

The Worship of the Church

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The modern philosophy in worship is that a person can worship God any way that he wants. Legally one can, but to please God and be acceptable unto Him, our worship must be on God’s terms, as Christ has directed. Not even the church has the right to choose its methods of worship, but must worship as the Bible teaches.

Our Worship Must Be unto God Only.

In Exodus 20:3, God said, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me...” Jesus told Satan, “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve” (Matthew 4:10). When John fell down to worship before the feet of an angel, the angel said, “See thou do it not...worship God” (Revelation 22:8-9).

Worship Can Be True or Vain. Did you know that it is possible to worship God in vain? The Lord told the scribes and Pharisees, “But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men” (Matthew 15:9). These people were worshipping God, but it was vain, or to no avail, because it was not as God directed. Remember the story of Nadab and Abihu from Leviticus 10:1-2? They died because they offered “strange fire” in their worship “which God had commanded them not.” They may have thought they could worship God with any fire or perhaps the strange fire was better, for after all God had not said they could not use it. But, God would not accept it for He had not authorized

its use. This same principle is taught in 2 John 9-11 (“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds”) and Colossians 3:17 (“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him”). Our worship must be by Jesus’ authority. To go beyond is to not have God.

There are two elements of true worship. Jesus said, “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). To worship in spirit is to worship from the heart. It involves understanding, meaning, and feeling. This is the attitude of acceptable worship (Matthew 15:8). To worship in truth is to worship by the teachings of the truth, the word of God (John 17:17). This is the standard for acceptable worship.

The Channels of Worship. To fully worship God, we must assemble with the church. “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is...” (Hebrews 10:25).

Teaching. The Lord directed, “...teaching

them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you..." (Matthew 28:20). The ones to be taught in this verse are those who have been baptized. "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God" (John 6:45). Early Christians "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine..." (Acts 2:42). We see a good example of the church meeting for worship and Paul preaching unto them in Acts 20:7. This is why Bible classes are taught and sermons are preached.

Prayer. Paul penned, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit..." (Ephesians 6:18). Luke recorded, "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers" (Acts 2:42). "Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him" (Acts 12:5).

Singing. There are two kinds of music: vocal and instrumental. Ephesians 5:19 says, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." Colossians 3:16 states, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs singing with grace in your hearts

to the Lord." From these Scriptures, it is easy to see that the only kind of music Christ has directed is singing - vocal music. Notice also that we are to all sing to each other, and not have a choir to sing to or for us.

The Lord's supper. "And they continued steadfastly in...breaking of bread..." (Acts 2:42). The Christians at Troas assembled upon the first day of the week to break bread (Acts 20:7). As the Jews were expected to keep every Sabbath day holy (Exodus 20:8), Christians observe the Lord's supper every Sunday. There are two elements of the Lord's supper: unleavened bread and fruit of the vine (1 Corinthians 11:23-30), and its purpose is to "shew the Lord's death till he come" (1 Corinthians 11:26).

Giving. "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (1 Corinthians 16:2). "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:6-7). This is the only way the church may Scripturally raise money.

Let us be content to worship in these ways and leave out everything else.

The Terre Haute Speaker is published weekly by the church of Christ at Terre Haute, Indiana.

Assembling At:

Holiday Inn Express & Suites
2645 S Joe Fox St.
Terre Haute, IN 47803
(Exit 11, I-70 & SR 46)

www.churchofchristatterrehaute.com



Assembling Times:

Sunday @ 10:00 a.m. & 3:00 p.m.
Wednesday @ 7:00 p.m.



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Is Our
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