

A Study of the Church in the New Testament

Lesson 8: The Worship of the Church in the New Testament

I. Introduction

A. Some important foundation principles concerning worship in the New Testament:

1. Worship is directed to the Father in heaven (*Matthew 4:10; John 4:20-24*)
2. Worship was also given to Jesus
 - a. A leper worshiped Jesus (*Matthew 8:2*)
 - b. Jairus, a ruler, worshiped Jesus (*Matthew 9:18*)
 - c. The disciples worshiped Jesus (*Matthew 14:33*)
3. Angels REFUSED to be worshiped (*Revelation 22:8, 9*)
4. Peter REFUSED to be worshiped (*Acts 10:25, 26*)
5. The common word for “worship” means to “kiss the hand toward someone” as a token of REVERENCE
6. When we worship together, this assembly is NOT ENTERTAINMENT, but it should be ENCOURAGING! (*Hebrews 10:24, 25*)
7. Worship is much more than activities done in a worship assembly. Worship is also the offering of ourselves as a “living sacrifice” to God, our “spiritual worship” (*Romans 12:1*). Worship is also our daily “service” to God!

B. A very important note: **Throughout the history of man, God has ALWAYS told His people how He wants them to worship Him!**

1. God wanted certain sacrifices from Cain and Abel (*Genesis 4:1-16; Hebrews 11:4*)
2. Under the Law of Moses, God specified EVERYTHING about the tabernacle and ALL the activities of worship. See the disobedience of the sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, concerning the worship (*Leviticus 10:1, 2*)
3. God wants us to worship Him in “spirit” and “truth” (*John 4:23, 24*)

II. Some Very Important Characteristics and Qualities of Worship

A. Worship should be done with a feeling of “AWE” and “REVERENCE”

1. We are to worship God with “reverence” and “awe” (*Hebrews 12:28*)
2. Angels cry, “Holy, Holy, Holy,” is the Lord God! (*Revelation 4:8; 5:8-14*)

3. See the “reverence” of Isaiah as he saw God’s glory (*Isaiah 6:1-6*)
- B. Worship is showing God’s WORTH or GREATNESS (*Revelation 4:11; 5:8, 9, 11-15; Psalm 96:1-9; 99:9*)
- C. Worship is a “SACRIFICE” that is offered to the Lord
 1. It is praise, the “fruit of our lips” (*Hebrews 13:15*)
 2. Doing good and sharing is also sacrifice (*Hebrews 13:16*)
- D. Worship is our RESPONSE to what God has done for us (*Acts 2:36-47*). They were saved, and then they praised God!
- E. Worship REMEMBERS what the Lord has done (*1Corinthians 11:23-29*). We “remember” as we take the Lord’s Supper!
- F. Worship also looks to the FUTURE! “...until He comes” (*1Corinthians 11:26*)

III. Incorrect and Correct Worship

- A. Incorrect Worship
 1. “Vain” worship that is based on the precepts of men (*Matthew 15:1-14*). “Vain” means “fruitless” or a “futile attempt.”
 2. “Ignorant” worship, for God was not known to them (*Acts 17:23*)
 3. “Will” worship which the person wants, and worship which the worshiper “devises and prescribes for himself” (*Colossians 2:20-23*)
- B. Correct Worship (*John 4:23, 24*)
 1. The OBJECT of true worship is GOD
 2. The NATURE of true worship is “in SPIRIT.” It comes from the reason of man. It is a “reasoned” worship (*see Romans 12:1; 1Peter 2:2*).
 3. The STANDARD of true worship is “TRUTH.” See how important truth is in the book of John (*John 1:14, 17; 8:32; 17:17*)

IV. The Worship of the Church in the New Testament (In the Assembly of the Church – see *1Corinthians 14:23*)

- A. Note first that the assembly of the church is to (1) praise God, and (2) to encourage the church (*Hebrews 10:24, 25*)
- B. Praying together
 1. See how the church prayed together in assembly (*1Corinthians 14:14-17; Acts 12:1-12*)
 2. Characteristics of prayer
 - a. Directed to God (*Matthew 6:9*). But, see also “Maranatha” which means, “Come Lord Jesus” (*1Corinthians 16:22; Revelation 22:20; Acts 7:59*)
 - b. Prayer must be spoken in FAITH (*James 1:5-7*)

- c. Prayer must be in harmony with God's Word, and His "permissive will" (*1John 5:14*)
- d. Prayer is "in the name of Christ" (*Hebrews 4:14-16; John 14:13, 14*)

C. Singing together

- 1. Singing was done in the assembly (*1Corinthians 14:15*), or privately such as Paul and Silas in prison (*Acts 16:25*). The singing in *Ephesians 5:19* and *Colossians 3:16* could be either individual singing or as a group.
- 2. Singing is both UPWARD praise to God (*Acts 16:25*) and OUTWARD as we teach and encourage our brothers (*Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16*)
- 3. In the New Testament, singing was ALWAYS done without any musical instrument to accompany. It was vocal music only.

D. The Lord's Supper

- 1. It was observed in the assembly of the church (*Acts 2:42; 1Corinthians 11:18, 20*)
- 2. It was eaten on the "first day of the week," the day when Jesus was resurrected (*Acts 20:7*). See *Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1, 9*
- 3. It was Jesus who began the Lord's Supper the night before His betrayal (*Matthew 26:17-29; Mark 14:12-25; Luke 22:7-30*)
- 4. The Lord's Supper is:
 - a. A MEMORIAL in remembrance of the Lord's body and blood (*Matthew 26:26-28; 1Corinthians 11:23-26*)
 - b. It is COMMUNION, a sharing, in the body and blood of the Lord (*1Corinthians 10:16, 17*)
 - c. It is PROCLAMATION of the death of Jesus (*1Corinthians 11:26*)

E. Public Reading of the Scriptures

- 1. Public reading of the Old Testament was done in the synagogue (*Luke 4:16-20*)
- 2. Public reading of the Word of God was to be done by Timothy (*1Timothy 4:13*)
- 3. The inspired Word was to be read to the church at Colossae (*Colossians 4:16*)

F. Preaching of the Word of God was done in the assembly

- 1. Paul spoke to the church at Troas (*Acts 20:7*)
- 2. When the church assembled, there was teaching (*1Corinthians 14:26*)

G. Giving of a financial contribution by the church

- 1. The Christian must FIRST "give himself" to the Lord (*2Corinthians 8:5*)
- 2. It should be based on LOVE (*2Corinthians 8:8*)

3. It is VOLUNTARY, as one has purposed to give (*2Corinthians 9:6, 7*)
4. It is based by the Lord on WHAT A PERSON HAS, how he has been BLESSED (*1Corinthians 16:1-3; 2Corinthians 8:12*)