

Church and Worship: The Manner or Elements in True Worship (Acts 2:41-47)

Introduction

What is the way or the manner by which we worship God? How should true spiritual worship be practiced?

- Our God is to be worshipped in a manner that He accepts our worship.
- The author of Hebrews explains it, “Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear, for our God is a consuming fire” (Heb 12:28-29).
- This means God is jealous for His name to be revered and hallowed.
- Hence God, in His Word, regulates how we are to worship Him.
- Acts 2:42 gives an outline description of the worship of the early Christian congregations. There we read that the early Christians were devoted to the apostles' teaching (the Word), fellowship, the breaking of bread (the Lord's Supper), and prayers.

Doctrine--Word (Romans 12:2)

One of the first elements the early church practiced in their worship gatherings was persevering in the Apostles' doctrine.

- Doctrinal purity was essential to a New Testament church. For which systematic teaching and preaching was practiced.
- Local churches placed themselves under God's authority by accepting the discipline of the Word of God.
- Romans 12:2—God's Word is the most powerful detergent by which we cleanse our minds.
- We renew our minds daily by cleansing them of the world's “wisdom” and replacing it with true wisdom that comes from God. We worship Him with our renewed and cleansed minds, not with our emotions.
- This is the reason we do not consider music as the centre of worship. Music can't produce worship, although it certainly can produce emotion. Music is not the origin of worship, but a meaningful and relevant hymn or psalm can be the expression of worship. Do not look to music to induce our worship.
- Emotions are wonderful things, but unless they are shaped by a mind, saturated in Truth, they can be destructive.
- There is only one way to renew our minds, and that is by the Word of God.
- To know the truth, to believe the truth, to hold convictions about the truth, and to love the truth will naturally result in true spiritual worship.

Fellowship & Offering (Hebrews 10:24-25; Acts 2:44-45)

Fellowship is very much part of true biblical worship.

The word “fellowship” here is “koinonia” and the basic meaning of it is “partnership” or “sharing.”

- True fellowship is loving one another and caring for one another (Rom 12:10, 16; 1 Pet 1:22).
- True worship takes place when believers gather together and stir-up one another to love and to good works (Heb 10:24-25).
- It is a sin for a Christian to isolate himself from other believers and do not participate in corporate worship.
- Sacrificial offering was part of their gatherings by which they helped each other, especially the needy ones. Their giving was according to the needs and part of their fellowship (Acts 2:44-45). The giving was spontaneous or willingly!

Sacraments (1 Corinthians 11:24-29; 10:16-17)

For the early church, the Sacraments, especially the Lord's Table, unified the believers. In Communion Service, all believers met on common ground at the foot of the Cross (Eph 2:16; Col 1:20).

Secondly, the Sacraments provide the opportunity for self-examination and purging of sin, thus purifying the church.

Prayer (Acts 1:14, 24; John 14:13-14)

Early church was a praying church, and they made prayer the integral part of their spiritual gatherings.

- Prayer strengthened their relationship with God.
- Prayer strengthened their dependency on Him.
- Prayer united them (Acts 1:14).
- Prayer guided them in their decision makings (Acts 1:24).

Conclusion

Our God is a God of order and decency. He guides His Church with clear instructions in His holy Word (eg the details of the Tabernacle; Christ taught His disciples how to pray).

- Let us therefore obey the Lord according to His will and plan!
- Let us worship Him acceptably with reverence and Godly fear!