



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

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How Should Christians Worship?

Chuck Northrop

To the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, Jesus said, "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 4:23-24). Notice "true worshippers" (as opposed to false worshippers) worship the right object — **God, the Father** — and in the right manner — "**in spirit and in truth.**"

Because God created the universe and everything therein, He is worthy of our worship. John, in his vision on the Lord's Day, recorded those around the throne of God were exclaiming, "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 wrote, "Let them praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded, and they were created" (Psalms 148:5). ***Let us, therefore, worship God who created us.***

While 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 their glory and said to Him, "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me" (Matthew 4:8-9). In spite of the temptation, 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). Though Satan tempts men to focus their worship upon someone or something other than God, ***let us have the conviction to worship God and Him only.***

In spite of God's clear instruction to direct worship towards Him and Him only, many have changed the direction of worship from God to man. By such actions, they have "changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator" (Romans 1:25). In many churches, worship has become nothing more than entertainment. When Christians assemble to be entertained or to entertain, has not the focus of worship changed from God, the true object of worship, to the worshiper? Most certainly men are not to be worshiped. When Peter went to Cornelius to teach him the gospel, Cornelius fell down to worship him. Peter knowing the right object of worship lifted him up and said, "Stand up; I myself also am a man" (Acts 10:25-26). After Barnabas and Paul healed a crippled man, the Lycaonians proclaimed, "The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men" and "would have done sacrifice" had not Barnabas and Paul restrained them saying, "Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God..." (Acts 14:8-18). Barnabas and Paul called upon them to turn from a vain object of worship — men — to the true object of worship — the living God. Thus, we ought not go to worship to get something out of it. We ought to go to give or to offer our worship to God, our heavenly Father.

Not only do some worship men, others worship angels. However, angels are not the rightful object of worship. Towards the end of the book of Revelation, John proclaimed an angel showed him these visions, and he fell down to worship the angel. However, the angel said, "See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God" (Revelation 22:8-9). Thus, the angel directed John to the rightful object of worship — God.

Some people not only worship men and angels, they worship things. Like the people of Athens, they are "wholly given to idolatry" (Acts 17:16). The most prominent form of idolatry, however, is not idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood: "which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk" but is covetousness (Ephesians 5:5; Colossians 3:5). Because idolaters shall not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9-10), all men ought to keep themselves from idols (1 John 5:21). Men ought to be as the Thessalonians who "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God" (1 Thessalonians 1:9).

Not only did Jesus point men to the right object of worship, He taught worship is to be done "in spirit." "**In spirit**" refers to the spirit of man or the inner man in contrast to the physical part of man. This refers to the attitude of worship. Worship done "in spirit" is not mechanical, ritual, or ceremonial homage done without thought. True worship proceeds from the heart, the will, the spirit of man in harmony with the Spirit of God. True worshippers have their minds focused upon what they are doing. The Psalmist expressed this type of worship when he wrote, "Praise ye the Lord. I will praise the Lord with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation" (Psalms 111:1). Rather than focusing their minds upon the material, physical, or earthly things of this world, when people worship

in spirit, they focus their whole heart upon worshipping God. When so-called worshipers are occupying their time clipping their nails, playing with the kids, or daydreaming about dinner, they are not worshipping in spirit. *Let us, therefore, channel our thoughts toward the spiritual realm.*

“**In truth**” refers to what is real and what is opposed to error. True worship, therefore, is according to the truth as revealed in the Word of God. Jesus said, “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (John 17:17). The truth must be the authority of our worship. 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” (Colossians 3:17). “In the name of” means *by the authority of*. Thus, when worship is done “in truth,” it is done in harmony with the will of God. Thereby, it is authorized of God. Authorized worship includes these five avenues: Prayer (Acts 2:42), the Lord’s Supper (1 Corinthians 11:23-26), the Contribution (1 Corinthians 16:1-2), Singing (Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19), and Preaching (Acts 20:7). *Let us, therefore, worship God according to what He authorized within scripture.*

The only worship which enjoys divine approval is directed towards the right object — “**God,**” done with the right attitude — “**in spirit,**” and having the right authority — “**in truth.**” “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him **must** worship him in spirit and in truth.” This is the only worship acceptable to God. All other worship is unacceptable.

“You Poured It on ‘Em!”

The preacher had just concluded a hot and scathing sermon on the sin of swearing. He stated several times he knew one of his hearers was guilty. The sermon ended, and the worshipers one by one filed out the door.

The first to go was a woman never suspected of using foul language. With a red and angry face, she exclaimed, “I’ll never darken this door again!”

Before the preacher could recover from her blast, another said, “Well, brother preacher, if I had known you were near last week, I would have been more careful with my language.”

A third said, “I think you might at least have had the courtesy to come to me privately instead of telling it to the whole church.”

Then came to real culprit, the one at whom the preacher had aimed all of his remarks. With a bland and innocent smile, he grasped the hand of the preacher and said, “Brother, that is what I call a real sermon. Your sure did pour it on “em today.”

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Observations and Concerns

December 20, 2023

Welcome Visitors! Your Presence is our Pleasure.

Praise in Psalm: “I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore” (Psalm 86:12).

Declaration of Appreciation: Let us be thankful for God’s rich blessings of the winter and final season of this year. The first day of winter this year is tomorrow, December 21, 2023.

Our sympathy is extended to the family of **Pat Dennis** who passed away. Pat is Dan Dennis’s sister-in-law.

We extend our sympathy to the Hunter family upon the passing of **Ralph Hunter**. There is no service being planned at this time.

Remember in Prayer:

- ▶ **Jim Allison** has been ill recently.
- ▶ **Bill Dilks** had a CT scan done today.
- ▶ **Sammy Gray** had a biopsy yesterday. He does not have the results yet.
- ▶ **Darla Smith** has an MRI scheduled for Friday, December 22nd.
- ▶ **Ed Dindy**, father of Tia Swearingen, began cancer treatments last week.
- ▶ **Randall Hunter** had shingles but is doing much better.
- ▶ **Trayton Linton**, great grandson of Darla Smith, continues to recover from an auto accident.
- ▶ **Bill Roach** was recently diagnosed with cancer. Bill is an elder at the Owasso congregation.

Schedule of Services	Assignments		
		Wednesday, Dec. 20	Sunday, Dec. 24 AM
		Sunday, Dec. 24 PM	
	Announcements	Chuck Northrop	Bill Dilks
	Prayer	Chuck Northrop	Bill Dilks
	Song Leader	Doyle Jackson	Ross Swearingen
	Lord's Supper (speaker)		Chris Nelson
	Lord's Supper		Doyle Jackson
	Lesson	Bill Dilks	Bill Dilks
	Prayer	Bill Dilks	Chuck Northrop
Website: oologahcofc.org	Door Attendant	Chris Nelson	Doyle Jackson