

Redwater Restorer

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness..." (Matthew 3:3)

Volume 1

No.11

May 10, 2003

The Worship Of The New Testament Church

Published By:

Redwater
Church of Christ

Services:

Sunday

Bible Class 10:00 a.m.
AM Worship 10:45 a.m.
PM Worship 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

Address:

P.O.Box 229
Redwater, Tx. 75573

Phone:

(903) 671-2369
(903) 671-2515

E-Mail:

MILBY2@JUNO.COM

Web Address:

WWW.ARKLATEXGUIDES.
COM/REDWATERCHURCH

Edited By:

Mark Miller

Works:

Four States
Lectures
Sept.27-29

Camp Ida Youth
Encampment
June 8th - 13th
June 15th - 20th
June 22nd - 27th

The New Testament contains a divine pattern for worshipping God. At the inauguration of Judaism, God gave patterns to his people for the construction of the Tabernacle, its furniture and instruments and their worship (Exodus 25:9; Ezekiel 43:10; Hebrews 8:5; 9:23). There is no less direction for worshipping God under the New Covenant than there was under the Old Covenant. John 4:24 says, *"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."* Whereas worshipping God in spirit pertains to a proper attitude, worshipping God in truth corresponds to adhering to the pattern for worship by the divine law now in effect. The New Testament has superseded the Old Testament and is the religious law to which all people today are amenable (Hebrews 8:6-13; Ephesians 2:15).

There are similarities and dissimilarities between Old and New Testament worship practices. For instance, the New Testament neither requires nor authorizes the worship of God with sacrificial animal offerings, lighted candles or burning incense. One must turn to the New Testament alone to identify how God desires people living in the Gospel Age to worship him. There are five avenues of worship prescribed in the New Testament through which God desires to be worshipped today. Each of these must comprise Christian worship each first day of the week (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2).

Music

The most obvious contrast between worshipful music employed by the New Testament Church versus modern day churches is the absence of mechanical instrumental music. This difference results from a sincere effort to practice precisely what the New Testament authorizes. Of the two possible types of music, vocal and instrumental, the New Testament commands vocal music or singing (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). Every example of worshipful music employed by the New Testament church is void of instrumental music

(Matthew 26:30 [church not begun yet]; Acts 16:25; Romans 15:9; 1 Corinthians 14:15; Hebrews 2:12; James 5:13).

What God may have allowed under the Old Testament or what God may permit in heaven does not affect worshippers amenable to the New Testament. The New Testament is the law of God now in effect; man has been released from the Old Law (Romans 7:6-7; Colossians 2:14) and living on earth does not come under the scope of some future heavenly legislation. The commandment to sing in worship (Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19) specifies a type of music to the exclusion of everything else or any combination with something else. Had God not specified what kind of music he wants, man could make his own choice, but God made the choice himself, much the same way he chose unleavened bread and fruit of the vine for the communion (to the exclusion of everything else).

Communion

Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper or communion following his observance of the Passover meal (Matthew 26:17-30). Concerning the bread and the fruit of the vine the Lord said *"this is my body"* and *"this is my blood,"* and that the partaking of such was to be repeated for *"remembrance"* of him (Luke 22:19). The apostle Paul called this supper *"the communion"* (1 Corinthians 10:16). In correcting abuses of the communion by the Corinthian church, Paul urged the Lord's Supper not be observed lightly, but remembering *"the Lord's death"* as often as (or each time) they observed it. Acts 20:7 indicates the frequency with which the early church observed the communion, and that with apostolic approval. There is no more doubt the early church observed communion weekly (on the first day of the week) than faithful Jews observed the Sabbath weekly (on the seventh day of the week, Exodus 20:8-1). There is no more doubt the early church observed communion weekly (on the first day of the week) than the early church observed (and contemporary churches ob-

Worship... (Cont.)

serve) collecting a contribution weekly (on the first day of the week, 1 Corinthians 16:1-2).

Giving

Though God required Old Testament people to give of their means for the support and progress of Judaism, there is a fundamental difference between then and how God desires New Testament people to support Christianity. Free will offerings were welcome under Judaism (Deuteronomy 12:6; Exodus 25:2; 35:29), but God also commanded the people to tithe or give ten percent of their increase to God (Leviticus 27:30-34). The tithe has not been reinstated by God in the New Testament. Instead, New Testament giving is: (1) always a freewill offering (2 Corinthians 8:12), (2) regulated in part by what one purposes in his heart to give cheerfully (2 Corinthians 9:7) and (3) regulated in part by one's prosperity (1 Corinthians 16:1-2). The last Scripture reference also details the first day of the week (implying the first day of each week) as the day on which the collection should occur.

Praying

Praying to God has always been basic to worshipping God, and this is the case in the Gospel Age as well. Several passages attest the regularity with which the early church prayed and further was exhorted to pray (Acts 2:42; 1 Timothy 2:1-3; 1 Peter 3:12). *"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him"* (1 John 5:14-15).

Preaching and Teaching

Preaching and teaching was essential to the establishment and maintenance of Judaism and they are equally essential to the establishment and maintenance of Christianity. Judaism was not just the religion of the Jews, it was their way of life, at home, in public, as well as when they worshipped God. The Jews were taught from childhood through adulthood God's Word (Nehemiah 8:1-8). *". . . he read the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in*

the book of the law. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them" (Joshua 8:34-35).

Edification of the children of God is one of the three divine missions of the Lord's church (1 Corinthians 14:12; Ephesians 4:11-12). Evangelism is also one of the missions of the church (Matthew 28:18-20; 2 Timothy 2:2). Both of these holy commissions require preaching and teaching. This teaching and preaching can be accomplished privately from house to house or publicly, such as in the public worship (Acts 20:20). The context of Acts 20:7 not only indicates the frequency with which the early church observed communion, it also notes preaching comprises part of the Lord's Day worship. *"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight."*

Conclusion

Often contemporary churches derive their worship practices from a confusion of formerly authorized practices under Judaism combined with selected avenues of New Testament worship, well stirred with the seasoning of personal preference. All living souls are amenable to the New Testament and will be judged one day by it (John 12:48). Therefore, each soul should worship God *"in spirit and truth"* (John 4:24). The worship practices of the churches of Christ, then, are not intended to be different, but identical to what God through the New Testament requires.

Mark Miller

If you are interested in any of the following please check the appropriate box and mail to the address below. Please include return address and phone number if possible.

Personal Bible Study

Home Correspondence Course

Redwater Church of Christ
P.O.Box 229
Redwater, Tx. 75573