



*Chalmette  
Church of Christ  
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Foundations of Worship (Part 2)

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The Folly of False Worship

While God is the object or aim of worship, not all worship is pleasing to God. The Bible speaks of vain worship (Matt. 15:8-9), ignorant worship (Acts 17:22-23), will worship (Col. 2:23), and true worship (John 4:24). To worship "in truth" means according to God's directive. To worship "in Spirit" means the worshipper has the proper attitude. Some may be careful concerning doctrine but forget the heart. Isaiah spoke of those whose worship was empty because it did not come from within. The worship lacked sincerity.

Bring no more vain oblations; incense is abomination unto me; the new moons and Sabbath, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them (Isa. 1:13-14).

Others completely neglect New Testament teaching regarding worship. In so doing, new or borrowed innovations are brought into the assembly in an effort to help the worshipers "feel" closer to God and to give their worship "meaning." However, for worship to be accepted by God it must be done "in spirit and in truth."

It is readily apparent that there are thousands of religious systems worldwide. Usually, Christianity is thrown in among Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam as among the major religions. Not surprisingly, all of these groups engage in some type of worship. In what is commonly called "Christendom," there are thousands of denominational bodies. While all of the adherents to these various groups are religious, and while all are worshippers, surely not all are true worshippers. How can this be determined? If one believes Jesus, the worshiper must realize he can come to God only through Jesus. The Lord said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). However, is it possible that one can claim he is a follower of Jesus and still not worship God correctly? Hear ye Him:

Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophecy of you, saying, this people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth 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).

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven (Matt. 7:21).

Did you know the second sin recorded in the Bible has to do with worship? Remember Cain, like Abel, was a worshiper. "And in the process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord" (Gen. 4:3).

Suppose Abel said to Cain, "Where are you going?" "I am going to worship," replies Cain. Abel says, "Cain, who are you going to worship?" "The same God you are worshipping, Abel."

Many religious people today claim to worship the same God as those who are members of the church of Christ. Because of this, many of them become hostile when their worship practices are called into question. Is it legitimate to question the way another worships? Is it not proper to ask where these religious people find authority for what they do in worship? John wrote, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1). Paul wrote, "Prove all things" (1 Thess. 5:21). The Lord said, "If any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth" (John 9:31). Consider once again the worship of Cain and Abel.

And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground and offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; But unto Cain and to his offering the Lord had not respect (Gen. 4:3-5a).

Someone could read the account and initially feel sorry for Cain. Perhaps he was sincere. Perhaps he did not know what God desired. However, God has never left it to man how He desired to be worshiped; He has always revealed His will. Concerning Abel's offering, the writer of Hebrews states, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained a witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh" (Heb. 11:4). But remember Paul's words, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). Since Abel offered his sacrifice by faith, the Bible student understands he could only have done so by revelation of God. What worshipers do today in worship must be done in faith or else worship is folly. To worship in faith demands respect for authority of God's word, and the greatest test of faith is respect for God's silence (Heb. 7:14). God had revealed how Cain and Abel were to worship, but Cain chose something else, thus becoming the first change agent of worship.

Remember that apostasy would take place in the early church. It would come through abandoning the gospel plan of salvation, the organization of the church, the New Testament worship. How were the principles of New Testament worship abandoned? Simply by disregarding God's authority. "Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar" (Prov. 30:6). Denominational bodies to this hour demonstrate their contempt for the word of God by engaging in unauthorized worship.

### The Formula for Worship

The restoration preachers of several centuries ago realized that for the New Testament church to be restored the worship of the church must be restored. Could this be done? Remember, God desires for man to worship Him. Likewise, He has, in every dispensation of man, revealed how to worship properly. Man must determine to humbly go to the word of God and accept its precepts (Jas. 1:21) and not engage in anything unauthorized by God (Col. 3:17).

First, for one to worship properly he must be in Christ (2 Tim. 2:10; Gal. 3:26-27). To be in Christ is to be in His church, and that is the only place where God can be glorified (Eph. 3:21). Once a person is born into the family of God, having his soul purified (1 Pet. 1:22), he then must retain a pure heart, if his worship is to be accepted (1 Pet. 1:16; 2:5, 9). A person should not fool himself into thinking he can live for the devil Monday through Saturday and please God with his worship on Sunday (Mic. 6:8).

Second, through a study of the New Testament one can find what is acceptable unto God in worship. Remember, one is to worship "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). Likewise, one is to respect Christ's authority, since He is the head of the church (Eph. 1:22). The New Testament authorizes five acts of worship. Indeed, worship involves action. Worship is something that begins and ends. For example, Abraham said to his servants, "I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you" (Gen. 22:5). Hence, not all of life is worship. What are the five acts of worship in which Christians engage?

(1) Christians are authorized to sing in the assembly. Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord (Eph. 5:19).

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 (Col. 3:16).

These passages are clear as to the types of songs that are to be utilized in worship to God (psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs). Furthermore, the melody is to be made in the heart. All Christians are to sing, because all Christians are to "teach and admonish."

We must also conclude that singing accompanied with musical instruments is an addition to what God has authorized and, thus, is sinful. The same would be true of choirs, solos, humming, and whistling.

(2) Christians are authorized to pray in the assembly (Acts 2:42; 12:5). Men are authorized to pray everywhere or in any place, but not women (1 Tim. 2:8-14).

(3) Christians are authorized to engage in preaching and teaching in the assembly (Acts 2:42; 20:7).

(4) Christians are authorized to partake of the Lord's supper in the assembly. This is a memorial of Christ's death on the cross (1 Cor. 11:23-28). It is to be done upon the first day of the week (Acts 20:7).

(5) Christians are authorized to give of their means in the assembly. Likewise, instruction is given as to the day this is done.

Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him is store as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come (1 Cor. 16:1-2).

While New Testament worship is simple, it is still profound. Truly, it is a joy to know one has worshiped God acceptably. The individual who worships God from a pure heart and wholly engages in the scriptural acts of worship, will never leave the assembly, saying, "I didn't get anything out of it."

### Conclusion

After the restoration of New Testament Christianity, false teachers once again came along to assault the gospel plan of salvation, the organization of the church, and the worship. How thankful we should be for those such as Tolbert Fanning, Benjamin Franklin, and David Lipscomb who valiantly resisted the efforts of change agents. With the same loyalty to our Lord and love for the souls of men may we ever strive to uphold God's pattern for worship in the midst of a multitude who would pervert it.

## News and Notes

- Our Third Sunday Singing and Fellowship Meal will be on August 17th. Please bring a dish and a friend.
- Please keep Malcom and Marlene Vazquez in your prayers at this time. Malcom was diagnosed with cancer.
- Please keep Mickey Harrison and David Desambourg in your prayers at this time as they as both recovering from recent surgeries.
- Please keep Alexis Hall in your prayers at this time. She is the granddaughter of Sylvia Hall. Alexis was in a serious accident and is still in serious condition.
- Please keep Alice Riley, and Margo Rodney in your prayers at this time as they are in poor health.
- Please keep Keiane Johnson in your prayers at this time. He is suffering from leukemia and will be undergoing a bone marrow transplant.
- Please keep Emily Menesses in your prayers at this time, she is back in the hospital and in serious condition.
- Please keep Kathy Calvert in your prayers at this time. She is the niece of Mary Jo Lance. She was diagnosed with cancer and is undergoing chemo at this time.
- Please keep all of our kids in your prayers as they start back to school this week!



### August Birthdays

11th-Emily Stafford  
12th-Sharon Brock  
14th-Jackie Gamble  
16th- Tracy Stafford  
23rd-Robert Gillard

25th-MaryJo Lance

26th-Carol Calix



# Prayer List



**Alice Riley & family**  
**Sherry Towle**  
**Margo Rodney**  
**Judy Hennessee**  
**Ella Gillard**  
**Krisztian Montague**  
**Linda Swanner**  
**Jackie Gamble**  
**Addressan Jenkins**  
**Gloria Smiles**  
**Joel James**  
**David Ebeling**  
**Ryker Amaya**  
**Raymond Sanchez**  
**Gary Huettmann**  
**Malcolm & Marlene Vazquez**  
**Sondra & Olivia Rivera**

\*All of our brethren scattered across  
the United States & our troops in  
Iraq



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**Services of The Church**  
**Sunday**

Bible Classes 9:00 am  
AM Worship 10:00 am  
PM Worship 6:00 pm

**Wednesday**

Bible Classes 7:00 pm

**Elders**

Mark Lance 504-250-8492

J. V. Russell 504-277-0251

Charles Whitley 504-277-4717

**Evangelist**

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