



**Spirit and Truth**

**Worship**

**is it Yours**

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## Preface

This booklet has information and enlightenment for the purpose of uplifting saints everywhere that call on the name of the Lord. Scriptural truth is shown so that the saints of God may worship with clarity in spirit and in truth. What was once practiced as common among the Lord's brethren today is almost unknown.

I have not given a complete word picture of everything pertaining to worship in this short booklet. Rather attention is directed to the central and vital aspects of worship. Also, attention is given regarding the Christian's place when entering into worship. Listed as well are some points to consider on what is not Scriptural or spiritual worship, concluding in a question and answer section.

There is lacking today, a mature and Scriptural understanding of true worship. A great deal of what is called 'worship' in the churches today does not have a Scriptural precedent, nor does it enter into the Scriptural pattern of worship. The thinking today among many in the churches is this; "I feel good so what I am receiving must be correct teaching and practice." This rational is alive and well in the churches. The culture of the unbelieving world is having a great influence on what is called 'worship' in the churches. This is so much the case that most professing believers, it would seem, are carried away by the winds of

expediency in the culture of our day. Humanism, the women's movement, new age, Nicolaitanism and many other isms that evolve from the mind of man or the enemy are the norm in churches today.

The knowledge of true worship will never make one higher than his brethren, thus allowing him to judge the intents of their hearts. The truths of true worship show the Christian his place of privilege in his inheritance. If the Christian should want anything in his desire of Jesus, it should be for a lower place for himself, for that is where Jesus promised to be, "I am meek and lowly in heart" (Matthew 11:29). The Christian should have the same spirit as John the Baptist, when he said, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30).

## **1. Who is to be at the center of worship?**

The desire or longing to worship is in the heart of every human being. The evidence of this desire is found in the actions of people from every tribe and nation on earth. Worship is practiced in one form or another among all people on the earth. In many of the primitive peoples, blood letting of sacrifices is involved. The more educated people practice traditionalism, ritualism and modernism. These practices of worship in the world according to man and Satan's idea of worship are not according to the revelation of God as revealed by the Holy Spirit in Scripture.

However people worship, they acknowledge a god of some kind. Most all of this worship is around material objects, spirits, mysticism, superstition or whatever appeals to the religious nature of man (John 4:22; Acts 17:22, 31).

When we examine the Holy Scriptures, we learn about the God who made all things (Genesis 1:1). We learn that God designed man to be a worshipper of Himself (John 4:23; Ephesians 1:5-6). In Psalms 8, David acknowledges Jehovah God as the maker of heaven and earth, and gives exaltation (worship) to Him for it. In Psalms 139, David praises God for His sovereignty over all things, including David's own miracle of creation in birth.

In Romans chapters 1 and 2, we learn that God in creation gave man two facts of reality by which to identify

his Creator. The first being creation itself, the second being his conscience. By these two evidences, the natural man can know that the true God exists and is in fact, a reality. When the Apostle Paul was in Athens, Greece, he found an inscription on an altar that read, “to the unknown God.” He told the Athenians that they were superstitious and worshipped this god ignorantly. He told them that in times past God winked at this ignorance, but now commands all men everywhere to repent (Acts 17:22-23, 30). From these verses in Acts, we know that a person can not be a true worshipper without repentance.

In 2 Kings 5:15 we read about a man named Naaman who was a Syrian and a follower of pagan gods. He had been cured of leprosy by the prophet Elisha. After being cured he said, “I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel.” Later, Naaman asked pardon of the prophet Elisha, for having to enter a pagan temple, when his master would direct him to do so: see verse 18. Naaman had come to the point of truth about who alone was the true God. When a person arrives at this place, he does not need to ask who or what should be worshipped, it will be self evident.

## **2. What is Worship?**

The word worship is first seen in Genesis 22:5. In this passage Abraham was to offer his son Issac as a sacrificial

burnt offering to God. This is a picture of what the Lord Jesus would do at the cross. In Israel's sacrifice of the burnt offering, (a type of Christ) the entire animal was to be burnt up. It was all for God, nothing was to be eaten by the priests as in other sacrificial offerings (Leviticus 1:13). To the Christian, this simply means that pure worship is where man is unnoticed, and God our Father receives all praise, adoration and worship, for the glory found in the Son and the work which He has accomplished. Worship in its true application for the Christian, will always have God our Creator, and Saviour as its object. The One worshipped is to be our focus, not what the worshipper is doing. In fact, a worshipper can distract himself and others, from the object of worship by placing himself, or herself, into a physical place of attention.

True worship is the lifting up of the Lord Jesus to the Father. The worshipper should decrease in appearance and physical use of his outward person. He must be made small in his own eyes and the eyes of others as well, and in corporate worship even more so. The practice of worship does not ever put a worshipper into a place of being noticed, but simply to spiritually enter into what God has done. Worship, is the place where the Christian is called upon to fulfill the Father's desire, for the Father is seeking true worshippers (John 4:23). Only by worshipping in spirit and truth can the Christian fulfill the desire of the Father (John 4:24).

This place of communion with the Father is the entering into ‘spirit and truth’ worship. The Lord Jesus has given us the loaf and the cup for a remembrance of Himself. In the loaf and the cup, the Lord Jesus is seen as the sacrificial object of the love of God. Here nothing can compare to the beauty of Him. Men dancing, musical instruments playing, clergy taking charge, or men exhibiting their physical presence is compared to “sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal” (1 Corinthians 13:1). When we compare man’s ways with the love of God found in the Lord Jesus, they are always lacking. When we see just a little of the fullness of God, found in the Lord Jesus, it becomes an empty gesture for us in some way to put our self into a physical place of sharing this spotlight. This is done in churches regularly, but in ignorance. The delight of the Father is in the Lord Jesus only, and in the believer who lives in the liberty of Christ.

We come into favor with God thru Christ’s righteousness being imputed into us. To worship in spirit and truth allows us to rejoice in what the Father accomplished in Jesus. The Lord Jesus will be the center of our joy and praise, as we come to God in Christ’s righteousness.

The loaf and the cup speak of the remembrance of His glorious person and work. One of the few requests Jesus asked of His own, was to remember Him in the loaf and the cup (Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:24). The pathway of

freedom in spirit and truth worship is to follow Him in what he has taught us.

The practice of worship for the Christian is to be guided and led by the Holy Spirit. We are to function as a vessel of His praise (Ephesians 1:6; 1 Peter 2:9). The Holy Spirit's work is to function through the heart of a Christian, to bring forth and make known the glories of the Lord Jesus. To worship according to truth means that the word of Christ, and the person of Christ, will have preeminence. True worship will bring forth the truth as revealed in Scripture of the position and work of the Lord Jesus. The worshipper will have as little physical presence as possible, so that the One being worshipped may be seen by faith.

What is worship? It is the putting away of myself (to sit at his feet) to elevate the Lord Jesus who called me by His grace. It is to speak forth the praises of God our Savior among His blood bought saints in the assembly.

In the gospel of John 5:23, we learn that the Father and the Son are of equal honor. It is clear from this Scripture and many others, that worship is to be directed toward the Father and the Son (John 9:38; 10:33; 11:43).

In searching Scripture, we find that there is no place where the Holy Spirit is to be prayed to, or worshipped. If we are led in worship by the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit will direct the Christian to the Father and the Son. He will not direct worship to Himself. "For He shall not speak of

Himself” (John 16:13). We can only assume that many in Christendom worship and pray to the Holy Spirit because of their zeal without knowledge. Our place before God is to be led by the Holy Spirit, not by zeal or good intentions. The truth revealed in Christ through Scripture is the Christian’s only place of foundation for addressing his God.

### **3. Does it Matter in Which Way I Worship or is Worship just a Matter of Where my Heart is?**

God gave Israel every aspect for worship, and detail that was to be attended to. Let us start with the tabernacle and the articles for use in connection with the tabernacle. The clothing of the high priest, the feast days, the times of the year when all males were to present themselves, the offerings, the tithes, etc. Nothing pertaining to worship was left up to the individual to decide. Everything in connection with worship was ordered of God, even the smallest detail, as shown in the Pentateuch.

If we go back further in history to Abel, we learn in Genesis 4:4, that his form of worship with a blood offering was received of God. However, Cain’s form of worship with his offering from the fruit of the ground was not acceptable. This portion of Scripture shows us that worship is not a matter of good intentions. Worship is to be practiced on the basis of what is pleasing to God, not what is acceptable to man.

In Genesis 8:20-21, Noah worshipped by spilling the blood of clean animals in burnt offerings. We read in verse 21 that it was a sweet savor unto the Lord. In Ephesians 5:2, Christ gave Himself as a sweet smelling aroma unto God in His sacrifice unto death. The sacrifice of Jesus was the complete fulfillment of all the sacrifices before Him, forever (Hebrews 10:10, 12, 14).

If we looked for examples of worship in the Scriptures which were not acceptable to God, we would find many. Cain, as already shown, had a form of worship which was not acceptable to God. Exodus 32:1-10 gives us a description of the children of Israel worshipping according to their own hearts and minds. The result of this type of worship was that God would destroy them, verse 10.

As we go on, we find another unacceptable example in Leviticus 10:1-2. Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire before the Lord. Fire went out from the Lord and devoured them. Their sin was acting in the things of God without seeking the mind of the Lord. Another has put it this way; 'Nadab and Abihu used carnal means and ways to kindle the fire of devotion and praise.' We do not have to look far to see this happening today in the 'great house' of Christendom (2 Timothy 2:19-21).

I Chronicles 13:10 shows us that the ark, while being moved, was touched by Uzza in a way that God had not allowed. The result of this was death to Uzza. The ark was

the center of the things concerning worship in the tabernacle. The lesson from this incident is that the articles of worship were to be handled, according to the Word and mind of God. The Christian has full liberty in the Holy Spirit; however, this liberty cannot be interpreted to mean that one may handle the things of God according to his own mind.

Looking in the New Testament, we see that Jesus drove the money changers out of the temple. He said, they had made it a den of thieves (Matthew 21:12-13). In the case of Ananias and Sapphira, their sin was that of attempting to corrupt the house of God (the Church) with self interest (Acts 5:11). Further on, in 1 Corinthians 11:17-34, we see how the Corinthians corrupted the worship at the Lord's Table. The result of this was that many were sick and weak, and many died.

By these Scriptures, we may know that worship is to be carried out only according to the Holy Spirit, in truth and faith. The flesh cannot be involved in worship without consequences. Liberty in Christ is the Christian's position and the place of favor. However, it can never be said that this liberty is freedom for the flesh to direct in the things of Christ. It cannot be more true that where spiritual worship is involved, the flesh has no place.

#### **4. Is it Your Desire to be a Worshipper?**

Within the heart of every Christian, the Holy Spirit has put the desire to be a worshipper of God and Christ. This desire has been redirected by many men, churches, and doctrines to bring the Christian under un-Scriptural practices to worship. To be a worshipper of God, one must worship according to the truth of Christ in Scripture. The reader may be asking, “How do I enter into worship according to Scripture?” The Christian may be confused about how clear and simple the subject of worship really is. The Holy Spirit will lead the Christian to this place, if Jesus alone, without men’s voices, is heeded. John 16:13 teaches us that, “when the Holy Spirit is come He will lead us into all truth.” And in verse 14, “He shall glorify Me.” Worship has its foundation based in truth (the Lord Jesus) not the physical acts of men, church practices or religious programs.

The Christian should ask himself if he has been released from man’s form of worship. Only then will he come into the place where the Holy Spirit is free to elevate the Lord Jesus according to the truth of Scripture, and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

#### **5. Has the Father Found in me a Worshipper?**

Worship is the main thought recorded in Genesis 22. Abraham and Issac his son were going to worship God,

with a burnt offering. This sacrifice was a type of that perfect burnt offering which was to come. The first seven chapters of Leviticus speak of various offerings. These offerings all tell of the different aspects that the Lord Jesus, as God's lamb, would fulfill at the cross. In Leviticus 23, there are seven feasts. Of these seven feasts, the first four have been fulfilled in the life (Feast of Unleavened Bread), death (Feast of Passover), resurrection of Jesus (Feast of Firstfruits), and the giving of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Feast of Weeks). Those feasts were types and shadows of the true feast of God, Jesus (Colossians 2:17). Jesus came and completed all things written of Himself (Luke 24:27, 44).

In Numbers 19, there is another offering; this one was of the red heifer. The sacrifice of the red heifer was burned up completely, outside the camp of Israel. The ashes mixed with water, cleansed all who were sprinkled with them from their defilement. Jesus is the antitype, by a continual sacrificial work for his saints (Hebrews 10:10, 12, 14). In all these types, Jesus is seen as the fulfillment of the outward practices which God gave to Israel in and before the law.

The Christian's enjoyment then is to enter into this by a new and living way (Hebrews 10:19-20), not in a physical way as by the law, but by the Holy Spirit and truth, being in awe of the One who has done all things in completion. The Christian's place of worship is in joy and thanksgiving. The Christian's heart is then unrestricted, with the recipient of worship being the Lord Jesus and the Father.

As noted in John 4:23, the Father is seeking worshippers. He is seeking those who will worship Him according to His mind, in truth and by the Holy Spirit. The book of Acts, teaches us the truths which the Holy Spirit enacted for worship. The same pattern for worship is found in the epistles. For example, in Acts 2:42, there are four pillars, which are the spiritual ground of gathering for the Church.

These four are: the 'apostles' doctrine,' fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayers. We will consider these four in each one of their aspects. First, the 'apostles' doctrine,' is it worship? The answer, of course, is no. But correct doctrine is very uplifting and necessary for the people of God. The second to consider is fellowship. Is it worship? The answer again is no, but fellowship in Christ is very uplifting and necessary for the saints. The third is prayers. Prayers are certainly part of worship. However, prayer here seems to mean soliciting God for the needs of the saints (Acts 6:4). The fourth is the breaking of bread. In the breaking of bread we have been given a remembrance of the sacrificial work of the Lord Jesus. In this, the remembrance of the Lord Jesus is pure worship. This is because it involves what He has done, not what individuals are doing. It sets our hearts on Him who is at the center of all that pleases the Father.

In this place of worship, we find in Jesus, everything that brings us into oneness with the Father. To enter into

worship (pure and undefiled), one must step back and by faith bask in the glory of the Lord Jesus. True worship is to be led by the Holy Spirit, and unspoiled. Spoiling worship is accomplished by the pushing in of men who may be gifted or not gifted, or by those who labor in God's vineyard or saints of no significance (as men think), or those with some title or clerical position given by men. The place of worship given to the Lord's brethren, is centering themselves around the Lord Jesus, Who is in their midst, as the center and Head among them. In this gathering, the priesthood of all the Lord's brethren is exercised, to make known the glory of the Lord Jesus to the Father with all joy and praise. All this is to be exercised in the full liberty of the working of the Holy Spirit. Each brother, as exercised brings forth in worship for all in attendance, what the Holy Spirit has given him to make known. It may be in the form of a psalm, a teaching, a tongue, a revelation, or an interpretation (1 Corinthians 14:26). This privilege of exercising one's priesthood is an exercise of faith, to bring out and make known in worship, the glory of the Lord Jesus. The Christian who exercises this practice puts himself in the place to answer the Father's desire for a worshipper (John 4:23-24). In this manner the simplicity in Christ Jesus is seen and the Father is glorified.

## **6. Some Scriptures and Thoughts for Meditations**

The following thoughts deal with Christians as worshippers, both within and outside the assembly. Notice how the culture of the present day has influenced the professing churches in their practices. The question before the reader is: should he or she follow culture or

the truth found in Christ according to Scripture?

**1.** The remembrance of the Lord Jesus in the breaking of bread is to be primary in worship as it centers on Him.

More attention is given in the New Testament to the breaking of bread than any other corporate practice of worship. It is spoken to in: Matthew 26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19; Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Corinthians 5:5-6; 10:16; 11:23-34.

1-a. To fulfill the type in Scripture of one body, a loaf is seen in the one bread (1 Corinthians 10:17). Wafers, (instead of bread), are used by many churches; wafers do not give an adequate expression of the (physical) body of Jesus as shown in 1 Corinthians 11:24. The oneness of His body (the Church), is spoken of in 1 Corinthians 10:17 as the one bread or loaf.

**2.** As we worship in the remembrance of the Lord Jesus, the priesthood of all believers should be in practice, as we offer up prayers and thanksgiving to the Father (1 Peter 2:5, 9). Saints are giving forth the joy of the Lord Jesus by the

fruit of their lips; in this place the fullness of Jesus is allowed to occupy us, while the world is shut out and our souls find rest in our God (Hebrews 4:9-10).

3. How often should we break the bread? In the beginning of the Church it appears it was a daily practice (Acts 2:46). However, when we get to Acts 20:7, we find it was on the first day of the week when the brethren came together to break bread. The first day being the day of the resurrection of Jesus, or the Lord's Day (Revelation 1:10).

4. In 1 Timothy 2:8 we are instructed that men (in contrast to women, the Greek word for males is *Aner*, (it is used here), are to lift up holy hands and pray. This instruction for men to raise hands in worship should not be despised.

5. We are instructed in 1 Corinthians 14:34 that women are to be silent in the assembly. This does not mean that the sisters do not have gifts and calling to be used, where liberty of Scripture allows. Their worship is just as valid as the brothers; however, their worship is to be practiced the same of the brothers, under authority of Scripture. Meaning that vocal leadership among sisters is forbidden by Scripture and the Holy Spirit during worship, or in public ministry (1 Timothy 2:11-12). In

1 Corinthians 14:37 we are given the Lord's mind concerning these truths "if any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."

6. According to what we are taught in 1 Corinthians 11:5 a woman is to have her head covered (veil, hat or cloth) so that the order of God may be seen by angels and men (1 Corinthians 11:10; Ephesians 3:10). Worship of God should only be practiced under the order that God has established. “For you brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty for an opportunity for the flesh...” (Galatians 5:13).

7. Offering the sacrifice of praise in worship, through the fruit of our lips, is no less than the place of privilege and freedom in priesthood (Hebrews 13:15).

There is much more that could be written on this subject, however, only some of the primary truths have been covered. Christians of today should be like the Bereans who examined the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so (Acts 17:11).

### **Some Questions Considered**

**Q.** Where could I see or gather with other believers as the Scriptures have been made known in this booklet?

**A.** Seek out those who gather according to Scriptural truths. It could be in your own home or any convenient place. For Jesus said, “Where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them” (Matthew 18:20).

**Q.** What is necessary or needed to practice these truths of worship?

**A.** Faith in the Lord Jesus who calls us by His grace. Also, faith in what Scripture teaches us, as it shows us our position of privilege in Christ.

**Q.** Why shouldn't we use musical instruments playing in worship? Why shouldn't our pastor or clergy be in charge of this?

**A.** Spirit and truth worship, as pointed out in this booklet, has to do with the Holy Spirit leading us, not men with some appointed position or talent. Instruments are very valuable in music. However, in spiritual worship, instruments overshadow the gentle voice of the Spirit of God leading and working in the believer and in the assembly. Believer's, who in faith express joy and worship in their offering of praise and thanksgiving, are not in need of external help.

God has set the Christian free to function in his priesthood as he exercises his faith. This freedom means, allowing the Holy Spirit the preeminence in any Christian worship meeting, to accomplish His purpose. Worship is first in the exercise of the Christian's gift of priesthood. The position of 'worship leaders' is not found in Christian assemblies where Scriptural order is practiced. The hiring of clergy and the utilizing of non-clergy to lead worship or be called worship leaders are concepts that come from the

Law of Moses. The Law of Moses is for a people of no faith (Deuteronomy 32:20; Galatians 3:12).

Priesthood of believers taught, practiced and understood among the saints gives freedom to the Holy Spirit to use whom He will and bring forth what He will.

**Q.** Israel used instruments in worship as recorded in the Psalms, so why shouldn't believers use them also?

**A.** Israel's worship was outward worship, as all things were under the law. It was not improper for them to use instruments. A higher place is given the Christian.

Christians have direct access to God by His Spirit, through Christ, their High Priest. Israel did not have that, because the Holy Spirit was not yet given to them (John 14:17). The prophets prophesied by the Holy Spirit, but they were not permanently in-dwelt by the Holy Spirit (1 Peter 1:11).

Only from the time of Pentecost did any believer receive the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, Jesus said, "...true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. For the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth" (John 4:23-24).

Spiritual worship is from the heart; the believer's vocal expression makes it known to God and to the assembly. Instruments or the introduction of other physical distractions take away from the Holy Spirit's leading and directing in worship.

**Q.** Our church has worship leaders and dancing. We think this is a spiritual way to worship, because King David danced before the Lord.

**A.** Worship leaders in Israel were not uncommon in times of God's blessing on Israel. Again, this was right and good for people, who were not indwelt with the Holy Spirit. Every Christian has the only worship leader, who has been appointed of God to lead (the Holy Spirit), living within him. To go back to a place of worship, which was a pattern for people living under the law, is not for the Christian who lives by the Spirit of God. Believers are to exercise corporate worship where the Holy Spirit alone, is in leadership.

As to the record of David dancing, Scripture tells us many things which the Old Testament saints did. If we used every example of their doings, as what we should do, some Christians would have multiple wives, and some would build palaces as Solomon did for himself. Some of us would cut off the thumbs and toes of our enemies, just as Judah and Simeon did to Adoni-bezek (Judges 1:6). The revelation and indwelling of Christ in the heart of a Christian exceeds all that the Old Testament saints had been given. Furthermore, it gives the Christian a position that even the angels desire to look into (1 Peter 1:12).

We have the Spirit of God, whose life is within us. If we go back and try to live in the concepts of the law, as most churches have done today, confusion in the believer's

understanding and ability to separate between ‘law’ or ‘grace and truth’ is the result (Galatians 3:3).

**Q.** In our church we have a worship service. We sing hymns and our pastor gives a sermon. Are you saying this is not worship?

**A.** First, we need to know that it is never wrong to be involved in the things of God. If a sermon or teaching is given, it can be very valuable to the saints. However, Scripture does not refer to it as worship. The singing of hymns is very much a part of worship. However, in the context of your question, the structure of your church service would not answer to what Scripture describes as worship. The freedom of the Holy Spirit to use any brother in vocal leadership in worship is mandatory. The clerical/laity system cannot enter into this freedom. The clerical system is patterned after the law.

**Q.** If Christians worship like this booklet teaches, will there not be confusion without a leader?

**A.** Scripture teaches us this, “let all things be done decently and in order” (1 Corinthians 14:40). Allowing the Holy Spirit to be in control, rather than men, does not mean there will be confusion. Your response is normal. This thinking is shared by many who have not practiced worshipping according to what we are taught in Scripture.

**Q.** This might work with a few but wouldn’t there be confusion with more than just a few?

**A.** Christians who worship in this manner may do so with two or three, or as in many assemblies, two or three hundred or more. The truth of the leadership of the Holy Spirit does not change with numbers of people.

God is calling Christians to faith and the exercise of faith. Jesus lived in complete freedom and oneness with His Father. His dependant life is the example that the Christian is called to follow in worship and in his or her walk of life.

The words of this hymn speak in the heart of the Christian to his or her place in worship.

Christ only Christ, ere long will fill my vision;  
Glory excelling, soon, full soon, I'll see —  
Christ, only Christ, my every wish fulfilling —  
Christ, only Christ, my all in all to be.

Ephesians 3:2 teaches us that we live in the dispensation of the grace of God. This grace is toward us as individuals and as this booklet relates, toward us corporately as the assembly of his people. We learn from Scripture that God sent his Son into the world to make us the beneficiaries of the riches of His grace. This grace is found through faith in believing God, and through believing the truths that we learn from Scripture. In occupying the place of faith, “we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28).

D. Neely  
9-19-06

That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:7).

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