

New Testament Worship—a Mark that Matters

Worship is a word that denotes an act of reverence paid whether to a creature or creator. Jesus set the parameters for true worship: “ Yet the time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the father in spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks (Jno.4:23).”

From the beginning God has required that worship conform to his will. Cain offered an unacceptable sacrifice from the fruit of the ground instead of from the flock (Gen. 4:1-8). Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire and died (Lev. 10:1-7). The New Testament describes unacceptable worship. Jesus describes acts of the Jews as vain worship when their heart was far from God and they followed the precepts of men (Mt. 15:1-9). In Col. 2:18-23, Paul described certain acts as will-worship.

True worship has New Testament characteristics: It must be according to the will of the Father (Mt.7:21), in spirit and truth (Jno. 4:23), in the name of the Lord (Col. 3:17), with understanding (I Cor. 14:12), unto the Lord (Eph. 5:19), with the peace of Christ ruling in our hearts and the word of Christ dwelling in us richly (Col. 3:15-16)

Singing was the only music in the worship (Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:17). *Generic versus specific commands.* Wood was generic. Gopher wood was specific. Music is generic. God commanded vocal and not instrumental music. *Law versus expediency.* The New Testament commands singing. Lights and song books are expedient. Instrumental music adds another type of music. *David played a harp.* David served under the Old Testament. Many things were permitted for David, such as multiple wives, incense, animal sacrifices. These were put away when Christ nailed the Old Testament law to the cross. Paul wrote, “God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, 14 having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. Colossians 2:13-15. Some say that there are trumpets in heaven. Many things in heaven are not commanded for the church: incense, an altar, streets of gold, etc. Others find their instrument in the Greek word PSALLO. However, the word means plucking and the instrument named is the heart. Therefore, sing and make melody in your hearts (Col. 5:19).

The Lord’s supper was taken on every first day of the week. The Lord made it a permanent institution (Mt. 26:28-29). The church at Jerusalem continued to be steadfast in observation (Acts 2:41). The church gathered together to break bread in Acts 20:7. The church assembled to observe the Lord’s supper in I Cor. 11:17-34, and the assembly was on each first day of the week in I Cor. 16:1-2

Let us pay close attention to Col 2:20-23. “If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as, Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch! (which all refer to things destined to perish with use) -- in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men? These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence.”

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Worship in Spirit and Truth
John 4:23

False Worship
Nadab and Abihu: Lev. 10:1-7

Precepts of Men
Mt. 15:1-9; Col. 3:18-23

Six **Musts** of True Worship As Commanded in the New Testament

- It must be according to the will of the Father (Mt. 7:21)
- It must be in spirit and truth (Jno. 4:23)
- It must be in the name of the Lord (Col. 3:17),
- It must be with understanding (I Cor. 14:12)
- It must be unto the Lord (Eph. 5:19)
- It must be with the peace of Christ ruling in our hearts and the word of Christ dwelling in us richly (Col. 3:15-16)

Two Examples of True Worship Not Practiced in **Most** Religions of Today

Singing was the only music in the worship (Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:17).

Generic versus specific commands. Music is generic. God specifically commanded vocal and not instrumental music.

Excuses:

David played a harp. Instrumental music along with incense and polygamy were put away when Christ nailed the Old Testament law to the cross. (Col 2:13-15).

There are trumpets in heaven. Many things in heaven are not commanded for the church: incense, altar, streets of gold, etc.

The instrument is in the Greek word PSALLO. The word means plucking and the instrument named is the heart. Therefore, sing and make melody in your hearts (Eph. 5:19).

The Lord's supper was taken on every first day of the week.

The Lord made it a permanent institution (Mt. 26:28-29).

The church at Jerusalem continued to be steadfast in observation (Acts 2:41).

The church gathered together to break bread in Acts 20:7.

The church assembled to observe the Lord's supper in I Cor. 11:17-34, and the assembly was on each first day of the week in I Cor. 16:1-2

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Questions and Answers

1. What did Jesus say true worship is in John 4:24? _____
2. What was Nadab and Abihu's mistake in worship? _____
3. When is your worship vain (Mt. 15:1-9; Col. 3:18-23)? _____
4. In whose name do we worship? _____
5. List six musts of true worship. 1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____
5. _____ 6. _____
6. What music is commanded of the church (Col. 3:17; Eph. 5:19)? _____
7. If *wood* is generic and *gopher wood* is specific, what would have happen had Noah built the ark out of oak wood? _____

8. If music is generic and vocal music is specific, what would happen if we use the instruments of music? _____

9. What happened to the Old Testament law when Christ died (Col. 2:13-15)? _____
10. Where are we to make melody (Eph. 5:19)? _____
11. What did Jesus call the bread and fruit of the vine in Mt. 26:28-29? _____
12. When did Jesus say that he would partake of the supper again? _____
13. How often did the church in Jerusalem participate in the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:41)? _____
14. For what reason was the church gathered together in Acts 20:7? _____
15. On what day were they gathered together? _____
16. For what reason was the church gathered together in 1 Cor. 11:17-34? _____
17. On what day were they gathered together in 1 Cor. 16:1-2 _____