



Oologah

Observer

“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...” Matthew 28:20

Church of Christ • 13800 S. 4080 Road • P.O. Box 527 • Oologah, Oklahoma 74053

## God Cares How We Worship Him.

Chuck Northrop

Because God created the universe and everything contained in it, God is worthy to be worshiped. As the apostle John revealed the vision he saw on the Lord’s Day (Sunday) of the throne of God, those around the throne exclaimed, “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created” (Revelation 4:11). The psalmist exclaimed,

Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise him in the heights. Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts. Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light. Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded, and they were created (Psalms 148:1-5).

### The Object and Nature of Worship

Because of the attributes of God, He alone is worthy of worship. When Jesus was in the wilderness being tempted, the devil took Him up on a high mountain and showed Him “all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me” (Matthew 4:8-9). In spite of the tempter’s temptation and claim to power, Jesus said, “Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve”

(Matthew 4:10). Since God alone is worthy of worship, we must focus our worship only toward Him and only as He instructed, neither adding to nor taking away from His instructions.

In John 4, Jesus was asked about worship by a woman of Samaria. Because of Jesus’ conversation with her, she perceived He was a prophet and said, “Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship” (John 4:20). Jesus seized the opportunity to teach the woman about worship and said,

Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth (John 4:21-24).

Notice Jesus taught concerning the “true worshippers” as opposed to false worshippers. Further, He taught the proper object of worship — the Father, and He taught the proper way in which to worship the Father — “in spirit and in truth.”

“In spirit” refers to the inner man. When worship is

done “in spirit,” it is done from the heart or inner person. It is not mechanical, ritual, or ceremonial worship done without thought. True worship proceeds from the heart, the will, the spirit of man in harmony with the Spirit of God.

“In truth” refers to what is real as opposed to error. True worship, therefore, is according to the truth of God’s word. Jesus prayed, “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (John 17:17). Thus, only worship done in accordance with the word of God is acceptable to God.

In summation of John 4, there are three vitally important aspects of worship. First, worship is directed toward the Father. Second, worship ought to be done in spirit and in truth. Third, only the worship of the Father done in spirit and truth has divine approval and is thereby true worship.

### Five Elements of Worship

After the establishment of the church, the disciples “continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42). This passage describes the first worship assembly of the church. This assembly took place on Pentecost which was always on the first day of the week. Therefore, as we consider the five elements of worship, they are done when the church gathers or assembles on the first day of the week. The importance of this assembly is seen in the exhortation of Hebrews 10:25: “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.”

**Prayer** is a part of New Testament worship. Since the life of a Christian is a life of prayer (1 Thessalonians 5:17), it is only natural for prayers to be made when Christians gather together for the worship assembly. Prayer is said to be the most common expression of worship. The very nature of prayer expresses God exists and man needs God’s help. When Christians assemble there are many things for which to pray. Christians can pray for their enemies (Matthew 5:44-45), for laborers in the kingdom of God (Matthew 9:38), for escape from temptation (Matthew 26:41), for forgiveness (Acts 8:22-24), and for all mankind (1 Timothy 2:1). All Christians are to pray, but during the assembly, God’s design is for men (adult males) to lead prayers. The apostle Paul recorded, “I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting” (1 Timothy 2:8).

**The Lord’s Supper** was instituted by Christ before His crucifixion. Paul recorded the account in 1 Corinthians 11:23-26:

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. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come.

Acts 20:7 says, “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.” Thus, the church partook of the Lord’s Supper on the first day of the week as a part of their assembly. The following will help us to better understand.

The Lord’s Supper is...

- A Communion Feast: “I delivered unto you”
- A Symbolic Feast: “this is My body...this is My blood”
- A Memorial Feast: “This do in remembrance of Me”
- A Proclamation Feast: “ye do show the Lord’s death till He come”

The Lord’s supper contains two elements — the unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine. Since the Jews were commanded not to have any leavening in their houses during the Jewish Passover, and because the institution of the Lord’s supper took place during the Passover, then **unleavened bread** and **unfermented grape juice** must be used. Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:27-29 gave this warning concerning the Lord’s Supper,

Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body.

**The Contribution** is part of the Lord’s Day assembly. In 1 Corinthians 16:1-2 Paul proclaimed, “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 in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.” Because the command was given to the church at Corinth as it was previously given to the churches of Galatia, it must be an universal command for all churches. Since it was to be done on the first day of the week, then it was a part of their worship service. This is the only provision God gives for the support of the church and its work. Fund raisers of any type are not authorized by God for the support of the work of the church. They are not found within Scripture. Paul also exhorted the motive behind giving should be done in cheerfulness. He wrote, “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 9:7).

**Singing** is the blending of voices when the church comes together. In Hebrews 2:12, the writer quoted Psalm 22:22 to show Christians are brethren with Christ. The writer testified, “Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.” Within this quotation, please note singing praise took place in the assembly. Paul instructed in Colossians 3:16, “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 two passages, there are two purposes in worshiping through song — praise and teaching.

Please remember the Bible instructs not to add to nor take from it (Revelation 22:18-19) and not to go beyond what is written (1 Corinthians 4:6 ASV). God’s instruction is simply to sing. Therefore, we must not add to this simple instruction with mechanical instruments of music. The verse following Paul’s instruction to the Christians in Colossae to sing is a reminder of the authority of Christ. In Colossians 3:17 Paul wrote, “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.”

Further, Paul instructed the church in Ephesus to “be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Ephesians 5:18-19). Paul by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit commanded a specific instrument to be used — **the heart**. We must not substitute or add to what God instructed! This music of the heart is “the sacrifice of praise” and “the fruit of our lips” (Hebrews 13:15) done unto the praise of God and the building up of one another.

**Preaching** was done when the church gathered during the days of the apostles in the first century. Christians were instructed concerning God’s will for them. This instruction took two forms — preaching and reading scripture. The example of Acts 20:7 states, “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.” In Colossians 4:16 the Bible says, “And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.”

The Bible makes clear what the message of preachers should be. Notice the following verses:

- “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine” (2 Timothy 4:2).
- “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen” (1 Peter 4:11).
- “And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things” (Romans 10:15).

From these verses, the message of preachers should be God’s divine word — **the Bible**. The message is not to be one of sociology or psychology to tickle the hearts of men (2 Timothy 4:3-4) but a message “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:12).

### “Lively Stones”

Peter wrote, “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 2:5). Thus, it is the responsibility of Christians “to offer up spiritual sacrifices.” Those sacrifices are prayers, the Lord’s supper, the contribution, singing, and preaching. When they are done from the heart according to all that God delivered unto us in His word, they are “acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” Anything other than what God instructed, whether done in sincerity or not, is rebellion toward God and unacceptable worship. Let us, therefore, worship God “in spirit and in truth” for He is the Creator of all; He is worthy to be worshiped; and “He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6). □

## Observations and Concerns

February 1, 2023

**Welcome Visitors!** To us, it is never a bother for you to be a part of our assembly.

“Give unto the LORD, O ye mighty, give unto the LORD glory and strength” (Psalm 29:1).

**Expression of Gratitude:** We are thankful to God for the institution of marriage (Hebrews 13:4).

**Remember in Prayer:**

- ▶ **Pat Taylor** has blockage in her right and left carotid artery. She is also scheduled to see a new neurologist soon.
- ▶ **Joyce Cash** is working with doctors to resolve issues with her heart.
- ▶ **Alan Johnson**, grandson-in-law of the Hudsons, had quadruple bypass surgery. He is recovering at home.
- ▶ **Nelda Hudson** is still seeking a diagnosis for her health concerns.
- ▶ **Ed Dindy**, father of Tia Swearignen, has cancer and is scheduled to have surgery on February 7th to prepare for radiation treatments.
- ▶ **Amanda Georgakus**, friend of Sherry Carmona, has metastatic breast cancer.

We extend our sympathy to the family of **Dale Jackson** upon him passing early Wednesday morning. He is the son of Walter and brother of Doyle. No arrangements have been made at the time of this publication.

Our sympathy is extended to the family of **Virginia Lively**, former mother-in-law of Kathy Orr, upon her passing last week.

February anniversaries: 14 – **Dan & Michele Smith**; February birthdays: 3 – **Brooke & Brecklyn Nelson**; 10 – **Brenson Nelson**; 12 – **Walter Jackson**; 15 – **Michele Smith**; 18 – **Brianna Nelson**; 22 – **Paul Praschnik**; 23 – **Ed Carmona**; 24 – **Sherry Carmona**.

There are **Bible covers** in the foyer for anyone who wants one.

**Men’s Business Meeting** is this coming Sunday, February 5 after evening services.

Schedule of Services	Assignments			
		Wednesday, Feb. 1	Sunday, Feb. 5 AM	Sunday, Feb. 5 PM
	Announcements	Chris Nelson	Chris Nelson	Russ Earl
	Song Leader	Doyle Jackson	Ross Swearingen	Doyle Jackson
	Prayer	Paul Praschnik	Doyle Jackson	Chris Nelson
	Lord’s Supper (speaker)		Paul Praschnik	Ross Swearingen
	Lord’s Supper		Chris Nelson	
	Lesson	Russ Earl	Russ Earl	Chuck Northrop
	Prayer / Door Attendant	Ross Swearingen	Chuck Northrop	Paul Praschnik
Sundays				
Bible Classes. . . . .	9:30 AM			
Worship . . . . .	10:30 AM			
Worship . . . . .	5:00 PM			
Wednesdays				
Bible Classes. . . . .	7:00 PM			
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