

Searching His Word
Worship #2 – Authorized Worship
By Russell Earl

As we continue our look into worship we find our worship must be authorized in God's Word. One of the most common and abused areas of worship is the praise we offer up to God. In various places we can see things such as; praise groups, chorus', bands, and other forms of "praise." While it may sound and feel ok to us, the question remains is it authorized by God? While we know a lot of forms of praise we offer up to God in the Old Testament we must understand some things. Just because it was tolerated by God in the Old Testament it does not mean God will tolerate something He has not authorized today. We must remember that the old law was nailed to the cross (Col 2:14). While God tolerated some things before, it does not mean He does so today; "*Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent,*" (Acts 17:30). We see there were several things God "overlooked" or tolerated in the Old Testament but that is not the case today. We can not say we have scriptural authority to carry over certain things in worship from the Old Testament while denying other activities that God tolerated during that time but has condemned today (multiple wives, concubines, etc).

Clearly the Bible shows us that what we do in the act of worship and praise to God must be authorized or it will not be pleasing to God. How many times have children done something their parents have not authorized (given permission) to do? The children may have enjoyed that activity but the parents hand out punishment to the children for doing something they did not have permission to do. Why should it be any different with God? Should not we use caution in how we worship and praise Him? Ask yourself a few questions while you are worshipping God. How is God glorified by this? Are these acts or actions only done because they are pleasing to me or a tradition? Can I go to the Bible and find authorization to do such things?

Take for instance the false idea that we have authorization for instruments of music in our praise to God. Many will argue to their blue in the face about such because they may say "David used them in the Old Testment. So why not us today?" The Bible, to be exact David, answers that question himself. The Bible says "*four thousand were gatekeepers, and four thousand praised the Lord with musical instruments, "which I made," said David, "for giving praise"*(1 Chro 23:5). Did you notice what He said? David said "*which I made.*" While God gave the command to worship, it was David who created the instruments and commanded their use. While it is tolerated by God you find no direct command from God to use them. "*And the singers, the sons of Asaph, were in their places, according to the command of David...*" (2 Chro 35:15). According to whose command? David's command! Such verses as these tell us what was done was according to the command of David and not of God.

As the Bible teaches us there are certain acts that are simply not authorized by God and "*never came into My mind*" (Jer 19:5). While certain acts are done in the name of giving praise to God we must be sure they are pleasing to Him. Others have done things they thought were pleasing to God only to be proven wrong later (Jn 16:2, Acts 22:3-4). How is your worship? Is it authorized? Is not it an important enough question for

us to take time to consider what we are doing? After all the worship and praise we offer up to God is for God, right? Think about it.