped in the "spirit" of purity, 2 Chron. 29:5-7, 28-31.
  5. Josiah worshiped in the "spirit" of restoration, 2 Chron. 35:18.
- B. What is worship in Spirit?
1. It is one's attitude in worship.
  2. It is one's attitude about worship.
  3. It is one's emotion in worship.
  4. Not just being religious.
- C. Worship in spirit transcends the mundane:
1. It does not depend on social standing.
  2. It does not depend on wealth.
  3. It does not depend on male/female.
  4. It does not depend on health.
  5. It does not depend on popularity of Gospel.
- D. Worship in spirit does depend on:
1. One's relationship to God — you can't approach God just once a week, Rom. 12:1.
  2. One's relationship to sin — sin is to be dead and buried, James 1:27.
  3. One's relationship to truth — without truth the attitude cannot be as it ought to be, John 4:24.
  4. One's relationship to others — worship is personal, yet it is a cooperative effort, Matt. 5:23-24.
  5. Faith, Rom. 1:17; Heb. 11:6.
- E. There is a heart not right for worship:
1. The hypocrite, Matt. 6:5.
  2. The empty heart or "form" worship, Jer. 3:10.
  3. Carnal living, Amos 8:4.

4. No true desire, Amos 8:5.
5. In sin, Isa. 1:11-15.

**V. WHAT WORSHIP IN SPIRIT DEMANDS.**

- A. We have seen we are in control of our “spirit.”
- B. We have seen we are to have the proper “spirit.”
- C. What is left is how to have that “spirit.”
  1. This is found in a desire to follow the demands of God.
  2. If our desire is to please Him, we will seek out the ways and means of this true worship.
- D. True worship in spirit can be accomplished in these words.
  1. Give — the very concept of the “felt needs” in worship fails, Psalm 29:1-2.
  2. Fear — we don’t approach a daddy, a good buddy — we approach our creator and judge and a Father to be feared, Psalm 5:7.
  3. Unto — unto is a preposition that speaks of direction complementing the word “give.” We take from ourselves and give it to the Lord, Psalm 66:1-4.
  4. Before — this preposition speaks of our place, we worship not before the throne of self, pleasure, gods. We come before God, Psalm 86:9.
  5. Submission — submission is an attitude that will manifest itself in action. It also understands the place of man and the place of God. Hard heartedness cannot worship in spirit as God wants, Psalm 95:1-8.
  6. Exalt — this governs all things we say, do, and think in worship. All our songs, words, actions are controlled by this desire — to exalt God, Psalm 99:5.
  7. Holy — think of all the places we are “at” all week long (jobs, store, bank, etc.). How many of these are holy? Worship takes us to a place holy and reminds us we are to be holy, Psalm 99:7.

**CONCLUSION:**

1. God expects man to worship Him.
2. He expects this worship to be such as befits His holiness.
3. God, in His wisdom and love, has given the ways and means to fulfill this worship.
4. As such, we must seek this worship.
5. Never approach God in a flippant manner, but in the grace and demeanor befitting our great creator.



# Worship In Truth

John 4:23,24

*Jared Knoll*

1. Amos 5:21-27 depicts a very dark time in Israel as their worship was rejected.
  - a. They had the wrong way of worship — offered sacrifice with leaven (4:5; c.f. Lev. 2:11; 7:11).
  - b. They had the wrong place of worship — Bethel and Gilgal (4:5).
  - c. They had the wrong object — Molech, Chiun (5:26) also they had the golden calves at Dan and Bethel.
  - d. They were the wrong kind of people — dishonest, deceiving, wicked (8:4-6).
2. God refused the worship of His own people and used strong language to depict that refusal: I hate, despise, I will not smell, I will not accept, I will not regard, Take thou away, I will not hear, Therefore = captivity.
3. What a terrible place to be today, to think that God would not:
  - a. Hear us when we praise in song.
  - b. Open His ear when we pray (nor have Jesus to intercede).
  - c. Sup with us when we sup (c.f. Matt. 26:29).
  - d. Be present when we come together (Matt. 18:20).
  - e. Bless or accept our offering as we give of our prospering.
4. The fact is, there happens to be much worship that God refuses today, because He does not find in all places and among all who attempt to worship, worshipers worshiping in spirit and in truth (John 4:23,24).
5. Our task at this time is to understand the concept of worshiping in truth, the goal of which is to comprehend and practice coupling with worshiping in spirit that we might be true worshipers never refused of God.

## DISCUSSION:

- I. **EXPOSITION OF THE TEXT WITH EMPHASIS ON THE PRIMARY TERMS (John 4:23,24).**
  - A. The text is a familiar one to many as Jesus sits beside Jacob's well and teaches a Samaritan woman.
    1. It is a perfect example of personal evangelism.
    2. It was the foundation which made such occasion as Acts 8:5-13.
    3. By means of teaching, Jesus had led this woman to inquire into the question of worship. Her's was as to where and Jesus directed her mind to the who and how.
  - B. The principle terms:
    1. God is spirit — not bound upon Mt. Gerizim or a temple in Jerusalem; nor to be worshiped with men's hands as



though he needed anything (Acts 17:24-26; Psalm 50:8-14). As spirit God must be worshiped in accordance with His nature. Thus:

2. Worship in spirit and truth.
  - a. Worship — from the Greek “*proskuneo*” – “homage rendered to God and the ascended Christ” (Thayer’s Greek Lexicon, as used in the text); “to make obeisance, do reverence to” (Vine’s Dictionary).
  - b. This worship is described — the prepositional phrase(s) function as an adverb to tell how we are to worship. It is rendered as two prepositional phrases in the King James Version when it is actually one, joining the two as one idea. (\* Hendiadys - “one by means of two. Two words employed, but only one thing or idea, intended.” A figure of speech used to emphasize the point).
  - c. It is worship that accords with the nature of God, spiritually. This does not “spiritualize” the worship in the modern sense of the term because biblically, truly spiritual people have the right motives and actions before God, worship included.
  - d. We often conclude that “in spirit” has reference to the attitude, motive or condition of the heart, while “in truth” has reference to accomplishing the activities of worship in accordance with the word of God.
  - e. God has never separated the heart from the action when it comes to doing His will in any matter. It is always man that makes such separation either by departing in heart or departing in action.
- C. Our lesson focuses on accomplishing the activities of worship in accordance with the word of God.
  1. What is the form of worship acceptable to God?
  2. How does God’s word direct us to worship?
  3. Another lesson has already dealt with the condition of the heart, the motive or attitude.

## II. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR WORSHIPING IN TRUTH.

- A. Guideline #1. We must do all God has commanded us to do.
  1. Consider Cain and Abel (Gen. 4:1-7; Heb 11:4; Jude 11)
    - a. They both sacrificed. Only Abel’s was respected.
    - b. The bible is very general regarding Cain’s offering – as a tiller (farmer) he offered of his fruit.
    - c. Abel, however, offered the first (all belonging to God) and the fat thereof (the best to be offered).
    - d. Abel offered by faith. Cain did not.
  2. Consider the tabernacle (Exodus 25-31)

- a. It was a place where God could meet his people (Exodus 25:8); a place where his people could approach Him (Exodus 25:2).
- b. For this to take place, all things had to be done according to the pattern (Exodus 25:9).
3. Consider the days of Josiah (II Kings 22:1-23:28).
  - a. Josiah worked to restore the temple (the place was important).
  - b. They found the book of the law of the Lord (22:8); read it (22:10); the fathers had not done all according to the commands of God and thus aroused the wrath of God (22:11-13; 16-17); Josiah pledged to do all the law of the Lord demanded and received the pleasure of God (22:18-20; 23:3); He began by cleansing the land and then kept the Passover (23:4-20; 21).
- B. Guideline #2. We must not do anything God has not said do.
  1. This includes explicit exclusions (Exodus 20:4,5; 32:7,8).
  2. This would include the silence of the scriptures — no authority (consider II Sam. 6:1-11 - David's "new cart" and Uzzah's death).
  3. Consider Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10:1-2).
    - a. They offered incense at the wrong time. They offered between Aaron's sacrifice (Lev. 9) and the meal when they were only authorized to offer in the morning and evening.
    - b. They offered incense with fire from the wrong place. Fire was to come from the brazen altar (Lev. 6:13).
  4. Consider Jeroboam's golden calves (II Kings 12:25-13:6).
    - a. He knew what God commanded, but his priorities were on his own power.
    - b. He did it his own way.
    - c. God pronounced his rebuke and pronounced punishment.

### III. SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR WORSHIPING IN TRUTH.

- A. We must worship the right object — God (John 4:23,24).
  1. It is not about us, what we like, what makes us feel good or what we think is good. We are not the object of worship.
  2. It is not for our self-satisfaction, self-expression or entertainment
  3. It is not about or for our fellow man (Acts 10:25,26; Matt. 15:9). It is not for praising the abilities of men or to put people on display.
  4. It is about He who is worthy of worship (Psalm 99:5; Rev. 4:10,11; 5:12; Matt. 4:10; Rev. 22:8,9).
- B. We must worship in the right place — the church (Acts 2:41-42,47; Eph 3:21).

- C. We must by the right kind of people — faithful.
  - 1. Notice what Jesus taught the woman just prior to the teaching on worship (4:16-18).
  - 2. Amos 8:4-10; 5:21-27 — worship unacceptable from unjust people.
- D. We must worship with the prescribed acts.
  - a. Sing with the spirit and with the understanding (I Cor. 14:15; Eph 5:19) — remember God said sing but there is silence regarding instruments (no authority) — thus not acceptable.
  - b. Pray with the spirit and with the understanding (I Cor. 14:15; Acts 2:42).
  - c. Partake of the Lord’s supper in remembrance of Christ’s suffering and death (Matt. 26:26-28; Acts 2:42; 20:7; I Cor. 11:20-29).
  - d. Give as we have been prospered (I Cor 16:1,2; II Cor 9:6,7).
  - e. Preaching and hearing of God’s word (Acts 2:42; 20:7).
- E. We must worship at the right time.
  - 1. The Lord’s supper and giving of our means must be accomplished on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:1,2).
  - 2. We must consider the appointed times (Hebrews 10:25).

**CONCLUSION:**

- 1. We cannot separate worshiping in spirit from worshiping in truth.
- 2. Spiritual people will worship spiritually — with the right heart, right object, right place, right acts and right time.
- 3. Are you the type of worshiper God is seeking?

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## Will Worship

*Windell R. Fikes*

- 1. *“Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and severity to the body; but are not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh.” (Col. 2:23, 1901 ASV)*  
*“Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.” (Col. 2:23, KJV)*
- 2. Will-worship is worship which originates in the mind of man. Will-worship is human designed and offered by man to demonstrate and show his, man’s wisdom. Will-worship does not

meet God's standard and is therefore not pleasing. Neither is it acceptable unto Jehovah. Will-worship is worship that *did not, does not now, nor will ever* please our Lord.

## DISCUSSION:

### I. DEFINITION:

- A. "Will-worship" the compound "*ethelothreskia*" is found only here in the New Testament. (Ralph Earl; *Word Meanings in the New Testament*; Hendrickson Pub.; 2nd Printing, August, 1997; Col. 2:23; pg. 357) "will-worship" **voluntary, arbitrary worship**, ... (A.V. *will-worship*) i.e. worship which one devises and prescribes for himself, contrary to the contents and nature of the faith which ought to be directed to Christ; said of the misdirected zeal and practices of the ascetics; Col. 2:23; (Thayer pg. 168). "**In will-worship**" (*en ethelothreskiai*); This word occurs nowhere else and was probably coined by Paul after the pattern of *ethelodouleia*, to describe the voluntary worship of angels (see 2:18). (A.T. Robertson; *Word pictures in the New Testament*; The Epistle to the Colossians; Col. 2:23; pg. 499). "will-worship", "**self-made religion**" perhaps **would-be religion**; Col. 2:23; (Arndt & Gingrich; pg. 217).
- B. Will-Worship is "self-made" worship; "self-imposed" worship; "self-inspired efforts at worship"; "self-imposed service." Will-worship is "man-made", "self-pleasing", "self chosen", "after our own will"; worship originating with man, designed by man, offered by man, in a show or an attempt to demonstrate man's wisdom.

### II. CONTEXT (Col. 2:16-23)

- A. <sup>16</sup> "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a sabbath day: <sup>17</sup>which are a shadow of the things to come; but the body is Christ's. <sup>18</sup>Let no man rob you of your prize by a voluntary humility and worshipping of the angels, dwelling in the things which he hath seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, <sup>19</sup>and not holding fast the Head, from whom all the body, being supplied and knit together through the joints and bands, increasing with the increase of God. <sup>20</sup>If ye died with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, do ye subject yourselves to ordinances, <sup>21</sup>Handle not, nor taste, nor touch <sup>22</sup>(all which things are to perish with the using), after the precepts and doctrines of men? <sup>23</sup>Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and severity to the body; but are not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh." (Col. 2:16-23, 1901 ASV)

- B. Key phrases of the Context

1. “let no man therefore judge you” v.16
  2. “let no man rob you” v.18
  3. “and not holding fast the Head” v.19
  4. “if ye died with Christ” v.20
  5. “handle not, nor taste, nor touch” v.21
  6. “doctrines of men” v.22
  7. “things have a show of wisdom in will-worship” v.23
- C. Paul’s apostolic instruction to the Colossians.
1. Christ nailed the law to the cross “*and hath taken it out of the way*” (Col. 2:14).
  2. The Colossians heard, believed and obeyed the gospel (Col. 1:21-23)
  3. Being in Christ (vs.3,5,6,7,9,10,11,12,13,17,20), they were freed from Moses’ law (2: 14-17; Col. 1:18-20).
  4. Since you are free, let no man “decide or give judgment against you” (A.T. Robertson) in:
    - a. meat; drink; feast day; new moon or sabbath day. v.16
    - b. or rob you by “voluntary humility” (delighting in self-abasement); or worship of angels; dwelling in the things which he hath seen; puffed up by his fleshly mind. v.18
    - c. Touch not; taste not nor handle doctrines of men. v.21
    - d. Men’s teachings and their knowledge will perish. v.22
  5. This “show of humility” and will worship is of “no value” or safeguard against the indulgences of the flesh. v.23

### III. BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF WILL WORSHIP.

#### A. Old Testament

1. Cain “brought forth the fruit of the ground” a “self-chosen” sacrifice (Gen. 4:3; cf. Heb. 11:4).
  - a. God rejected Cain’s offering (Gen. 4:5).
  - b. Cain’s offering because it was not by faith (Heb. 11:4).
  - c. God told Cain and Abel what to offer as a sacrifice, otherwise, Abel would not have known to offer a lamb, the firstling of his flock of sheep (Gen. 4:2-4).
  - d. Cain “chose his own” offering to worship God, hence “will-worship” and was condemned by God.
2. Nadab and Abihu “offered strange fire before Jehovah” (Lev. 10:1-4).
  - a. Fire which God had not commanded them. v.1
  - b. Fire came down from Jehovah and devoured (consumed) them and they died. v.2
  - c. Any change or substitute of God’s commands is “will-worship.”

#### B. New Testament

1. Pharisees — *"But in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts (commandments KJV) of men"* (Matt. 15:9).
  - a. Their worship of the Lord was an "empty show"!
  - b. Men who teach their own doctrines are "will-worshippers."
2. Judaistic teachers at Colossae and Laodicea (Col. 2:1, 8, 13-17, 20-22).
  - a. Jewish teachers who bind the Law of Moses and their traditions on New Testament Christians and the Gentile converts (Acts 15:1-35; Gal. 5:1-6; Col. 2:13-17, 20-22).
  - b. Gnostic philosophers are likely referred to in Col. 2:8,18-19; including the Judaistic teachers also in vs.20-23.

#### IV. PRESENT EXAMPLES OF "WILL WORSHIP."

- A. Mechanical Instruments added in worship.
  1. God commands singing, vocal music only (Matt. 26:30; Mark 14:26; Acts 16:25; Rom. 15:9; I Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 2:12; James 5:13)
  2. Adding to God's Word is self-pleasing "will-worship" (cf. Rev. 22:18).
- B. Women who speak, teach, lead prayer or serve the Lord's supper in the public assembly while men are present go beyond "that which is written."
  1. The Sacred Word reveals, *"But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man"*, I Tim. 2:12 (cf. Acts 4:18 for similar sentence structure).
- C. Heretical Doctrines Being Taught By Some Brethren.
  1. Baptism not essential to salvation (Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; I Peter 3:21).
  2. Grace only (Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 3:24).
  3. Not under law (John 1:17; Rom. 8:2).
  4. *After Life—A Glimpse of Eternity Beyond Death's Door* by F. LaGard Smith (new book, 2003, that advances a "not with on-going torment" kind of hell). Do the Scriptures teach an eternal, tormenting hell? (Matt. 25:46; Mark 9:48; Luke 16:24-25; Rev. 19:20, 20:10)
  5. Christians (salvation obtained) in denominationalism.
    - a. The "Pious Unimmersed" defined. *"If we see a man whose prayer life is much more dedicated than our own; if his study of the Bible is more consistent than ours; if his speech is filled with the praise and adoration of God while ours is hesitant or silent; if his personal involvement in helping the fatherless and widows is greater than ours; if he loses his life while preaching the gospel in remote places; then who are*

*we to say that we, who have been immersed, and are christians but he is not?"* Hal Hougey, *The Quest for Understandable Hermeneutics*, Manna, a Division of Pacific Publishing Co., 1997, Concord, CA, pg. 589

#### V. HOW CAN WE AVOID "WILL-WORSHIP?"

- A. Submit and surrender to God's Authority; never man's. (Matt. 28:18-20)
- B. Accept the Bible as God's inspired revelation to man. (II Tim. 3:16-17; Gal. 1:11-12; II Peter 1:20-21)
- C. Accept the Bible as complete truth, adequate for salvation and man's every need. (II Tim. 3:16, 17)
- D. Approach God and hear his message with a good and honest heart. (Luke 8:15)
- E. Give yourself to reading, searching and diligent study. (I Tim. 4:13; Acts 17:11; II Tim. 2:15; Heb. 11:6; John 8:32)
- F. Demonstrate your love for God by obedience. (John 14:15; 15:14; Rom. 6:17-18)
- G. Be faithful, be committed to the Savior. (Acts 20:20, 26-27; II Tim. 4:7-8)

#### CONCLUSION:

1. Will-worship is all worship offered to God that originates with man, and is designed to please man, not God.
2. Man-made doctrines, i.e., "will-worship", that originates with man are *worthless*, in fact, *they are worse than worthless* because following "will-worship" and "self-pleasing worship" will damn one's soul.
3. "Self-service" to God will never deter any fleshly lust or indulgence.
4. All "will-worship" will be rejected by our Lord at that last great day when all men will account for his deeds done in his body. (II Cor. 5:10)

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## Preparing For Worship

*Clifford Dixon*

1. John 4:19-24
2. We are to be sure that the right items are in worship.
3. We should also be concerned with our spirits being directed to God in the right manner in worship.

**DISCUSSION:****I. PREPARE FOR WORSHIP BY UNDERSTANDING WHAT WORSHIP IS.**

- A. There are at least 13 words in Hebrew and Greek rendered worship in the King James Version of the Bible.
1. Hebrew *segad* used especially by Nebuchadnezzar when commanding the people to bow down and worship the great image he made. (Daniel 3)
  2. Hebrew *atsab* used in Jeremiah 44:19 concerning making and worshipping an idol.
  3. Hebrew *shachah* found 97 times in the Old Testament and means "to bow self down".
  4. Hebrew *abad* described by Young as "to do or serve" especially used of Baal worship (2 Kings 10:19-23).
  5. Greek *doxa* meaning "glory, esteem" speaking of men having worship or esteem in Luke 14:10.
  6. Greek *eusebeo* meaning "reverential, pious" used by Paul to the Athenians saying, "whom therefore ye ignorantly worship..." (Acts 17:23).
  7. Greek *therapeuo* meaning "to serve, cure, heal" — used by Paul in Acts 17:25 where it says that God is not "worshiped with men's hands."
  8. Greek *latreuo* meaning to worship publicly. Used by Paul saying that he worshiped the "God of my fathers" (Acts 24:14).
  9. Greek *neokoros* meaning a temple sweeper — used by the town clerk at Ephesus speaking of the city of Ephesus being worshipers of Diana (Acts 19:35).
  10. Greek *threskia* meaning religious observance — used by Paul to speak of worshipping angels (Col. 2:18).
  11. Greek *sebozomai* meaning to venerate, reckon venerable. Used in Rom. 1:25 concerning worshipping and serving the creature more than the Creator.
  12. Greek *proskuneo*. meaning to kiss toward. This is the main word for worship in the New testament. It is found 59 times, 24 of which are in Revelation and it is used in reference to worship of God, worship of the Beast, and worship of the Devil.
- B. Worship is Bowing and doing obeisance, and subjecting oneself to the object of worship. Theology defines it "as paying reverence to Deity."
1. Worship is: attitude of heart being expressed in certain items to God and which we render to God.
  2. It can be vain if it is according to the doctrines and commandments of men (Matt. 15:9).
  3. It can be directed to the wrong objects such as worship of angels (Col. 2:18).



4. It can be ignorant worship (Acts 17:23) which is wrong and it can be will worship (Col. 2:20-22) which is self imposed worship which glorifies abstinence. This is also wrong.
  5. It can be worship to God conducted in spirit and truth (John 4:24). Bowing before God refers to humbling oneself before Him.
- C. There is *private* worship.
1. Getting into the closet and praying (Matt. 6:6).
  2. Family devotionals where devotion is expressed to God, where God's word is read, discussed and prayer is engaged in at home.
  3. We are told to be anxious in nothing but in prayers and supplications to make our requests known to God (Phil. 4:6,7). While everything we do is not worship, we can worship in all activities of life by prayer in all decisions especially important ones (I Thess. 5:17,18).
- D. There is *public* worship.
1. We are to not forsake the assembling of ourselves together (Heb. 10:25).
  2. The *Lord's supper* must be individually partaken of in remembrance (I Cor. 11:23-30). Someone cannot do it for you.
  3. *Giving* is as you individually purposed in your heart and on the first day of the week (I Cor. 16:1,2; 2 Cor. 9:7).
  4. *Singing* is to be done "speaking to yourselves." Nobody can do it for you (Eph. 5:19).
  5. While in public worship for it to be decent and in order, one man leads the prayer but for it to be effective it must be your prayer. You are in your heart to also be praying with that person who is leading (I Tim. 2:1-6; I Cor. 14:40).
  6. While only one can teach at the time for the above reason it will do no good if we are not following the teaching, checking up on the teacher, and having an open heart to receive the word (Acts 17:11,12).

## II. PREPARING FOR WORSHIP.

- A. By learning of God. He is the one we worship and we should know all we can about him as we approach the worship.
1. Read Eph. 4:6; I Cor. 8:6; Heb. 4:13; Eph. 2:5,6; Acts 17:23-31; Isa. 1:10-20. The conclusion to which we should come is we will not try to worship God through some idol, nor in an empty form, nor with sinful lives concerning which we will not repent.
  2. We should worship God acceptably with reverence and godly fear (Heb. 12:28,29).

- B. By cleansing our lives from sin before we worship (Isa. 1:18; Rev. 1:5,6; Acts 22:16; Acts 8:22-24). Remember Isa. 59:1,2; John 9:31; I Peter 3:12.
- C. By making the time before we get to the worship as least stressful as we can.
  - 1. Start in plenty of time.
  - 2. Try to help children to prepare themselves to get ready to worship.
  - 3. Be as kind to those you come into contact as possible.
  - 4. Remember that an hour of Bible Study before hand will prepare you. So go to the church's Bible study.
- D. If you have a public part in the worship, try to know before hand and prepare.
  - 1. Songs selected before hand that you are going to lead.
  - 2. Prayers that are thought about before hand as to the needs that are there.
  - 3. Those who serve the Lord's supper as reverent as can be in heart and appearance.
  - 4. Giving with a definite purpose in mind (2 Cor. 9:7).
  - 5. Sermons well prepared and researched.
- E. Remember that God is the Spectator but we are the participants.

### CONCLUSION:

1. *"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."* (2 Chron. 7:14)
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## Corporate and Individual Worship Differences and Similarities

*Terry Joe Kee*

1. The worship of God is an important subject and worthy of study.
2. We do not engage in worship with the eyes.
  - a. We walk by faith and not by sight. (2 Cor. 5:7)
  - b. We are to look at the things we cannot see. (2 Cor. 4:16-18)
  - c. When we do not approach God by faith, it is impossible to please God. (Heb. 11:6)
  - d. Moses endured as seeing him who is invisible. (Heb. 11:27)
3. Only when our worship is offered by faith will it be pleasing.

xiii.4; xiv.22,23); Prov. iii.7; ps. xxxiii. (xxxiv.) 10, and many other passages..." Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 656.

2. All acceptable worship must be offered in reverence and awe.
- F. Whenever we are talking about *corporate worship* we are referring to our collective worship as we are all gathered together in one place to offer up our worship to God.
- G. When we are discussing *individual worship* we are discussing our approach before the throne of God outside our *corporate worship*. This would include worship offered in our homes and/or other times when by ourselves or with a small group outside the collective gathering of the church we engage in worship to God.

## II. NOT ALL WORSHIP IS ACCEPTABLE TO GOD.

- A. We must all admit that not every time one engages in worship is it acceptable to God. There are times when one has offered his worship and not been pleasing to God.
1. The first time we are introduced to a worship service, we find acceptable and unacceptable worship being offered to God. (Gen. 4; Heb. 11:4)
  2. The beginning of the Ten Commandments demands that we worship only God and that no other gods should be had before Him. (Exodus 20:1-5)
  3. The sons of Aaron found that altering God's call for fire to burn the incense was met with the anger of God and their violent death. (Lev. 10:1,2)
  4. God told the ten northern tribes to take away their sacrifices and the sound of their songs and would not accept their sacrifices nor hear their songs. (Amos 5:22,23)
  5. God would not accept their sacrifices when they came with the halt, lame, and blind to their altars in the days of Malachi. (Mal. 1:12-14)
  6. The wise man said the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord. (Prov. 15:8)
- B. Jesus tells us what worship is acceptable. (John 4:24)
1. The church at Corinth is offering worship that is condemned. (I Cor. 11)
  2. God will not hear the cries of the wicked when they pray. (I Peter 3:12)

## III. WE CAN ONLY DO IN WORSHIP WHAT IS AUTHORIZED.

- A. Authority is established by: *direct statement, example, expediency and implication.*

- B. We are commanded to worship according to the standard set forth by God and by no other. If we are to worship God we *must* worship Him in spirit and in truth. (John 4:24)
1. This standard therefore demands that our worship is addressed to the right object, to the right One, God.
    - a. When Cornelius fell at Peter's feet and sought to worship him, Cornelius was told to get up and "worship God." (Acts 10:25,26)
    - b. When John fell at the feet of one calling himself a "fellow servant" he was told to "worship God." (Rev. 19:10)
    - c. Again, when John fell at the feet of the angel, he was told to "worship God." (Rev. 22:8,9)
  2. Our worship must be offered in the right place, the church. Only those who are citizens in the kingdom of God can faithfully and acceptably worship God. How can an unbeliever address God as his Father? How can he partake of the Lord's supper without having enjoyed the blessings of the death of Christ?
  3. Our worship must be offered according to the truth (John 4:24; 17:17). We can only engage in those avenues or acts of worship which are authorized by God and in no other way can we approach the throne of God and come before our heavenly Father.
  4. Our worship must be offered with the right attitude (John 4:24). If our hearts are not right, we cannot worship God acceptably. If we are not right with our brethren, our worship is offered in vain (Matt. 5:21-26).
- C. All things we do, including worship, must be authorized (Col. 3:17).
- D. Anything we do that is not authorized by God, even if it is being offered to God in worship, is condemned by God.
- E. God authorizes only five avenues through which we can address Him in worship.
1. *Singing*. Christians, blending their voices together as they praise God with the fruit of their lips, is authorized (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 13:15). No substitute for singing is authorized: such as playing, humming, whistling, etc.
  2. *Praying*. When Peter is imprisoned, the church comes together in the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, and prays (Acts 12). Jesus was a man of prayer and a teacher of prayer (Matt. 10; Matt. 6:5-13).
  3. *Teaching and Preaching*. When the church comes together we exhort one another (Heb. 10:25). When Paul gathers together with the church at Troas, he preaches to them until midnight (Acts 20).

4. *The Lord's supper.* Jesus said that in the kingdom we would remember His sacrifice by eating the bread, His body, and drinking the fruit of the vine, His blood (Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:17-19). Even though what the church at Corinth is doing is contrary to the will of God, they did come together into one place to eat the Lord's supper. (I Cor. 11:20ff)
5. *Giving.* Paul said he had given instructions to the churches of Galatia and now was commanding the church in Corinth to follow this teaching by giving as they had been prospered when they came together. (I Cor. 16:1,2; 2 Cor. 9:6,7)

#### IV. WHAT ABOUT MY INDIVIDUAL WORSHIP OFFERED OUTSIDE THE ASSEMBLY?

- A. Many of the sermons in this series of sermons will address unauthorized innovations in our worship, entertainment in worship, vain, ignorant and willful worship practices.
- B. Our efforts are directed toward showing any similarities and differences in our collective, corporate worship and in our individual, separate worship.
- C. First, I must only address God in those ways which are authorized regardless of whether I am gathered together with the saints or I am alone at home. Remember Col. 3:17.
- D. Second, God has only authorized me to address Him in one of five ways *singing, praying, teaching, Lord's supper, and giving.*
  1. Two of these, the Lord's supper and giving, are further regulated as being done only upon the first day of the week. (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:2)
  2. These acts of worship are also regulated by being required to be done when the church is gathered together and only when the church is gathered together.
- E. *Singing, praying and teaching* are not restricted to the first day of the week, nor to the assembly of the saints.
  1. One may sing when he is merry (James 5:13). This is not restricted to the assembly.
  2. One may pray when afflicted or in private (James 5:13; Luke 18:1; I Thess. 5:17).
  3. Teaching and preaching may be done at times outside the assembly of the saints.
    - a. Paul, Barnabas, Silas, Timothy, Titus, etc. are seen preaching outside the assembly (Acts 16:25ff).
    - b. Aquila and Priscilla teach Apollos more perfectly. This was not done in the assembly (Acts 18:24-28).
- F. Whenever one approaches the throne of God in worship, he is always regulated by the Word of God. One can only worship as he is authorized.

1. Can one sing with the instrument outside the assembly? Where is the authority? Is there a direct statement? An example? Some implication? Or expedient?
  2. Can one sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs in a chorus or choir outside the assembly? Is this singing done in worship? If so, are not all to sing? If the singing is not done in worship, what is it? Entertainment? Where is the authority for using psalms, hymns and spiritual songs as entertainment? Am I engaging in something other than worship or entertainment, and if so, what is it?
  3. Can we use drama to present the Gospel and teach the lost or edify the saints? Where is the authority? Where is the authority either in or outside the assembly to use drama in worship?
- G. In every act of worship where we participate, the question we must always ask is, where is the authority? Whenever, with reverence and godly fear, we approach the throne of God, can we engage in any act outside that which is authorized?
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## The Lord's Supper as Worship

*Jeffery L. Orr*

1. Bible doctrine teaches the Lord's supper is an item of worship in the New Testament church. (Matt. 26:26-29)
2. I Cor. 11:23-26, Paul relates the events of Matt. 26 as the institution of what we refer to as the Lord's supper.
3. The Lord's supper is a very important subject showing how Christians honor and remember the sacrifice and death of the Savior who bought the church with His own blood (Acts 20:28).
4. The controversy and confusion that exists today regarding this subject is founded in the doctrines of men, not in the Word of God, which is quite plain in revealing its design and purpose.

### DISCUSSION:

#### I. ITS INSTITUTION.

- A. The Lord's supper was instituted on the same night in which Jesus was betrayed by Judas Iscariot and arrested.
  1. Matt. 26:26-29, the Lord *"took break and blessed it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink*

*henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."*

2. Also recorded in Mark 14:22-25 and Luke 22:17-20.
  3. Jesus was aware of His impending suffering and death, and was relating these events to His disciples.
- B. The institution of the Lord's supper followed the observance of the Passover meal by Jesus and His disciples (Matt. 26:19-25; Mark 14:17-21; Luke 22:14-20; John 13:1-12).
1. It was not intended to be a part of, or a replacement for, the Jewish Passover (Exodus 12:1-20). Jesus and his disciples were still living under the Old Law and observing this aspect of it prior to the occasion of the supper's institution.
  2. However, the point can be made that the Passover lamb was typical of the Christ, described by Paul as "our Passover" in I Cor. 5:7 (cf. Exodus 12:5; cf. I Peter 1:19; John 1:29), and the blood put on the two side posts and upper posts of the door to spare the firstborn was a type of the blood of Christ who saves those obedient to His will (Exodus 12:12-14; Acts 20:28).
  3. There are similarities between the Passover Feast and the Lord's supper which make the latter typical of the former.
    - a. Both feasts were designed as memorials to remind God's people of a deliverance: from Egyptian bondage in the Passover Feast; and from sins, in the Lord's supper (Ex. 12; 23:15; cf. Matt. 26:28; I Cor. 11:25b).
    - b. The Passover Feast and the Lord's supper were instituted before the deliverance, which they memorialized, took place (Exodus 12:28-29; Matt. 26:25-29; 27).
- C. Matt. 26:26-28, Mark 14:22-24, and Luke 22:19-20 all relate events associated with the institution of the Lord's supper.
1. John goes into some detail as to what happened before the event (washing of the disciples' feet after the Passover meal, 13:2-11), and after (the discourse regarding the Comforter, chapters 14-16, and the prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, chapter 17, prior to His arrest).
  2. The accounts in the synoptic Gospels are similar and give us a full description. The differences among these accounts are not significant.
    - a. Jesus took the bread, gave thanks for it, break it.
    - b. Matt. 26:27 and Mark 14:23 both state that Jesus then took the cup, gave thanks for it, and then gave it to His disciples.
    - c. Luke 22:20 simply states that He "likewise" (after the same manner) took the cup.
    - d. Matthew 26:27 states that Jesus commanded, "*Drink ye all of it,*" whereas Mark 14:23 records, "*They all*

*drank of it.*" This means they were all obedient to His command to drink of the contents of the cup, not necessarily that the entire cup had to be emptied.

- D. I Cor. 11:23-26, Paul wrote, *"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: and when He had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me."*
1. Paul was dealing with another issue of carnality among the Corinthian brethren when he wrote this passage.
  2. The brethren were making no distinction between a common fellowship meal and the partaking of the Lord's supper as an act of worship when they came together *"into one place"* (v.20).
  3. He explained to them the purpose and meaning behind the Lord's supper and advised that self-examination was necessary so as not to eat and drink unworthily, *"not discerning the Lord's body"* (vs.26-29).
  4. This passage not only speaks to the problems in the church at Corinth in regard to this subject, but also implies the Lord's supper was a practice of N.T. worship.

## II. ITS ELEMENTS.

- A. There were two elements used by Jesus to institute the Lord's supper. They are used by Christians to partake of it.
- B. Matt. 26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19, I Cor. 10:16 and 11:23 all mention the "bread" (*artos*) which Jesus broke.
  1. Such bread was the same kind as used in the Passover meal, and thus was unleavened. Exodus 12:15
  2. Because Jesus faithfully kept the Law, He would have used this type of bread for the Passover meal and then conveniently used it for the Lord's supper.
    - a. Melvin Wise, in *The All-Sufficiency of the Gospel*, suggested: "Surely we cannot think of any element that would better picture to us the broken body of the Son of God on the cross than pale, lifeless, unleavened bread. Bread is grain that has been harvested, crushed and baked. The life has been taken from it."
    - b. Jesus stated, "This is my body," when offering the unleavened bread to his disciples. The use of such bread may have contained an underlying meaning to explain what his body was about to go through; it was about to become lifeless.



- C. The other element used by Jesus was the "cup" (Matt. 26:27; Mark 14:23; Luke 22:20), the contents of which He went on to describe as "the fruit of the vine (*oinos*)" (Matt. 26:29).
1. *"This is my blood of the new testament"* (Matt. 26:28).
  2. Palestine had a great abundance of grape vines, and Jesus refers to a drink which comes from such grapes. Wine, from the Greek word *oinos*, simply means the fruit of the grape, whether fermented or not.
  3. Controversy has arisen over whether fermented or non-fermented "fruit of the vine" is authorized.
  4. If the word can refer to unfermented as well as fermented wine, why use fermented and tread in dangerous territory of violating Scriptures which condemn the imbibing of strong drink? The fact that drunkenness is condemned by God in both principle and practice should alleviate the need to have to think about this question (Prov. 23:29-35; Gal. 5:21; I Cor. 6:10).
  5. The cup should not be taken to mean the literal container, but is a metonymy to refer the contents of the cup; the liquid contained therein symbolizing His blood that was about to be shed. Some misplace the emphasis and bind "one" cup to be used by all. If a "cup" is to be bound, why not the cup that Jesus used?
- D. Although the Bible clearly teaches the only two authorized elements for the Lord's supper are unleavened bread and fruit of the vine, there are some who have taken it upon themselves to use things such as soda crackers, grape-flavored Kool-Aid and other materials in substitution for what the Lord intended to be used.

### III. ITS DESIGNATIONS.

- A. The Lord's supper has been called by several different names that are not warranted by the Scriptures.
1. *Eucharist* is a commonly used name. It means a solemn thanksgiving for the blessings of redemption.
  2. *Sacrament* was made popular by Martin Luther, indicating that it was a most important item of worship.
  3. *Prophora*, meaning offering or oblation. It was an innovation in which gifts or offerings for the poor were made at the same time the Lord's supper was observed.
  4. *Mass* is used by the Roman Catholic Church.
- B. Though these designations are popular, they are nowhere to be found in the Bible. If we are to be a people who speak *"as the oracles of God"* (I Peter 4:11), we are obligated to refer to this item of worship in Scriptural terms.
1. I Cor. 11:20, *"the Lord's supper."* Paul made it clear the brethren's conduct was not allowing them to partake of the Lord's supper in a worthy manner.

2. I Cor. 10:21, "*the Lord's table*"
3. I Cor. 10:16, "*the communion*"
4. Acts 2:42; 20:7, "*breaking of bread*"

#### IV. ITS PARTAKER.

- A. Who can rightfully partake of the Lord's supper?
  1. Matt. 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:29-30
  2. Matthew and Mark state that the partaking of the Lord's supper is in the kingdom. Luke mentions that the kingdom is the place where the table is located.
  3. To Scripturally partake of the Lord's supper, one must be in the kingdom, the church (Col. 1:13-14; cf. Rev. 1:9).
- B. Jesus said one must be born of water and of the Spirit in order to enter the kingdom of God (John 3:5).
  1. When one is born again, he becomes a child of God, a member of the Lord's church, and one entitled to partake of the Lord's table. Until that time, one is not worthy of the privilege of eating at this great feast.
  2. The Bible does not speak of "open" or "closed" communion. However, in God's eyes the supper is open to all servants of His kingdom and closed to every person outside of it. Although a visiting non-member may physically partake on occasion, the meaning and significance of the act is not fully appreciated or spiritually beneficial to that person.
- C. It is possible to partake unworthily of the Lord's supper.
  1. The supper is a memorial/remembrance of Christ (I Cor. 11:24-25) and the sacrifice He made on our behalf, as well as a proclamation of the Lord's death "til He come" (v.26), it should be approached with the utmost seriousness and devotion.
  2. Paul emphasized these matters when he wrote to the Corinthian brethren because they had lost focus or may have never fully appreciated the significance of the Lord's supper, as they were treating it as a way to gratify their physical appetites.
  3. "*But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup*" (v.28) so that he not eat and drink unworthily, "*bringing damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body*" (v.29).
  4. Lack of reverence and sins of attitude can also prevent one from worthily partaking of the Lord's supper, as these things cloud the mind from going back to the cross in deep appreciation for what Jesus did for us.

## V. THE LORD'S PRESENCE AT HIS TABLE.

- A. When instituting the Lord's supper, Jesus stated that He is present when Christians partake of such in the kingdom (Matt. 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:29-30).
1. He was literally and physically present with His disciples when He commanded them to partake of the bread and the fruit of the vine.
  2. These passages also prophesy that the time would come when the Father would appoint him a kingdom, "*that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom*" and that He would be there as well, communing with us.
- B. The *how* of this presence has been the subject of controversy through the centuries.
1. Roman Catholicism teaches a doctrine known as *transubstantiation*, which states that the unleavened bread and fruit of the vine actually and literally become the body and blood of Christ when administered by the priest. This is based upon a literal interpretation of Jesus' words, "this is my body."
  2. Martin Luther rejected the doctrine of transubstantiation. He replaced it with what he called *consubstantiation*, which teaches the bread and wine do not change into the literal flesh and blood of Jesus, but rather Christ's entire person is present in, under, and along with the elements. This still emphasizes a literal presence.
  3. Calvin denied the literal presence of Jesus at the Lord's supper, but stated that the Holy Spirit plays a dominant role in making the effects of Christ's sacrifice become real to the participant. This approach is based on his direct operation of the Holy Spirit belief.
  4. Zwingli denied the Lord was literally present at the Lord's supper, but did teach that Christians imagine that Christ is spiritually present; he viewed the feast mainly as a sign, a memorial of Jesus' death and a profession by the believer.
  5. Of the four views above, Zwingli is closest to the truth.
- C. Jesus promised to drink the fruit of the vine "new with you" in His Father's kingdom (Matt. 26:29).
1. If Jesus is not communing with us, then our partaking is in vain, because He promised to be "with us,"
  2. This is not in a literal or physical sense, but He is there when we gather around His table in spirit by our obedience and reverence in memorializing His redemptive work. It is in this manner that we commune with Him and with fellow Christians.

**CONCLUSION:**

1. It should be observed that the Lord's supper is one of five acts authorized by our Lord for New Testament worship.
2. It is to be observed on the first day of every week (Acts 2:42; 20:7-11; I Cor. 11:20; 16:1-2; Heb. 10:24-25).
3. Its purpose and design as an act of worship is to memorialize and proclaim the death of Christ, "til he come."
4. As God's children and members of His Son's kingdom, the church, let us always strive to do Bible things in Bible ways in reference to this subject and well as all other matters of work and worship.

(Note: Much of the information gleaned for this lesson came from a research paper entitled *An Examination Of The Doctrines Of Baptism, The Lord's supper, The Mechanical Instrument of Music and Fellowship* by Roger D. Campbell. It was submitted to William S. Cline on February 17, 1981 for a course entitled Systematic Theology — credit to whom credit is due)

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## Worship In The Patriarchal Age

*Randy Kea*

1. Let's briefly define the meaning of "worship."
  - a. *proskuneo* (Greek): to make obeisance, do reverence to, an act of homage or reverence.
  - b. *shachah* (Hebrew): to depress, to bow down.
2. This lesson will be restricted to the "Patriarchal Age."

**DISCUSSION:**

- I. **DEFINING AND IDENTIFYING THE "PATRIARCHAL AGE."**
  - A. Patriarchal: God's authority and His word were communicated through the fathers (Patriarchs) of the household. Heb. 1:1-2
  - B. Through the years, we have taught there are three major periods of Bible History: the Patriarchal Age, the Mosaic Age, the Christian Age.
  - C. Sermon charts, slides, and videos have presented in graphic form the idea that:
    1. The Patriarchal Age was from creation until the giving of the Law of Moses. (This needs clarification)
    2. The Mosaic Age was from the giving of the Law of Moses until the Cross of Christ.

3. The Christian Age began in Acts 2 on the day of Pentecost and will last until Jesus returns.
- D. The scriptural basis for these three major divisions of Bible history is found in Galatians 3.
1. The period of Promise and Patriarchy. Gal. 3:16
  2. The period of the Law of Moses. Gal. 3:19
  3. The period of the Faith (the Gospel). Gal. 3:24-28
- E. Some points sometimes not emphasized:
1. The Patriarchal Age did not end at the giving of the Law of Moses.
  2. The Patriarchal Age did not end at the cross, even though the law of Moses did. Col. 2:14-16; Eph. 2:14-16
  3. The Patriarchal Age continued until the Gospel was first preached to the Gentile world at the household of Cornelius. Acts 10, 11, 15
  4. Consider carefully the following comments by the late Guy N. Woods on this matter: "There has been but one other law, through the ages, under which God accepted worship: Patriarchy. (3) It follows, therefore, that Cornelius was worshipping God under a system which had continued from Eden — the patriarchal arrangement. We should recall that the law of Moses was given only to the descendants of Jacob (Israel) and to those Gentiles who suffered themselves to be proselyted, by circumcision to it. (Deut. 5:2; Acts 2:10; 13:43.) Inasmuch as Cornelius was neither a Jew nor a proselyte, it follows that he was worshipping God under the patriarchal system obtaining from the beginning. It had, indeed, been in the divine purpose to make of the two — Jew and Gentile— "one new man," (Eph. 2:14 -18) but the attitude of Jews toward Gentiles had thwarted that plan, until the events of Acts 10. Here began a series of events eventually to result in the union of all men submitting themselves to the will of God in Christ (Gal. 3:29); and, in consequence, the end of a system of worship which would have terminated at the cross but was extended to the house of Cornelius because of the shortsightedness of the Jews touching the inclusion of the Gentiles in Christ's redemptive plan." "That the devout officer was worshipping God under the system of patriarchy is the only conclusion harmonizing the difficulties of the case. It is, to this, no valid objection that, after the angel's visit, Cornelius was to hear words whereby he and his house were to "be saved"; at the moment the angel appeared to him he became accountable to God under this, the Christian dispensation; prior to the visit of the angel he was answerable only under of the system which alone was available. Nor, can it be affirmed, from these premises, that on the foregoing assumption, all men, who have not heard the gospel today ought to be regarded as in his category. No one lives in his category; the gospel had never

been extended to embrace the Gentiles prior to the events of Acts 10. It follows, therefore, that the condition of the Gentiles, from Pentecost to the house of Cornelius, was legally that which characterized the Jews from the cross to Pentecost. When one law supersedes another, the effects of the superseded law carry over to the point where the newer became effective. The events in Caesarea made clear the fact that God no longer regarded the Jews, because they were Jews, above others; thenceforth men of all nations who fear him and work righteousness are acceptable to him.” (Acts 10:34,35). (Pages 63-64, Questions and Answers, Open Forum Freed-Hardeman College Lectures)

## II. GOD HAS ALWAYS REVEALED HIS WILL TO MAN EVEN DURING THE PATRIARCHAL AGE.

- A. Genesis 1,2 — Adam & Eve had revelation from God.
  - 1. God created Adam & Eve with the ability to understand His revealed will.
  - 2. *“And the Lord God commanded the man.”* Gen. 2:16
- B. Gen. 4 — Since Abel acted by faith, and faith only comes by hearing God’s Word, we know Cain & Abel had revelation from God. (Gen. 4:1-7; Heb. 11:4; Rom. 10:17)
- C. Gen. 5 — Enoch, according to Jude 14, “prophesied” about the judgment of God upon the ungodly.
- D. Gen. 6 — Noah preached “righteousness” for 120 years. Gen. 6:1-8; II Peter 2:5; I Peter 3:18-21
- E. Gen. 2:7 — Abraham was a “prophet.” By definition a prophet is a mouth piece or spokesman for God. Exodus 14:14-16; 7:1
- F. Rom. 1:18-32 — Gentiles prior to Christ had revelation from God. Rom. 1:18, “truth”, Rom. 1:21, “they knew God”, Rom. 1:25, “changed the truth”, Rom. 1:32, “knowing the judgment of God”
- G. John 10:16 — The Lord had “other sheep” (none Jews) before the cross. To be “sheep” they had to know and follow the revealed will of God.
- H. God has NEVER allowed man to approach Him in worship just any way he pleased. (Gen. 4:1-7; Lev. 10:1-3; Matt. 15:7-9). True worship has always been based upon divine revelation.

## III. WORSHIP IN THE PATRIARCHAL AGE.

- A. Gen. 4:1-7, Cain, not “by faith”, did not “do well”, was rejected.
- B. Gen. 4:1-7, Abel, “by faith” did “well”, pleased God, accepted, Heb. 11:4; Rom. 10:17.

- C. Gen. 5, Enoch "walked with God" and "pleased God", can't walk right without worshiping right, lived by faith. Heb. 11:5; Rom. 10:17
- D. Gen. 6-9, Noah obeyed God in all things. Gen. 6:22. Built an altar after the flood. Gen. 8:20-22. Lived by faith. Heb. 11:7; Rom. 10:17
- G. Gen. 12-13, Abram built altars of worship, lived by faith, Gen. 12:8; Heb. 11:8; Rom. 10:17.
- E. Gen. 14 (Heb. 7), Melchizedek, priest of the most high God, don't know details, shadow of the priesthood of Christ.
- F. Gen. 22:5, Proves all of life is not worship. Proves the altar sacrifice was an act of worship during the Patriarchal Age.
- H. Rom. 1:18-25, Gentiles before Christ corrupted true worship and God gave them up.
- I. Acts 10, Cornelius (see above.)

### CONCLUSION:

1. The Patriarchal Age was from Eden until Cornelius.
2. God has been from the beginning revealed His will to man.
3. God forbids man to change His word.
4. Worship has always been regulated by God's word.
5. Today our worship must be authorized by the New Testament of Jesus Christ.

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# Worship In The Mosaic Age

*Rodney Hilliard*

1. Throughout time, God's message has been given to humanity.
  - a. The Patriarchal Age, which embraced such figures as Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, and others.
  - b. The Christian Age, which began shortly after the resurrection of Christ and continues to this day, God not failing to reveal His will and desires by means of His Son and the apostles and prophets.
  - c. The Mosaic Age, (purposely out of order) which spanned the period from Israel's exodus from Egypt until just after the resurrection of Christ, in which He also revealed Himself and His laws to the Israelites.
2. It is the Mosaic Age in which our attention is focused.
  - a. When the Lord called Moses out of Midian and sent him back to Egypt (Exodus 3ff.), His will was for Israel to depart Egypt.
  - b. The nation arrived at Sinai, God called Moses into the mount and began to present His law for His people (Exodus 19:3-6).

3. It was after this that the Law of Moses, God's standard of authority for the Israelites, was delivered to the nation.
  - a. When the first sections of the law were received, Moses was sent to the people to determine if they would commit to following God (Exodus 19:8; Exodus 24:3,4).
4. The law had a design or purpose for being given.
  - a. That the people might have a civil government.
  - b. To convict men of sin by giving them a perfect standard and code of morality.
  - c. To prevent the spread of idolatry, by preserving among men the knowledge and practice of the true religion until Christ should come. (Our point.)
5. To prevent the spread of idolatry, they were given detailed instruction on how to worship God.
  - a. The people did not have to guess how or who God wanted them to worship.
  - b. By giving them knowledge of Godly worship, was to help in keeping idolatry out.
6. Let us look at examples of worship in the Mosaic Age, paying particular attention to how they conducted themselves, giving Christians examples of the mind-set expected by God.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### **I. A LOOK AT GOD'S PEOPLE.**

- A. Those at Sinai, were ordinary people who were to follow the Law given by God.
  1. They had been delivered out of Egyptian bondage.
  2. They had no special powers that kept them from sinning.
  3. They were simply a people, who in return for privileges (being God's), were required to submit to certain restrictions (God's law).
  4. Just like man is to do today.
  5. Keeping this in mind will help in making the proper applications for us today.
- B. God established them as His people by giving them His law.
  1. This as seen, was done through Moses.
  2. With the Law intact, they were to be Jehovah's possession before all nations.
- C. God's law, a negative and positive side.
  1. On the negative side, the selection and separation of Israel from all other nations, and its obligation to be unlike them. (Negative, in not being able to see God's overall purpose at that time.)
  2. On the positive side, its obligation to belong to Jehovah alone, to be holy, because He Himself is holy (Lev. 19:2).



## II. HOW GOD'S PEOPLE WERE TO WORSHIP.

- A. In looking at examples of worship during the Mosaic age we can see interesting actions being done by the worshipers.
1. That is, how they conducted themselves during worship.
  2. We can know better facts about the worship and what was acceptable during the time of worship.
- B. They worshiped **reverently**.
1. The root idea of "reverence" is fear or falling down, depending on which Hebrew word used.
  2. It is used to express the attitude toward God Himself. (Psalm 89:7)
  3. There were different ways they showed awe or fear for the Lord:
    - a. *By bowing.*
      - 1) To bend the knee, sink, to prostrate. Psalm 95:6; 22:29
      - 3) Many worshipers who fell to the ground.
        - a) When the Birth of Samson was announced to Manoah and His wife (Judges 13:15-20).
        - b) Solomon dedicated the temple (2 Chron. 7:1-3).
        - c) Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel (1 Kings 18:38).
        - d) Joshua, when the angel of the Lord appeared to him (Josh. 5:14).
    - b. *By exalting Him.*
      - 1) Exhault: to be high, to rise or raise, to bring up.
      - 2) God is one above all others.
      - 3) The Israelites did this (Psalm 99:5,9).
      - 4) Much of 1 Chron. 16 is exalting or showing the greatness of the Lord. (See verse 29.)
- C. They worshiped **correctly**.
1. In worship to the Lord there were ways in which the Lord had designed.
  2. *By a right heart.* (Deut. 30:17,18)
  3. *By taking heed.* (Duet. 11:16)
    - a. To "take heed" is to guard, protect, attend to.
    - b. In worshiping God, they were to keep up their guard to keep from being deceived.
    - c. "Taking heed" is not a response that was to be done occasionally, but continually.
  4. Having to maintain a "right heart" and a need to "take heed" is stressed because it mattered who they served.
    - a. *God says so through the prophets.* (Jer. 25:5-7)
    - b. *God's covenant in a vision with Solomon* (1 Kings 9:6).
    - c. Psalms 81:9; 97:7
    - d. Exodus 34:14, "*For thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord...is a jealous God.*"

- 1) The jealous God, is one who admits of no rival or competitor in worship.
  - 2) He will not give His glory to another nor to graven images.
  - 3) God expects whole worship to Him, no exception.
5. Their worship would always be correct if they followed God's commandments.
- a. God's promises to Solomon (2 Chron. 7:19-22).
  - b. Before leaving this point, we have sadly those who did not worship God reverently and correctly.
    - 1) But they started right. Nadab and Abihu (Exodus 24:1) (verse 9 they went up with Moses.)
    - 2) But over time things changed, (Lev. 10:1,2, because they offered strange fire before the Lord, they were devoured and died.)
    - 3) Children of Israel. (2 Kings 17:36-41; Jer. 44:16; Micah 5:10-15)
- D. They were to worship **consistently**.
1. By not doing this is the main reason God gives them so many warnings.
  2. God gave in His law to the people the times of worship and sacrifice.
  3. They changed worship to their terms, and on their time schedule.
  4. By not being consistent in their worship, they were not able to have the right heart (Deut. 30:17), have refused to take heed (Deut. 11:16), in turn lost sight that it mattered who they served (God), and rejected His statutes and commandments (2 Chron. 7:19).
  5. If one does not possess these things there is no way to be consistent with worship.
  6. If not consistent, they would not be a nation separated from other nations, nor holy like their Father was holy.
- E. They were to worship **courageously**. (contend-defend-fight)
1. For this point we go to the book of Daniel.
  2. Sometimes it takes raw courage in the face of the most dreadful danger to worship the true God. (something less likely today for us)
  3. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. (Dan. 3)
  4. Daniel. (Dan. 6)

### III. APPLICATIONS FOR WORSHIP TODAY.

- A. Though we are not under the same law (Col. 2:14-17; Rom. 7:1-6; 8:1,2; Gal. 3:13), there are many things we can glean from those of the past.

1. The Old Testament was written for our learning (Rom. 15:4). Meaning we can learn from the examples given (1 Cor. 10:11). Even as it pertains to worship.
  2. We have the opportunity to "draw back the curtains" and take a look at the way God wanted it to be.
  3. Even see the punishment rendered when their worship was not acceptable.
- B. Just like those which were given a law (law of Moses) in which they were responsible, we have the responsibility now to a better and perfect law (Heb. 7:22; James 1:25).
1. We have no special powers that keep us from sinning.
  2. We are simply a people, who in return for privileges, are required to submit to certain restrictions.
- C. We must also make the proper applications and have the right attitude toward worship.
1. I Cor. 14:40, worship must be done in order.
    - a. All things are to be done in an "appropriate" and "becoming" manner, as becomes the worship of God.
    - b. Our worship is to be done in "order," a military term, without discord.
  2. To fail to do worship in an orderly way will bring punishment.
- D. To worship in "order" we must...
1. Do it **reverently**. (Heb. 12:28; Psalm 95:6; 22:29)
  2. Do it **correctly**.
    - a. Our true worship must be done in spirit and truth (John 4:21-24).
    - b. Just like then, we must have the right heart (Eph. 5:19), and always take heed, because it matters who we serve. (Eph. 3:21)
    - c. Nowhere do we have God accepting worship not authorized by Him (2 John 9-11; Matt. 15:1-9; 2 Tim. 4:3,4).
    - d. To worship correctly, man knows the Lord's church is different from denominations. (Eph. 1:22,23; Acts 2; 2 Tim. 3:16:17).
  3. Do it **consistently**.
    - a. Worship to God is not to be according to our own time schedule (Acts 20:7).
    - b. By not being consistent in worship, we will not be able to have the right heart, will refuse to take heed, in turn losing sight that it matters who we serve.
      - 1) Indicating a sinful attitude and inadequate love for God (Heb. 10:25).
      - 2) Shows a lack of spiritual development (2 Peter 3:18).
    - c. Worshiping once or twice a year will not be acceptable (James 4:17; Rev. 3:15,16).

4. Do it **courageously**. (Contend-defend-fight)
  - a. Fight the good fight of faith (1 Tim. 6:12).
  - b. Just like those in the book of Daniel, there is no neutrality. (Matt. 12:30; 6:24)
  - c. Be steadfast and unmoveable (1 Cor. 15:58), endure to the end to be saved (Matt. 10:22).
  - d. Put on the whole armor of God, being a good soldier (2 Tim. 2:3; Eph. 6:10-18).

**CONCLUSION:**

1. There is so much to glean from worship in the Mosaic age.
2. God, delivered to the Israelites a law they were to follow.
3. This law had a design for being given, one being to prevent the spread of idolatry.
4. For man to worship right, they had to follow the law.
  - a. We see many decided they would not and punishment was given.
  - b. God wanted them to be holy, because He Himself was holy (Lev. 19:2). The same stands for man today.
5. If we fail to “be holy” we have decided not to follow God, and punishment will be given.
6. The curtains have been drawn back and we can take a look at what is expected of man as pertaining to the attitude.
7. May we never have to hear the Lord speak of us like He did the Israelites: *“This evil people, which refuse to hear my words, which walk in the imagination of their heart, and walk after other gods, to serve them, and to worship them, ... which is good for nothing.”* (Jer. 13:10)

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**“Silence” in Public Worship**

1 Corinthians 14

*Larry E. Montgomery*

1. The old song declares “Silence is Golden,” but the adage of modern culture is “Silence is Olden.”
2. Our society and modern culture has conditioned itself to not only accept almost constant immersion in noise pollution, but adds to it, perhaps in an effort to drown it out, the continual sounds of information or entertainment afforded by the latest take along, play along sounds on radio, cassette, or CDs.
  - a. As a result, some not only lack an appreciation for the value of silence, but have come to disdain it.
  - b. Just notice what happens when:

- 1) The electric power goes off (with the unlikelihood that all battery back up also fails!).
- 2) The radio signal goes dead—even for as little as ten seconds.
- 3) A minute's silence is called for in a large crowd.
- c. People of our day hardly know what to do with silence or how it can be obtained and appreciated.
3. Most important to us is the question of "silence" and its place in public worship.
  - a. Has modern society and culture influenced us to neglect, abandon, ignore and displace "silence" in public Worship?
  - b. What does God have to say about it in the Bible?

### DISCUSSION:

- I. **"SILENCE" IS ESSENTIAL IN OUR EXPRESSION OF REVERENCE, AWE, PRAISE AND RESPECT TOWARD GOD—AND, THEREFORE, HAS AN ESSENTIAL PLACE IN PUBLIC WORSHIP.**
  - A. The wise man declared there is, "...a time to keep silence, and a time to speak" (Eccl. 3:7).
    1. The church today in its worship tends to recognize and exalt the speaking aspect of our worship.
    2. However, the "time to keep silence" is forgotten, ignored, and disparaged.
  - B. The fact that silence is associated with reverence for, and humility in the presence of God is an established principle in both Old and New Testaments.
    1. In the Old Testament, a few verses with several different Hebrew words illustrate our point:
      - a. In private worship, "*Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still*" (Psalm 4:4). {The Hebrew word for "be still" is *damam* which means "be or grow dumb, silent, still."}<sup>1</sup>
      - b. "*Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth*" (Psalm 46:10). {Hebrew "be still" is *raphah*, means "let go" in the sense of a pause or refrain from the activities of life.}<sup>2</sup>
      - c. "*Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed*" (Psalm 65:1). See Psalm 62 in its entirety but especially the "silence" aspect of verses 1 and 5 where "waiteth" and "wait" as in Psalm 65:1 are a translation of the Hebrew *damam* as in "a" above.
      - d. "*But the LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him*" (Hab. 2:20).
      - e. "*Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD: for the day of the LORD is at hand: for the LORD hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid his guests*" (Zeph. 1:7).

- f. *“Be silent, O all flesh, before the LORD: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation”* (Zech. 2:13).
2. In the New Testament, the documentation is not as plentiful or direct, but yet sufficient to demonstrate that “silence” is natural, appropriate, and essential in public worship.
- a. In the teaching of Jesus:
    - 1) He called for alms to be given without the “sounding of a trumpet as the hypocrites...” implying a “silence” in harmony with the “secret” giving where “the left hand does not know what the right hand doeth” (Matt. 6:1-4).
    - 2) He condemned the “much speaking” and “vain repetitions” used by the heathen in an effort to be heard, implying that humble silence has its place when we bow before God in prayer (Matt. 6:5-8).
    - 3) And, after the church was established, He declared from heaven through John that “he that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches” no less than seven times and such is indicative of the silent, careful, understanding reception of the message of God whether it is being read or preached as is characteristic of much of our public worship (Rev. 2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13,22).
  - b. Acts 15:12, the multitude “kept silence” to hear the preaching of Barnabas and Paul regarding the miracles and wonders God had done by them among the Gentiles.
  - c. But, most directly in 1 Corinthians 14, there are two particular points regarding “silence” which comprise our assigned topics and the remaining two major points. (While these two points are considered below, they additionally support subheading “2” in this division.)

## II. “SILENCE” PLAYS A VITAL PART IN ROLES WITHIN PUBLIC WORSHIP.

- A. One specific matter of silence is identified by Paul in our chapter for study as he wrote, *“Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church”* (1 Cor. 14:34-35).
- B. In this scripture, there are three easily understood matters legislated by God through Paul:
  1. Women are to generally keep silence in the church.
    - a. This general rule is excepted by the charge that all are to sing and make melody in their heart (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).
    - b. Scripture supports this instruction (1 Tim. 2:11-15).

2. This silence of women is to demonstrate their being "under obedience" and so that they not "usurp authority over the man."
  3. The acceptance of these roles of submission and the silence associated with it show respect for the authority of God (Eph. 5:21-24).
- C. These rules for silence must not be set aside even if:
1. A woman is more naturally talented in music than the man designated to lead the singing;
  2. A woman feels an urgent need to speak out;
  3. Men fail in accepting their responsibility;
  4. Society, culture and everybody decides to do otherwise.
- D. A special comment about serving the Lord's supper.
1. Many churches have begun having women serve the Lord's supper, perhaps supposing it does not require breaking "silence," however the silence of these passages is associated with the submission of following rather than assuming the authority of leading.
  2. This movement is but a step—the first—in moving women into positions of leadership outside their God given role for life, worship, and service.

### III. "SILENCE" MUST BE SOUGHT AND UTILIZED IN PUBLIC WORSHIP FOR PROPRIETY AND ORDERLINESS.

- A. "Propriety" as used here is "...the quality or state of being proper: APPROPRIATENESS... conformity to what is socially acceptable in conduct or speech...the customs and manners of polite society."<sup>3</sup>
- B. In worship, propriety and orderliness, includes the states of silence, stillness, and quietness.
1. 1 Cor. 14 teaches a "silence" principle. (The entire chapter is identifying the activities taking place when the church comes together — mentioned nine times vs.4, 5,12,19,23,28,33,34,35. Also, the purpose of their coming together is seen to focus upon worship as prayer, singing, prophesying etc. are mentioned specifically.)
    - a. Paul's predominant message in this chapter is that spiritual gifts in worship are to aid in "understanding," not create contention, chaos, or clatter.
      - 1) He uses the word "understanding" six times in four verses throughout (1 Cor. 14:14,15,19,20).
      - 2) He begins by a call to desire most the gift of prophecy which is teaching directly by inspiration (v.1) and gives emphasis (vs.2-3) that speaking by "prophecy is to man for edification, exhortation, and comfort" whereas in contrast, speaking in an

- unknown tongue is not heard by man (unless there is an interpreter as identified later).
- 3) He concludes the chapter with a call for “all things to be done decently and in order” (v.40).
- b. Paul limits the number speaking in an unknown tongue at a given assembly to two or three and then by course rather than at the same time and calls for one to interpret as they progress (v.27).
    - 1) Until someone interprets, those not knowing the language sit for a period of time listening to what amounts to meaningless chatter.
    - 2) Paul limits this to two or three, no doubt for the propriety and orderliness sought to secure understanding and edification.
    - 3) Paul assures a certain measure of “silence.”
  - c. If no interpreter is present, the “tongue speaker” is “to keep silence in the church” (v.28).
  - d. The principle of “silence” is made plain for the sake of orderliness when he says a prophet should “hold his peace” if he received revelation while another was speaking (v.30), and by asserting that the spirits are subject unto the prophets, so there is no excuse for the disorder that would occur if more than one person were speaking at once (vs.32-33)
2. If the word of God prohibits the “noise” of people speaking without interpreters or speaking more than one at a time, thus calling for the propriety and order of “silence,” even though such contained revelation from God, then is it not clear that God expects us to bring “silence” to worship for the sake of propriety and orderliness today?
- C. The silence, stillness, and quietness associated with propriety and orderliness in worship is essential for:
    1. Meaningful Meditation (Psalm 1:2) or Essential Edification (1 Cor. 14:26).
    2. Fruitful Fellowship (Acts 2:42).
    3. Shown Submission (James 4:10).
    4. Proper Praise (Psalm 65:1).
    5. Ordained Order (1 Cor. 14:40).
  - D. Let us seek and utilize the aspect of “silence” in our every act of public worship.
    1. *Preaching* (Acts 17:11).
      - a. Often today, it appears the congregation has least respect for this part of worship as people go in and out of the assembly at will or whim.
      - b. From the pulpit, preachers observe whispering, passing notes, playing with babies, and sleeping.
      - c. Let us do all we can to “silently” listen, seek, and meditate upon the proclaimed word.



2. *Praying* (1 Cor. 14:15).
  - a. Because "no one" is looking, this is not the time to open purses, wallets, calendars, or any other "life caddy" because some unattended detail has slipped into our brain — Satan is the one that put it there; and, God is "looking" even if no one else is.
  - b. We should avoid distractions by focusing undivided attention to the thoughts in which we are lead as it is our only opportunity to collectively speak to God.
  - c. Otherwise, how can we say, "Amen" (1 Cor. 14:16).
3. *Singing* (1 Cor. 14:15).
  - a. Now is our opportunity to speak whether we are leading or not, male or female, adult or child, musically gifted or not (Psalm 66:4; James 5:13).
  - b. The heart is at the center of this item of worship, so if your heart isn't in it, you are profaning the worship (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).
4. *Giving* (2 Cor. 9:7).
  - a. Cheerful in giving is not related to loud in giving.
  - b. Prepare ahead to avoid the noise of searching, writing, and tearing.
  - c. Focus on counting your blessings to realize God's goodness and the proper perspective of your gift.
5. *Communion* (1 Cor. 11:23-29).
  - a. The meditative process of self examination (1 Cor. 11:28) requires "silence" in this part of worship.<sup>4</sup>
  - b. The mental offering of praise through discernment of the Lord's body as a sacrifice for atonement is accomplished in the "silence" of worship (1 Cor. 11:29) — to do otherwise is unworthy worship unto one's own damnation.
  - c. With reference to the question about singing while the Lord's supper is observed, the need for "silence" to observe the Lord's supper properly offers a compelling argument against singing at the same time.
- E. Let us not forget to train our children in these matters.
  1. Our youth seem to appreciate "silence" least of all.
  2. They need our guidance to learn the value of "silence" and practice it properly in public worship.

## CONCLUSION:

1. *"Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men"* (1 Cor. 14:20 KJV).
2. Men seek and attain understanding through disciplined focus of thought best achieved in a setting of appropriate order where principles of "silence" are observed.

3. We are responsible for achieving that “silent” order for the benefit of ourselves and those that meet with us, as well as offering all of the praise, respect and honor possible to our God.

**ENDNOTES:**

- <sup>1</sup> “*damam*,” *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Brown, Francis; Driver, S.R.; and Briggs, Charles A., Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1957, p. 198.
- <sup>2</sup> “*raphah*” *Ibid.* pp. 950-51.
- <sup>3</sup> “Propriety,” *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 1998 ed.
- <sup>4</sup> For an excellent discussion of self-examination at the observance of the Lord’s supper see, Robert Milligan, *Scheme of Redemption*, Faith & Facts Press: Indianapolis, 1994 (reprint), pp. 436-37.

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## Ways To Improve Worship

*Garland M. Robinson*

1. Men and women of all generations have worshiped something.
  - a. Most of them have worshiped idols and other false deities.
  - b. Many have worshiped animals, birds, heavenly bodies, objects of all kinds and even their ancestors.
2. True worshipers follow the directions of the creator given in His Word, the Bible.
  - a. Man has no say in *what, where, how, when* and *why* in regards to worship.
    - 1) That does not prevent them from doing as they choose.
    - 2) Such worship is not recognized by God.
  - b. True worshipers are content to do as God directs.
3. Men are always seeking how they can improve worship. But the problem is this is generally what suits them—what they believe would improve worship, not what pleases God.

**DISCUSSION:**

1. **THE WORSHIP GOD DEMANDS NEEDS NO IMPROVEMENT.**
  - A. Since it is God-designed, it is perfect in every way.
    1. God does not refine or update His will through trial and error.
    2. He does not take a survey to see what men want.
    3. He makes it right the first time — every time.
  - B. There’s nothing you or I can do that would improve upon God’s revealed will.

1. However, many in the brotherhood today think they can improve worship, so they try desperately to do so.
  - a. A college degree is now offered in at least one university for those who would be worship directors.
  - b. God's ordained worship is not good enough, men have to "jazz it up" with their innovations — so they say.
2. Let's say again, worship, as God designed and commands, needs no improvement.
  - a. *Singing* — Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16
  - b. *Giving* — 1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor 9:6-7
  - c. *Praying* — Acts 12:12; 13:1-3; Rom. 15:30
  - d. *Lord's supper* — Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:23-30
  - e. *Preaching* — Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 14

## II. MAN'S PARTICIPATION OR ACTION IN WORSHIP CAN BE IMPROVED.

- A. It can be improved because men do not always follow God's directions.
  1. Our minds can wander and not concentrate upon what we need to be doing.
  2. Our *intent* and *sincerity* may not be as it should be.
  3. There are points we need to consider that will aid each one of us in offering our worship in an acceptable manner before God.
- B. Acceptable worship requires **PREPARATION**. We must prepare ourselves to worship. We do not worship by accident. We just don't fall into it.
  1. We must prepare our *BODY*.
    - a. We're coming before the Master of the Universe.
    - b. Shall we be dirty or slouchy? Dress appropriately!
    - c. God demands respect — honor Him! (Hab. 2:20; Psalm 46:10; Zeph. 1:7; Zech. 2:13)
  2. We must prepare our *MIND*. (1 Chron. 28:9; John 4:24)
    - a. Put aside affairs of the world. Concentrate upon our purpose for assembling with the saints.
    - b. Bring "your" Bible. Use it.
  3. We must prepare to be on *TIME*.
    - a. Are we late to work or school — both of them are earlier in the morning than our worship time.
    - b. We are late because we plan to be late. We don't plan to do any better. We won't be late for judgment!
    - c. When we are habitually late, we're not showing the proper respect for holy things.
  4. We must prepare our *ATTITUDE*.
    - a. If we're constantly rushing around trying to get ready, fussing with the kids, arrive late and finally get settled in our seat, our attitude and disposition for worship cannot be the best in the world.

- b. We must be in the proper frame of mind to worship Jehovah.
  - c. Luke 18:9-14, The publican and Pharisee help us.
- C. Acceptable worship must be **FOCUSED**.
- 1. We must have an attitude of “*giving*,” not “*getting*.”
    - a. We assemble to offer God our devotion, adoration and dedication — to “give” unto Him.
    - b. We have the wrong attitude when all we can think about is what we will get out of it.
    - c. Someone says, “I don’t get anything out of worship.” The reason is that such an individual doesn’t put anything into it.
    - d. Proper worship is not: “what do I get,” “what do I get,” “what do I get?”
  - 2. Worship is not for our *entertainment*.
    - a. Our mind should be focused on what God wants? Not what we want.
    - b. Worship is not a spectator affair. Each one participates. We don’t assemble to see and be seen.
  - 3. Our *song service* is for praise to God, not to impress others with our ability.
    - a. Focus on the sentiment of the songs — the meaning of the words. Make your singing “heart-felt.”
    - b. Make sure we sing “*psalms, hymns and spiritual songs*” (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).
    - c. Singing is a congregational affair wherein we not only praise God, but teach and admonish one another. We can encourage and uplift one another.
    - d. During the invitation song, concentrate, pray for the sinner, the wayward.
- D. Acceptable worship will avoid **DISTRACTIONS**.
- 1. Sit where you won’t be distracted. Some brethren like to see everybody’s business. They want to see what they wear, who they’re with and what they’re doing. They had rather concentrate more on everybody else than what they’re supposed to be doing.
  - 2. Resist the temptation to play with the babies. Don’t make faces and goo-goo at them.
  - 3. Don’t write notes, play or carry on a conversation. Some use worship time to clip their fingernails!
  - 4. When children need taking out, DO SO. Tend to their needs and bring them back.
- E. Acceptable worship does not give God the **LEFTOVERS**.
- 1. Our giving must be from the top, not the bottom. (1 Cor. 16:1-2)
  - 2. Why are so many so lax in their worship? People better wake-up and recognize whom they worship!

**CONCLUSION:**

1. Though God-ordained worship is perfect, man's participation in it is many times lacking.
2. Worship is improved when each participant does their part.
3. Could YOUR worship stand improvement?

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## **Voluntary Humility In Worship**

*Charles Blair*

1. The church at Colosse was composed mainly of Gentiles.
2. Greek culture was having an influence on the church there.
3. Some of these things were a result of Jewish legalism, Oriental mysticism and Greek speculation.
4. It was a call to asceticism which is a religious doctrine which says that one can reach a higher spiritual state through rigorous self-denial and self-discipline.
5. Colossians was written to combat this by pointing out the supremacy of Christ, the work of Christ in us and proper worship.
6. Our study, as per the theme of this lectureship, will focus on the idea of proper worship which was being corrupted by all these outside influences.
7. May God bless our study together.

**DISCUSSION:**

- I. **SALVATION IS IN CHRIST AND IN CHRIST ALONE:**
  - A. We are saved by hope (Rom. 8:24).
  - B. That hope is revealed in the truth of the Gospel (Col. 1:5).
  - C. We were, by the obedience to the truth in that Gospel, delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son (Col. 1:13).
  - D. The only thing that could remove sins is the blood of Christ (Heb. 9:22; 10:4; Col. 1:14).
  - E. When we have been immersed into the blood of Christ, our sins are removed and we are added to the church which is the kingdom of Christ on earth (Col. 2:12; Acts 2:47).
  
- II. **IN EVERY STAGE OF MAN ON THIS EARTH, GOD HAS ALWAYS REQUIRED MEN TO WORSHIP HIM. WITH THE FORMATION OF THE CHURCH, WORSHIP CONTINUES IN A WAY WHICH PLEASES GOD:**
  - A. All we do, both in worship and in service, is to be by the authority of Christ (Col. 3:17).

1. When an individual worships God, it must be in spirit and in truth (John 4:24).
  2. When he engages his life in daily service to God, it must be with all the energy he can bring forth (Rom. 12:1).
  3. The heart of such worship and services comes because the individual realizes and desires to do these things for Christ (Col. 3:23).
- B. The will of the Christian is submitted to the One who gave Himself for us (Matt. 16:24).
1. The words of that old familiar hymn reveals this truth.  
*“Have thine own way Lord, have thine own way; Thou art the potter, I am the clay.”*
  2. Worship then, is to be our adoring of Christ and the exaltation of Him in our minds and hearts.
    - a. John on Patmos cried deeply because there was no one worthy to open the book in the hand of the strong angel (Rev. 5:2-4).
    - b. One of the elders comforted John by telling him there was One who was worthy to open the book, it was the Lion of the tribe of Judah (v.5).
    - c. The elders, the angels, and all heaven declare about Jesus, “He is worthy” (vs.9,12).
- III. THERE WAS A GREAT PULL BECAUSE OF JEWISH LEGALISM WHICH THREATENED TO DESTROY, IN THE MINDS OF THE GENTILES, CHRIST AS SAVIOR.**
- A. Christ had taken the law of Moses out of the way. It was no longer the system of authority for God’s people, whether they were Jews or Gentiles (Col. 2:14).
  - B. The law under which we now live is called the law of Christ (Gal. 6:2).
  - C. In an effort to bind portions of the law of Moses on Gentiles, some false teachers were trying to bind dietary laws, holy days or Sabbath days on the Gentiles (Col. 2:16).
  - D. Paul reminds them the law of Moses was but a shadow while Christ and His church are the substance (Heb. 10:1; Col. 2:17).
- IV. THERE WAS ALSO THE PULL OF MYSTICISM AND GREEK THOUGHT:**
- A. Three things are presented here by Paul through inspiration.
    1. Voluntary humility.
    2. Worshiping of angels.
    3. Intrusion into things which they had not seen.
  - B. First of all, the idea of voluntary humility.
    1. The NKJV renders it “false humility.”
    2. The New English Bible calls it, “self-mortification.”

3. The English Study Bible says, "overly humble."
4. Vines Dictionary of the word "voluntary" speaks about it being "of his own mere will."
5. The idea then comes not about real humility, which we are to exemplify both in worship and service, but rather a false humility, that which is not real.
6. Those who try to impress others in worship become guilty of this very thing.
  - a. Jesus warned about the outward show which comes from the false heart (Matt. 6:1,2; 5-6; 16).
  - b. Those who become "actors" on the stage instead of the servants of Christ conveying truth, are spending their time trying to impress their audiences.
- C. The worship of angels was just another way to by-pass Christ as if to say, the angels could serve as go-betweens. The Scriptures declare that Christ is the mediator between God and man and not angels (1 Tim. 2:5)
- D. Intruding into those things which he has not seen.
  1. For some at least, there was a claim to have revelations from God.
  2. Since this individual says that God spoke to him, he must be closer to God.
  3. He becomes puffed up by his fleshly mind.

**V. WE ARE FACED BY THOSE WHO ARE WORKING OVERTIME TO CORRUPT WORSHIP. THE ONLY WAY THEY COULD BE SUCCESSFUL IS TO CHANGE THE OBJECT OF WORSHIP AND THE ATTITUDE OF WORSHIP:**

- A. Some efforts are putting on skits of drama during worship.
  1. First of all, the reaction to such drama efforts would be in the mind of the audience, subjective.
  2. In other words, how did you "feel" about the play?
  3. Whereas from the scripture, we are to teach the Word and the Word is absolute (1 Tim. 4:2).
  4. When Jesus taught His audiences, it was from a position of authority (Matt. 7:28).
  5. What this does is allow women to become active before the congregation in a teaching mode which is forbidden by I Timothy 2:12.
  6. It focuses the attention on the worshiper instead of God, the proper object of worship.
- B. There are those who adopt a change in their voice.
  1. They have their regular talking voice and then their pious voice (voluntary humility).
  2. How strange must this sound when one goes to the knowledge of Scripture which teaches that nothing is to be done through strife or vain glory (Phil. 2:3).

3. Such individuals want the audience to believe they are so pious and humble. It is false to the core.
- C. Those who push for contemporary music select songs which appeal to emotions without regard to Scripture.
  1. Our songs are to be hymns, psalms and spiritual songs (Col. 3:16).
    - a. The heart of such singing is that the Word of Christ dwells in us.
    - b. Those who no longer believe there is power in the Word of God use “Pentecostal type songs” to manipulate worship.

**VI. THE SOLUTIONS TO THESE AND ALL SIMILAR PROBLEMS MUST BE A RETURN TO ACCEPTING CHRIST AS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH AND THE RULER OF OUR HEARTS:**

- A. There were those who were not holding the Head (which is Christ) Col. 2:19.
  1. The word “hold” means to take hold of or hold on to.
  2. Hence, these individuals were no longer holding on to Christ as the head or authority for their lives and practices.
- B. Paul reminds us that it is from the head from which we receive our nourishment and strength.
- C. All of us are knit together in our worship and service to God through our love for God (Col. 2:2,19).

**CONCLUSION:**

1. Let us have real humility both in worship and in service.
2. May we honor God and not ourselves in worship.
3. Let us, by the actions of our lives, declare both in worship and in service, “He is worthy.”



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