



Every day I will thank you.  
I will praise you for ever and ever.  
(Psalm 145.2)

## WORSHIP

A Christian enjoys a special relationship with God. Having been added to the body of Christ at baptism, each member becomes part of a large family--the church. Everyone who has obeyed the gospel is part of that spiritual family, for whom Christ died.

As individuals, each of us can worship God when we are alone, all by ourselves. We can also worship Him together as a family at home. We are free to sing praises and offer up prayers to Him any time of the day, any day of the week. But God has set aside the first day of the week (Sunday) as the time for the church to meet. In fact, it was the first day of the week when 3,000 souls were baptized for the forgiveness of their sins (Acts 2:38-41) and were added to the church (Acts 2:47).

From that day nearly two thousand years ago until now Christians have met upon the first day of the week to remember Jesus' death on the cross for our sins, to study God's word, to pray, to give part of their money or goods back to God, and to sing. We will discuss each of these after a look at the nature of *true* worship. Consider carefully each of the Scriptures quoted below.

In spirit and truth

## THE NATURE OF TRUE WORSHIP

*"Now therefore, fear the Lord, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:14). "Only fear the Lord, and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things he has done for you" (1 Samuel 12:24).*

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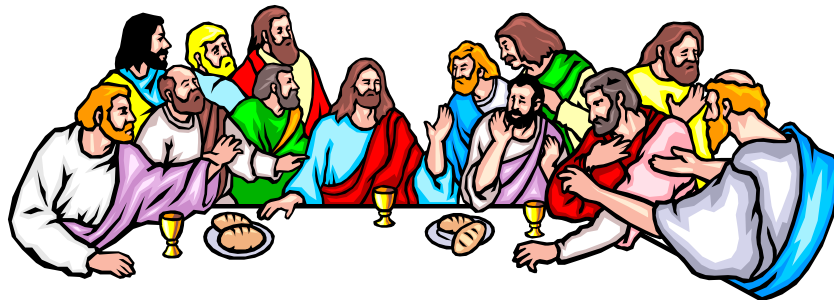
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*"But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:23-24).*

*"And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him" (Colossians 3:17).*

The first three Bible passages quoted on the preceding page are all very similar to each other. All three use the word *truth*. Worship, if it is to be correct, must be according to truth. We must do those things (and only those things) that God has commanded. The fourth verse cited also makes this point. Whatever we do in deed (including worship) and whatever we do in word (teach) must be in the name of Jesus, which means by His authority. If God does not authorize the worship we give Him, then it is not true worship.

Genuine worship must also be "with all your heart" or "in sincerity" or "in spirit." Worship that is without love cannot be offered to Almighty God. He would be insulted just as He was by those of old who offered Him their worship but said, *"Oh, what a weariness"* (Malachi 1:13).



## **THE LORD'S SUPPER**

When the church was established in the first century, the disciples met on the first day of the week to *break bread* (Acts 20:7; 2:42). That phrase refers to the Lord's Supper, a memorial to what Jesus did for us on the cross. Paul reminds the Corinthians of its purpose.

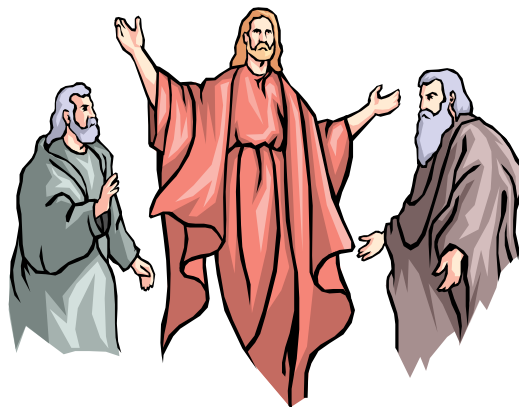
*"For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is my body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes" (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).*

The unleavened bread Christians use in this remembrance represents the body of our Saviour who was crucified for our sins. The fruit of the vine represents the blood that was shed for us. Each week we gather together to remember and honour Jesus for sacrificing Himself so that we could be forgiven of our sins.



## GIVING

*"For you know the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich"* (2 Corinthians 8:9). God loves *"a cheerful giver"* (2 Corinthians 9:7), and one of our privileges as Christians is to give back to God some of what He has blessed us with. Paul commanded brethren to give on the first day of the week as they had been prospered (1 Corinthians 16:1-2).



## CONTINUING IN THE APOSTLE'S DOCTRINE

When the three thousand were baptized on the day of Pentecost, they knew their sins were forgiven, but they needed to learn the teachings of the new kingdom. Therefore, the apostles taught them the things that had been revealed to them by the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:42). Whether they spoke or wrote through inspiration, their words were Truth, the Word of God (1 Thessalonians 2:13). Like the Bereans, we should search the Scriptures daily (Acts 17:11) to make sure that we are being taught the Truth. We also need to study God's Word so that we may grow spiritually (1 Peter 2:2).



## PRAYER

Paul says that we are to "*pray without ceasing*" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Each Christian should approach the Father through Jesus every day (as well as in the assembly on the first day of the week); God must continually be in our thoughts and in our hearts. We thank Him for His greatness and His gracious salvation. We may also make requests of God, but they should not be for purely selfish things (James 4:3). Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:6-7).



## SINGING

Christians also have the responsibility to speak to one another "*in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody*" in our hearts to the Lord (Ephesians 5:19). We are also to teach and admonish one another with songs (Colossians 3:16). The New Testament authorizes us to *sing* to God and one another; it never tells us to use instruments of music to accompany that singing. Remember, we are to do only that which Jesus authorizes (Colossians 3:17). Neither He nor His disciples ever sang spiritual songs with musical accompaniment.

## True Worship

A man named Jeroboam changed the way God said to worship (1 Kings 12:25-33). This decision caused him and the people to sin "*a great sin*" (2 Kings 17:21). No one has the right to add to what God has commanded for worship; no one has the right to take anything away, either. We must be content to worship as God has commanded us.

# In spirit and truth



## WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED



### FILL IN THE BLANKS WITH THE PROPER ANSWER

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ day of the \_\_\_\_\_ (Sunday) is the time Christians are to meet to offer up their \_\_\_\_\_ to God.
2. The bread represents Jesus' \_\_\_\_\_, which was broken on the cross; the cup (containing the fruit of the vine) represents His \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Paul commanded Christians to give on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of the week as we have been \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The apostles spoke through the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Holy Spirit.
5. We should \_\_\_\_\_ the Scriptures \_\_\_\_\_ to make sure that we are being taught the \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Christians are taught to pray without \_\_\_\_\_; our requests should not be for purely \_\_\_\_\_ things.
7. Christians should speak to each other in \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ songs.
8. A king named \_\_\_\_\_ changed the way God said to worship. In doing so the nation committed a \_\_\_\_\_ sin. No one has the right to \_\_\_\_\_ to or take \_\_\_\_\_ from God's rules for worship.

## MARK THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS TRUE OR FALSE

1. Since we can worship God as individuals, it is not ever necessary to meet with the church. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Truth is not an important part of worship; sincerity is all that is needed. \_\_\_\_\_
3. To "break bread" may refer to the Lord's Supper. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Christians should observe the Lord's Supper once a month. \_\_\_\_\_
5. God does not expect His children to enjoy giving. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Studying the word of God will cause us to grow spiritually. \_\_\_\_\_
7. God does not want to hear our requests. \_\_\_\_\_
8. The New Testament never authorizes us to use musical instruments to accompany our singing. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Christians do not need authority for what they teach or practice. \_\_\_\_\_

Please use the space below for any questions or comments you may have concerning this study.

**Please Note:**

You can e-mail your answers to the above questions to [mike@greatbarrchurchofchrist.com](mailto:mike@greatbarrchurchofchrist.com) for marking and I will happily send you your mark and the next lesson in this series.

We also have a number of different studies for all levels; a certificate of achievement will be awarded to those who complete any of our studies.

May God bless you as you strive to understand our God and His word.