

## The New Testament Church

### Part 8: Worship

John 4:19-26

#### I. INTRODUCTION: I

- I. **2** Man is a worshiping being; worship of some sort is universal among men.
  - A. Anthropologists documented worship by men on every continent going back to the dawn of time.
  - B. Man has worshiped every natural object (e.g., sun, moon, stars, mountains, rivers, forests, animals) as well as “gods” created by his own hands:
 

**Acts 17:29:** *“Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising.”*
  - C. We have seen in our Old Testament study the worship of “gods” by the native inhabitants of Canaan and how that idolatry rubbed off on the Israelites; idolatry ruined their relationship with the one true and living God and caused them to be cast off into captivity (**Rom. 1:20-23**).
2. The word “worship” originally meant an object of value or worth to which a man gives honor and allegiance.
3. Left to his own devices, man will “devote himself reverently to an almost endless number and variety of gods.” (Stauffer, p. 81)
4. **3** But man is not alone! Man is not without guidance! Are there any directions for true worship?! Yes! **Psa. 119:105:** *“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”*
5. Man has not been left on his own to decide what he will worship and how he will worship.
  - A. God has answered these questions by His Son (**Matt. 17:5:** *“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him.”*).
  - B. The Father expressed His approval of Jesus *“by miracles and wonders and signs”* (Acts 2:22).
  - C. And God’s Son has spoken to man about worship:
 

**Jn. 4:23-24:** *“But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”*
6. Jesus is very specific about true and acceptable worship; He gives us three aspects of true and acceptable worship:
  - A. Object: *“true worshippers shall worship the Father”* (v. 23).
  - B. Attitude: *“they that worship him must worship him in spirit”* (v. 24).
  - C. Pattern: *“they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth”* (v. 24).
7. “Man has always learned this lesson with difficulty. He has traditionally erred in the three ways Jesus specified.” (Stauffer, p. 81)
  - A. Canaanites
  - B. Israelites
  - C. Modern man
8. Common errors in worship:
  - A. Errors insofar as the correct object of worship (e.g., idols, modern performance/spectator worship).



- B. Errors insofar as attitude of worship (e.g., heartless, spiritless, apathetic worship of the Jews in Malachi 1; **Mal. 1:13**: “*Oh, what a weariness! And you sneer at it.*”; lackadaisical approach by many today exhibited by casual dress, lack of enthusiasm, lack of reverence, etc.).
- C. Errors insofar as the truth of worship (e.g., modern man has made the litmus test for how to worship sincerity and not the truth).

9. **4** Let’s examine the New Testament to see exactly what Jesus tells us about worship “*in spirit and truth.*”

## II. DISCUSSION:

### I. **5** Object:

- A. It should be obvious the proper object of worship is God.
- B. Satan does not want us to worship God!

**Matt. 4:9**: “*And he said to Him, ‘All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.’*”

**Jesus’ reply**:

**Matt. 4:10**: “*Then Jesus said to him, ‘Away with you, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’*”

- C. Why so important?

**Isa. 45:5**: “*I am the LORD, and there is no other; There is no God besides Me.*”

**Eph. 4:6**: “*one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*”

**Creator**: Gen. 1:26-27

**Sustainer**: **Jas. 1:17**: “*Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.*”

**Savior**: **Rom. 5:8**: “*But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*”

- D. Cornelius learned this lesson:

- (1) When Peter came to preach God’s word to him, he was grateful, devoted and humble:

**Acts 10:25**: “*As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him.*”

- (2) Peter had to correct Cornelius concerning the proper object of worship:

**Acts 10:26**: “*But Peter lifted him up, saying, ‘Stand up; I myself am also a man.’*”

- (3) Even the apostle John had to learn this lesson...twice!

**Rev. 19:10**: “*And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, ‘See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God!’*”

**Rev. 22:9**: “*Then he said to me, ‘See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.’*”

- E. “No man, object of nature, humanitarian cause, earthly pursuit, or even an angel is worthy of worship.” (Stauffer, p. 82)

**Matt. 4:10**: “*Then Jesus said to him, ‘Away with you, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’*”

- F. Modern denominationalism totally misses the mark in regards to the proper object of worship.



- (1) I do not deny they believe they are worshiping God, however, is that really true?
- (2) The vast majority of denominations have turned worship into a “spectator sport.”
  - (a) The “worshippers” are not really worshippers, they are merely spectators.
  - (b) In modern “worship” the “worshippers” come, not to worship, but to be entertained (e.g., “worship leaders,” contemporary worship, praise teams, drama, performance art, dance, influence of rock music with electronic instruments, etc.).
- (3) So-called “churches” compete with one another and try to “out do” one another in order to draw “worshippers” (spectators!)(pictures).
- (4) In essence, worship has been turned into a form of entertainment; hence, the focus, or object of worship, is not God, but the “audience” being entertained.

## 2. 6 Attitude:

- A. To worship God properly Jesus said we “*must worship [Him] in spirit*” (Jn. 4:24).
- B. What does it mean to “*worship in spirit*”? The answer is found in the nature of man.
  - (1) “*God is Spirit*” (Jn. 4:24) and man is made in His image (Gen. 1:26).
  - (2) A spirit is immaterial, it does not have a body (Lk. 24:39).
  - (3) Thus, man, in addition to a material body, has an “*inward man*” (2 Cor. 4:16), a spirit or soul that separates us from all of God’s other creatures and identifies us with the likeness (image) of God (see Matt. 10:28; Jas. 2:26).
- C. Thus, our worship of God “*in spirit*” arises as an expression of our “*inner man*” (**Eph. 3:16**: “*that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,*”).
  - (1) “The spirit of worship is described by the words translated ‘worship’ in the New Testament.” (Stauffer, p. 82)
  - (2) “Worship” comes from the Greek word *proskuneo*:
    - (a) **Strong**: meaning “a kiss, like a dog licking his master’s hand; to fawn or crouch, i.e., prostrate oneself in homage (do reverence to, adore)”
    - (b) **Thayer**: “of homage shown to men of superior rank; of homage rendered to God and the ascended Christ...”
    - (c) **Vine**: “to make obeisance, do reverence to”
  - (3) Our “service” to God, in general, is described as a “*spiritual service*” (**Rom. 12:1**: “*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, (which is) your spiritual service.*”).
    - (a) All of God’s creation; plants, animals, sun, moon, stars, the earth; serve God’s will and display His handiwork and design.
    - (b) But, of all of God’s creation, only man can offer heartfelt, spiritual worship and service to God.
    - (c) Man is able to do this because we are created “*in the image of God*” (Gen. 1:26).
    - (d) **7** Through this “*inner man*” made in God’s image, God enables us to:
      - ☛ To “*love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*” (Matt. 22:37),



- ☛ To obey “from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered” (Rom. 6:17),
- ☛ To sing “and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Eph. 5:19),
- ☛ To “give as he purposes in his heart” (2 Cor. 9:7),
- ☛ To pray (Rom. 10:1),
- ☛ To “eat this bread and drink this cup” (1 Cor. 11:26),
- ☛ To “discern both good and evil” (Heb. 5:14).

(4) **8** We sometimes see and understand the right way by looking at the wrong way.

- (a) Jesus strongly condemned the worship of the Pharisees because of their hypocrisy, in other words, because of their failure to worship God “*in spirit*” from the “*inner man*.”
- (b) “They prayed, gave alms, and fasted with great fanfare—merely to be seen of men (Matt. 6:1-18; see 23:13-36).” (Stauffer, p. 83)
- (c) “Jesus rebuked their absent-minded, ritualistic worship and service in unmistakable words. ‘This people honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me’ (Matt. 15:8).” (Stauffer, p. 83)
- (d) That “*their heart is far from me*” is, in essence, says, “They are not worshipping me ‘*in spirit*.’”
- (e) Thus, acceptable worship must spring from the “*inner man*,” and does not involve mindless, vain repetition; “Attitude is everything!”

(5) Man is the crowning glory of God’s creation (chew on that for a few minutes!); and with that comes great responsibility.

- (a) Thus, God expects us to act properly towards Him: we cannot act sloppily, robotically, lazily, or instinctively.
- (b) God has made us rational, thinking, spiritual beings with the ability to respond to God’s will in a reverent, fearful and respectful manner.
- (c) God has made us in such a way and communicated with us in such a way that He expects us to know Him, to recognize His “*invisible attributes*” of “*eternal power and deity*” (Rom. 1:20) and humble ourselves to Him in worship and service from the heart; be thankful to Him and glorifying Him (Rom. 1:21).
- (d) We must always, especially in worship, pour forth from the depths of our soul our “all in all” and “...serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. 29 For our God is a consuming fire.” (Heb. 12:28-29)

### 3. **9** Pattern (General):

- A. The third aspect of worship we want to consider is the pattern for worship.
- B. The pattern for worship is truth! **Jn. 4:24**: “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”
- C. The truth is God’s word: **Jn. 17:17**: “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.”
  - (1) “Truth” is also used to refer to the revealed gospel: **Eph. 1:13**: “In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation...”
  - (2) In 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 Paul contrasted “the love of the truth” with believing “the lie” (i.e., error); and condemned those who did not love, or believe, the truth as taking pleasure in “unrighteousness.”



- D. God has not left it up to man's wisdom or man's decision when it comes to how we will worship Him!
- E. We can see this from the very beginning in the case of Cain and Abel.
- (1) They both worshiped God and brought Him offerings (i.e., sacrifices; Gen. 4).
  - (2) Abel's sacrifice was accepted, but Cain's was rejected. Why?
  - (3) There is no indication Cain offered his sacrifice insincerely.
  - (4) But we are told: **Heb. 11:4**: "*By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.*"
    - (a) The key? Abel offered "*a more excellent sacrifice than Cain*" because he offered "*by faith.*"
    - (b) Rom. 10:17: "*So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*"
    - (c) This brings us to a necessary conclusion: Abel and Cain must have been told by God (God's word) what and how to sacrifice.
    - (d) Abel's sacrifice was accepted because he followed God's instructions (i.e., he worshiped "*in...truth*"; Heb. 9:22).
    - (e) On the other hand, Cain's sacrifice was rejected; he did not follow God's instructions (i.e., he did not worship "*in...truth*").
  - (5) Faith made all the difference! Because "*faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*" (Rom. 10:17).
  - (6) The same was true for the nation of Israel.
    - (a) The Hebrew writer described their worship: **Heb. 9:1**: "...even the first covenant had ordinances (NIV: regulations) of divine service and the earthly sanctuary."
    - (b) In other words, their worship services had rules that God expected them to follow; if not followed they were punished! Lev. 10:1-2 (Nadab & Abihu); 2 Chr. 26:16-23 (Uzziah)
- F. Modern denominationalism tells us that when it comes to worshiping God anything is acceptable as long as it is done sincerely (\*\*Indianapolis: The First Church of Cannabis\*\*).
- G. However, Jesus said that worship that is not based on truth is "*vain.*"
- (1) The Pharisees were fond of worshiping according to human tradition rather than God's word.
  - (2) Therefore, Jesus said to them: **Matt. 15:9**: "*And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.*"
  - (3) "Paul called the ascetic practices of philosophers who followed the rudiments of the world and traditions of men 'will worship' — a 'voluntary, arbitrary worship...which one devises and prescribes for himself' (Col. 2:8, 23; see Thayer)." (Stauffer, p. 84)
 

**Col. 2:8**: "*Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.*"

**Col. 2:23**: "*These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.*"
  - (4) Paul chastised the Athenians because they offered ignorant worship (Acts 17:23).
- H. What is true of life in general is true also of worship:



**Jer. 10:23:** *“O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps.”*

**Prov. 14:12:** *“There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.”*

- I. God’s will for us today concerning worship is in principle no different than the worship He expected from Cain and Abel or from Israel:
  - (1) Our worship must be *“in...truth”* (Jn. 4:24).
  - (2) That is no different than saying our worship must be *“by faith”* (Heb. 11:4).
  - (3) Remember Matthew 17:5? *“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!”*
  - (4) Jesus *“is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death,”* (Heb. 9:15); and, of course, we know that New Covenant is the New Testament.
  - (5) Hence, if we will offer acceptable worship (*“in...truth”*) we will look to the New Testament as our only safe guide (1 Pet. 4:11).\*\*

## STOP Part I

### 4. **10** Pattern (Specifics):

- A. When it comes to the specifics concerning the pattern (i.e., *“in...truth”*) of worship it is critical we draw a distinction between the Old and New Covenants.
  - (1) I do not know of one denomination that does not make the mistake of failing to make the proper distinction between the two covenants.
  - (2) Every denomination I know of mixes worship practices from the Old Covenant, New Covenant, plus the wants and desires of man (i.e., human traditions).
- B. The Old Covenant including the Ten Commandments has been fulfilled and annulled (Jer. 31:31-34; **Heb. 8:6-13**; Rom. 7:1-7: adulteress; 2 Cor. 3:7-13; Matt. 5:17, 21-22, 27-28).
  - (1) The Old Covenant was *“nailed to the cross”* (**Col. 2:14**: *“having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.”*):
 

**Eph. 2:14-17:** *“For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, 15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, 16 and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.”*
  - (2) That does not mean the Old Testament is of no value! Rom. 15:4
  - (3) However, it does mean those using the Old Covenant to justify their practices, to attempt to make themselves *“right with God”* is not possible:
 

**Gal. 2:16:** *“knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.”*

**Gal 5:4:** *“You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.”*
- C. **11** In regards to the proper distinction between the Old and New Covenants one of the most important is the day of worship.



- (1) In the Old Covenant the primary day of worship was the Sabbath:

**Ex. 20:8-11:** “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. 11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.”

- (2) The Sabbath was given to the children of Israel exclusively!

**Deut. 5:15:** “And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.”

✦ **Not made with the patriarchs:**

**Deut. 5:3:** “The LORD did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us, those who are here today, all of us who are alive.”

✦ **Clearly made with Israel and Israel only:**

**Neh. 9:13-14:** “You came down also on Mount Sinai, And spoke with them from heaven, And gave them just ordinances and true laws, Good statutes and commandments. 14 You made known to them Your holy Sabbath, And commanded them precepts, statutes and laws, By the hand of Moses Your servant.”

- (3) Many ignorantly call the “first day of the week” the Sabbath or “Christian Sabbath.”

- (a) We’ve already established the Sabbath was given exclusively to Israel as part of the Old Covenant.
- (b) The Old Covenant is no longer in force, it has been “nailed to the cross” (Col. 2:14).
- (c) Furthermore, the Israelites are no longer God’s people (**Matt. 23:38:** “See! Your house is left to you desolate...”).
- (d) Thus, Christians are not to observe the Sabbath under the New Covenant; nor has God changed the Sabbath from the seventh day of the week to the first day of the week.

**Col. 2:16-17:** “So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, 17 which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.”

- (e) Thus, those still keeping the Sabbath or teaching that Sunday is the “Christian Sabbath” are as wrong as can be; they “...have become estranged from Christ...have fallen from grace.” (Gal. 5:4)

- (4) **12** Why is the day of worship for the local church the “first day of the week”? Because the observance of worship on the first day of the week, or Lord’s Day, is of New Testament origin (recall Matt. 17:5; Jn. 16:13; **Heb. 11:4:** “By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice...through which he obtained witness that he was righteous”; Rom. 10:17).

- (a) The Lord’s Day, or first day of the week, is significant: Why?

- (i) Resurrection:

**Mk. 16:9:** “Now when He rose early on the first day of the week,”

**Lk. 24:1:** “Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. 2 But they



found the stone rolled away from the tomb. 3 Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.”

**Lk. 24:13:** “Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem.”

**Lk. 24:20-21:** “and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. 21 But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened.”

**Lk. 24:46:** “Then He said to them, ‘Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day,’”

(ii) Jesus appeared to the disciples on the first day of the week: Jn. 20:1, 19, 26

(iii) Church established: Matt. 16:18; Acts 2 (Pentecost always on first day of the week, **Lev. 23:15-16:** “And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed. 16 Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD.”).

(iv) Holy Spirit came on first day of the week: Jn. 14:26; 15:26; 16:13

**Lk. 24:49:** “Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.”

**Acts 1:8:** “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

**Acts 2:1-4:** “When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

(v) Gospel of Christ first preached on the first day of the week: Acts 2; Rom. 1:16-17

(vi) First converts: Acts 2:37-38, 41, 47

(vii) Called “the Lord’s Day” by the apostle John: Rev. 1:10

(b) **13** First century Christians followed the commands of the apostle (Jn. 16:13) and thus observed the following on the Lord’s Day, the first day of the week:

(i) Assembled: The New Testament church assembled for worship on the first day of the week:

**Acts 20:7:** “Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.”

**1 Cor. 16:1-2:** “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: 2 On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.”

(ii) Lord’s Supper: the breaking of bread, the chief purpose of the first day assembly (Acts 20:7).



- ✓ This assembly was not to be forsaken (Heb. 10:25).
- ✓ “on the first day of the week” (Acts 20:7) means every first day of the week, as often as it comes around (\*\*Rotary sign\*\*).
- ✓ Breaking of bread refers to the Lord’s Supper:

**1 Cor. 10:16-17:** “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? 17 For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread.”

**Acts 2:42:** “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.”

(iii) The observance of the Lord’s Day should be in the spirit of what that day stands for.

- ✓ For example, the events that take place on Veteran’s Day, Memorial Day or the Fourth of July are appropriate for the purpose of the “day.”
- ✓ Thus, the first and most important priority of the Lord’s Day for Christians is to observe those things God’s word tells His people to observe on the Lord’s Day.
- ✓ The world ignores the purpose God has placed in the Lord’s Day and instead uses it as a day for softball, fishing, picnicking, and other worldly amusements. These things are not evil in and of themselves nor are they forbidden to be participated in on the Lord’s Day. However, if we as Christians pursue these things to the detriment of what God has specified for the Lord’s Day we are wrong.

(5) The Lord’s plan for worship of necessity and per New Testament teaching calls for an “assembly.”

(a) Recall that the idea of “assembly” is inherent in the word “church.”

(b) In His first epistle to the Corinthians Paul wrote extensively about their “assemblies”:

- ✓ Paul said they had “come together as a church” to eat the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor. 11:17-24).
- ✓ Paul regulated the use of “spiritual gifts” when “the whole church comes together” (14:19, 23, 26, 28, 34, 35).

(c) “Whether singing, praying, or teaching, the goal of the assembly was ‘edification and exhortation, and consolation’ of the church.” (Stauffer, p. 84)

(d) Hence, the Hebrew writer ordered the brethren to “...not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.” (Heb. 10:25)

(e) “Assembling for worship is a must for the church.” (Stauffer, p. 84)

(6) **14** The New Testament describes five acts of worship:

(a) Lord’s Supper:

- (i) Observing the Lord’s Supper was the practice of the first century church (Acts 20:6-7: “came together to break bread”).
- (ii) Taught by the apostles per Jesus authority: **Matt. 28:20:** “teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you...”



- (iii) Paul received the instructions for observing the Lord's Supper: **1 Cor. 11:23**: *"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..."*
- (iv) Supper was instituted by Christ and delivered to the apostles (Matt. 26:26-29; Mk. 14:22-25; Lk. 22:19-20).
- (v) Time of observance:
  - ✓ The primary purpose of the assembly of the church on the first day of the week was "to break bread"; in fact, Paul waited an entire week so he could observe the Lord's Supper with the saints at Troas "on the first day of the week" (Acts 20:6-7).
  - ✓ The Supper was something observed from "the beginning" of the church and something in which the first century saints "continued steadfastly" (Acts 2:42).
  - ✓ The first day of the week was the day of regular assembly for the first century saints: **1 Cor. 16:1-2**: *"Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also. 2 On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come."* (NAS)
- (vi) Design:
  - ✓ A remembrance (i.e., a memorial):
    - ✦ Remembrance of Christ: **1 Cor. 11:24-25**: *"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.' 25 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.'"*
    - ✦ Remembrance of His death: **1 Cor. 11:26**: *"For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes."* (Thayer: to announce, to declare, to promulgate, to make known; to proclaim publicly, to publish).
  - ✓ Anticipatory: **1 Cor. 11:26**: *"For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes."*
  - ✓ Fellowship: **1 Cor. 10:16-17**: *"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? 17 For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread."; **Matt. 26:29**: *"But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."**
  - ✓ Obedience: Jesus gave instructions for observing the Supper in the shadow of the cross: *"Take, eat...Drink from it, all of you."* (Matt. 26:26-29; recall Heb. 10:25).
  - ✓ Spiritual Growth: To eat it regularly and worthily promotes spiritual vigor, growth, strength (1 Cor. 11:29-32; **Jn. 6:53**: *"Then Jesus said to them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.'"*).
- (vii) **15** Manner:
  - ✓ Self-examination: **1 Cor. 11:28**: *"But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup."* (brutal introspection!)



- ✓ Worthy manner: Observe in a worthy manner also means properly “discerning the Lord’s body” (1 Cor. 11:29).
  - ✓ Fellowship: Must be observed in the harmony of Christian fellowship (1 Cor. 10:17: “For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread.”).
  - ✓ Communion with Christ: It is a “communion” (sharing, fellowship, in common with, partnership) with Christ (1 Cor. 10:15-17; Matt. 26:29).
- (b) **16 Music**: “Music has its place and purpose in the worship of the church. This place and purpose has been created by divine authority. In that place and purpose we must recognize the importance of: (1) the kind of music authorized; (2) the purpose music shall serve; and (3) the manner in which it shall be rendered.” (Cogdill, *The New Testament Church*, p. 93)
- (i) Nine of the nine times when we find the New Testament speaking of the first century disciples making music they are singing: Matt. 26:30; Acts 16:25; Rom. 15:9; 1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 2:12; 13:15; Jas. 5:13
  - (ii) The command to sing is specific and, therefore, automatically excludes all other kinds of music.
    - ✓ God commanded Noah to build the ark of “gopherwood”; by specifying “gopherwood” God automatically eliminated every other kind of wood (Gen. 6:14; we are not just grabbing that concept out of “thin air”; restaurant example).
    - ✓ God commanded the priests in the Old Testament to get the fire to burn incense from the altar (Lev. 16:12); by specifying this source of fire all other sources of fire were automatically excluded (just ask Nadab and Abihu! Lev. 10:1-2). Silence about other sources of fire did not grant permission!
    - ✓ When we use any other kind of music in worship besides singing (i.e., instrumental music) we’ve disobeyed God! **2 Jn. 9**: “Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God.” Silence about instrumental music no more grants permission than silence about other sources of fire granted permission for Nadab and Abihu!
    - ✓ The New Testament Scriptures are all sufficient on this and all points pertaining to Christian worship and service:
 

**2 Pet. 1:2-3**: “Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, 3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,”

**2 Tim. 3:16-17**: “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

**Rom. 1:17**: “For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith.’”

**Matt. 17:5-6**: “While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!’ 6 And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid.”
  - (iii) Purpose of singing:



- ✓ Praise and thanksgiving to God:
 

**Heb. 13:15:** “Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.”
- ✓ Teaching and admonishing one another:
 

**Eph. 5:19:** “speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,”

**Col. 3:16:** “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

“Music in Christian worship is to instruct, communicate ideas from one to another, and admonish those engaged in it to right living in addition to being a medium of praise, thanksgiving and supplication to God.” (Cogdill, *The New Testament Church*, p. 94)
- (iv) Manner of rendition:
  - ✓ “unto God” (Acts 16:25): Our singing, first and foremost, is direct praise to God (not entertainment!)(Rom. 15:9; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).
 

“Whenever music in Christian worship degenerates into an effort to entertain, it becomes a stench in the nostrils of God. We must remember that we are singing to please God—not the multitude...” (Cogdill, *The New Testament Church*, p. 94)

“When any act of worship is not directed to God it misses the mark and is therefore vain.” (Cogdill, *The New Testament Church*, p. 94)

“How utterly abominable then the attempt to attract the world by music in the Church. Let us be primarily concerned with causing God to listen.” (Cogdill, *The New Testament Church*, p. 94)
  - ✓ “I will sing with the spirit” (1 Cor. 14:15):
 

“From this we learn that our hearts must accompany our singing and be thoroughly in accord with the sentiment of the song being sung. In other words, it must be done in all sincerity.” (Cogdill, *The New Testament Church*, p. 94)
  - ✓ “I will also sing with the understanding” (1 Cor. 14:15):
 

“One can hardly sing sincerely what one does not understand. We need to study the sentiment of our songs, expressed in the words, and be sure that it is scriptural and that we understand it’s meaning in order to be able to make that meaning the sentiment of our hearts.” (Cogdill, *The New Testament Church*, p. 94)
  - ✓ To be understood: “speaking to one another” (Eph. 5:19); “teaching and admonishing one another” (Col. 3:16). Therefore, we need to sing clearly and loudly enough to communicate with our fellow brethren. Can’t just float along in a lackadaisical fashion!
  - ✓ Kind of songs to be sung: “psalms and hymns and spiritual songs” (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). Songs we sing must be of a spiritual nature with scriptural themes and phrasing. Popular music or hymns that are not respectful, either in content or cadence, have no place in our worship.
- (v) **17** Common arguments **for** instrumental music:



- ✓ Instrumental music was practiced under the Law of Moses.
  - ☛ This argument would also allow incense burning, infant church membership, animal sacrifices, and anything else practiced under the Law of Moses!
  - ☛ We've already established that the Old Covenant was annulled by being "*nailed to the cross*" (Col. 2:14).
  - ☛ To reach back to the Law of Moses for our practices results in becoming "*estranged from Christ...fallen from grace*" (Gal. 5:4).
  - ☛ To reach back to the Law of Moses to justify our practices is to resurrect an invalidated law and deny the effectiveness of Christ's sacrificial death on the cross (Col. 2:13-17; Eph. 2:14-16).
- ✓ Instrumental music is not expressly forbidden in the New Testament.
  - ☛ This argument places a premium on the silence of the scriptures; silence has never granted authority! (recall Noah, Gen. 6; Nadab & Abihu, Lev. 10:1-2).
  - ☛ This argument essentially says we can do anything the New Testament does not expressly forbid.
  - ☛ This opens the floodgates to all sorts of nonsense: rosary, religious garb, burning of incense and/or candles, praying to saints and/or the virgin Mary, infant baptism, dancing, drinking, The First Church of Cannabis, drinking, gambling, etc.
  - ☛ Remember: silence authorizes nothing! Remember Noah, Nadab & Abihu, ordering in a restaurant?!
  - ☛ Taking such advantage of the silence of the Scriptures is to "*transgress and...not abide in the doctrine of Christ*" (2 Jn. 9).
- ✓ Instrumental music is only an aid:
  - ☛ Instrumental music is more than an aid, it is an entirely different kind of music!
  - ☛ Singing is not playing! Singing is often called *a cappella* music which literally means "in chapel style," in other words, as is done in the church!
  - ☛ Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16 require all Christians to participate, therefore, if instrumental music is used all would have to play an instrument.
  - ☛ Even liberal "Christians" that use instrumental music in worship admit that instrumental music was not found in the church until at least five or six hundred years after the first century! It is not part of John 16:13!
- ✓ The "*psallo*" argument:
  - ☛ In Ephesians 5:19 Paul said we are to "making melody in your heart to the Lord."
  - ☛ According to Vine *psallo* ("*making melody*") means "'to twitch, twang,' then, 'to play a stringed instrument with the fingers,'"
  - ☛ So the argument is that *psallo* justifies instrumental music in worship. If true, it would limit us to stringed instruments!
  - ☛ If true, again, every Christian would be required to play an instrument. Another could no more do the playing of the instrument for us than could they sing or partake of the Lord's Supper for us.



- ✦ The argument is also flawed because the passage *specifies* the “instrument” that is played which is “*the heart*”; it is a metaphor. When we sing it is coming from our heart, thus, we are metaphorically playing our heart strings, not the strings of a mechanical instrument.
- ✓ Final objections to instrumental music: (Cogdill, *The New Testament Church*, p. 99)
  - ✦ “Instrumental music transgresses and disrespects the authority of Christ by injecting something into Christian worship which the Lord and His apostles have not taught (II Jno. 9-11).”
  - ✦ “Instrumental music corrupts and makes vain our worship in the practice of that which God has not taught (Matt. 15:7-9).”
  - ✦ “It creates dissension and division by being offensive to the conscience of many (I Cor. 10:28).”
  - ✦ “We cannot worship God in spirit and truth and use it for it is no part of ‘all truth’ revealed to the apostles by the Holy Spirit (Jno. 16:13; Jno. 4:24).”
  - ✦ “We cannot walk by faith and practice it, for it is not taught in the word of God and faith comes by hearing God’s word (Rom. 10:17; II Cor. 5:7).”
  - ✦ “It is no part of the divine pattern and we corrupt the plan for God’s House and therefore labor in vain when we use it (Heb. 8:1-7; Psalms 127:1).”

## STOP Part 2

- (c) **18 Giving:** “The Church of God is engaged in the greatest mission under heaven. Money is an absolute requisite in carrying on its work and hence the proper use of money becomes an important theme in the New Testament and assumes an important place in the Christian’s life. The first sin in the Jerusalem Church that we are told was the sin of Ananias and Sapphira in the matter of giving money to the Lord (Acts 5:1-2). Christians in making money must take ‘thought for things honorable in the sight of all men’ and using the money they make must have the glory of God in mind.” (Cogdill, *The New Testament Church*, p. 103)

### General principles governing church finances:

- (i) **Stewardship:** Christians are stewards, trustees, caretakers of what belongs to another (God).
- ✓ Must be found faithful as good stewards (**I Pet. 4:10:** “...good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”); cannot be wasteful (**Lk. 16:1:** parable of the unjust steward, “if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?” v. 11).
  - ✓ We will render an accounting for our stewardship (**Rom. 14:12:** “So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.”).
  - ✓ Must not hoard the Lord’s money for our own security (Lk. 12:13-21: rich farmer that built bigger barns; **Lk. 12:20-21:** “But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?’ 21 ‘So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”).
  - ✓ What we give back to God must be the “first fruit offering” (Lev. 23:9-14; Matt. 6:33) not our “left overs.”



- ✓ “It is then not a question of how much of our substance we are willing to give to the Lord but, on the contrary, the problem is, ‘How much of what the Lord has entrusted to me shall I keep?’” (Cogdill, *The New Testament Church*, p. 103)
- (ii) Fellowship: Acts 2:42 A coordinated act of all the members; a mutual participation and joint effort.
  - ✓ Performed out of love (**1 Pet. 1:22**: “...love one another fervently with a pure heart.”; **Col. 2:2**: “...being knit together in love...”).
  - ✓ In suffering (**Gal. 6:2**: “Bear ye one another’s burdens”).
  - ✓ In service (**Phil. 1:5**: “for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now,”; **Phil. 4:16**: “For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities.”).
  - ✓ In equality (**1 Cor. 16:2**: “...let each one of you lay something aside...”; **2 Cor. 8:12**: “...according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have”; “Equality in bearing the financial burden of the Church does not mean one giving as much as another (II Cor. 8:13-15) but each one giving according to his ability. Individual ability is the basis of personal responsibility (Matt. 25:41-44). One cannot be in ‘full fellowship’ until he is doing his part. See the comparison in the story of the widow’s mite (Mk. 12:41-44: widow gave only “two mites,” but “she out of her poverty, put in all she had, her whole livelihood.”).” (Cogdill, *The New Testament Church*, pp. 103-104)
- (iii) Discipleship: **Matt. 16:24**: “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.”
  - ✓ Requires all of us to make a self-sacrifice and give up the world (Lk. 9:57-62; Matt. 19:27-29).
  - ✓ Failure demonstrated in the case of the rich young ruler (Matt. 19:16-22: when Jesus told him to “lay up treasure in heaven,” i.e., give to the poor; “he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions”).
  - ✓ Christ gives us the pattern for self-sacrifice (Phil. 2:5-8; **2 Cor. 8:9**: “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.”). “Measure yourself by this standard and do not be afraid of giving too much.” (Cogdill, *The New Testament Church*, p. 104)
- (iv) Love: Consecration of ourselves is the basis of giving (**2 Cor. 8:24**: “Therefore show to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love and of our boasting on your behalf.”).
  - ✓ Cannot serve God and mammon (Lk. 16:13-15; Matt. 6:19-24).

**19 More principles governing church finances:** “The Lord has presented a plan for financing the work of the Church in New Testament scriptures. As in the case of every other plan God has given it must be put into operation by faithfulness upon the part of Christians. The obligation is an individual one. We must work the plan and the plan will work.” (Cogdill, *The New Testament Church*, p. 105)

(i) Individual:

- ✓ Giving is an individual matter (BTW: increases our responsibility! **1 Cor. 16:2**: “...let each one of you lay something aside...”).



- ✓ Each individual Christian is to work so he/she can participate (1 Thess. 4:11-12; 2 Thess. 3:10-13; **Eph. 4:28**: “Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.”).
- (ii) Motive:
- ✓ Giving is a divine command (**1 Cor. 16:1-2**: “...let each one of you lay something aside...”).
  - ✓ By helping the poor we will obtain the Lord’s favor and help (**Psa. 41:1-3**: “Blessed is he who considers the poor; the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him and keep him alive, and he will be blessed on the earth...”).
  - ✓ Giving makes us like God (Lk. 6:35-38).
  - ✓ Makes our prayers acceptable to God (Acts 10:1-4).
  - ✓ Results in laying up treasure in heaven (Matt. 19:21; 1 Tim. 6:17-19).
  - ✓ Opens the doorway to the bounties of God’s grace (**2 Cor. 9:6**: “But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.”; **Lk. 6:38**: “Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”).
  - ✓ Serves as a means for us to glorify God (2 Cor. 9:12-15: recipients of the Corinthian’s gift “they glorify God...for you liberal sharing with them...”).
  - ✓ Provides us with an avenue for happiness (**Acts 10:35**: “...It is more blessed to give than to receive.”).
- (iii) Manner: New Testament plan: **1 Cor. 16:1-2**: “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: 2 On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.” Five facts here about giving:
- ✓ Periodic: “On the first day of the week...”
  - ✓ Personal: “let each one of you...”
  - ✓ Providential: “you lay something aside...”
  - ✓ Proportionate: “as he may prosper...”
  - ✓ Preventive: “that there be no collections when I come...”
- “NOTE: Sometimes it is argued that this is the plan for raising money only for benevolence in the Church. It remains, however, that divine wisdom led Paul to give this plan to Corinth for raising money and good reasoning will convince one that if it will work in raising money for one righteous cause, it will work for another and for all.” (Cogdill, *The New Testament Church*, pp. 105-106)
- (iv) Other principles in giving:
- ✓ Voluntary, cheerfully (**2 Cor. 9:7**: “So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.”).
  - ✓ Purposefully, planned, systematic (2 Cor. 9:7).



- ✓ Confidently in the sense that we can give liberally without fear of being caused to suffer as a result of our liberality (2 Cor. 9:8-11).

(v) Measure of giving:

- ✓ Measured by one's ability (1 Cor. 16:2: "On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper..."; 2 Cor. 8:12: "For if there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have.").
- ✓ Bountifully (2 Cor. 9:6: "But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully."). "Not how little but how much can we give and how great is the need is the principle of liberality (Acts 2:45)." (Cogdill, *The New Testament Church*, p. 106)

(d) **20** Prayer:

- (i) Apostles: "Paul mentioned praying "with the spirit, and...with the understanding" in the assembly (1 Cor. 14:15).
- (ii) From beginning: Prayer was something that we see in the assembly of the church from "the beginning" in Acts 2 and something in which the first century disciples "continued steadfastly" (Acts 2:42: "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.").
- (iii) Paul's letters: Paul often wrote about his prayers for the brethren (Eph. 1:15-18; Phil. 1:3-7; Col. 1:3-12) and requested their prayers on his behalf (Eph. 6:19: "and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel,").
- (iv) Prayer the subject of the Lord's teaching: It is only natural that prayer would be an important part of our assembly on the first day of the week since the Lord taught so much about prayer:
  - ✓ Jesus gave us a "model" prayer (Matt. 6:9-15; Lk. 11:1-4; Note: it is not something meant to be repeated verbatim, but gives principles; also short and to the point!).
  - ✓ Jesus taught us to be persistent in prayer (Lk. 18:1-7).
  - ✓ Jesus practiced what He preached in regards to prayer (e.g., He prayed before His baptism, Lk. 3:21; He prayed all night before selecting the apostles, Lk. 6:12; He went up on a mountain alone to pray, Matt. 14:23; He prayed in the garden the night before His crucifixion, Matt. 26; etc.).
- (v) **21** Important things for us to remember about prayer:
  - ✓ Prayer is directed to God the Father (Matt. 6:9; Lk. 11:1; Rom. 10:1).
  - ✓ It includes supplication for our needs and thanksgiving expressing our gratitude for God's blessings (1 Tim. 2:1).
  - ✓ We need to pray for our leaders (regardless of what we think of them!; 1 Tim. 2:2).
  - ✓ We need even to pray for our enemies (Matt. 5:44: "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.").
  - ✓ We must pray in faith expecting our prayers to be answered (Jas. 1:5-8; 1 Jn. 5:14-15: "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to



*His will, He hears us. 15 And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.”).*

- ✓ We offer our prayers in Jesus name (Jn. 14:13-14; 1 Tim. 2:5 (mediator); 1 Jn. 2:1 (advocate)).

(e) **22 Teaching/Preaching:** “In order to maintain its identity with the Church established by Christ, controlled by His authority, described in the New Testament, the Church today must be Scriptural in its teaching.” (Cogdill, *The New Testament Church*, p. 76)

(i) Whenever first century brethren assembled, including the first day of the week assemblies, teaching/preaching the word was a vital part of the assembly:

- ✓ This was so from “the beginning” in Acts 2 and teaching/preaching was something in which the first century Christians “continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine” (i.e., teaching; Acts 2:42).
- ✓ The emphasis on teaching/preaching was directed by the Lord Himself as He issued the Great Commission to the apostles (Mk. 16:15; Matt. 28:19).
- ✓ The teaching commanded by the Lord not only included the basic facts of the gospel that instructs the alien sinner in how to become a Christian, but includes “teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:20) and all that is needed to grow complete in Christ (Eph. 4:11-14; Acts 20:27; 2 Pet. 1:3-11; **2 Pet. 3:17-18:** “You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; 18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”).
- ✓ We see this “teaching program” continuing through the book of Acts at every opportunity including the assembly on the first day of the week (Acts 19:9 Paul taught in the school of Tyrannus in Ephesus for ~2 years; Acts 20:6-7 Paul preached at Troas in their first day of the week assembly).
- ✓ By apostolic, inspiration what and how we preach is strictly specified and narrowly defined (**2 Tim. 4:1-2:** “I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: 2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.”).

(ii) **23 Subject of teaching restricted:**

- ✓ Jesus limited His teaching to God’s words (**Jn. 8:26:** “...I speak to the world those things which I heard from Him.”; **Jn. 8:28:** “...I do nothing of Myself; but as the Father taught Me, I speak these things.”; **Jn. 8:38:** “I speak what I have seen with My Father...”
- ✓ Holy Spirit didn’t speak of His own authority (**Jn. 16:13:** “However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.”).
- ✓ Apostles didn’t speak of their own authority (Jn. 16:13; **Gal. 1:11-12:** “But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. 12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.”).
- ✓ No such thing as “church doctrine” (2 Jn. 9-11; Jn. 12:48).

(iii) **24 Teaching limited to that of Christ and His apostles:**



- ✓ The revealed gospel is all sufficient for our spiritual needs (Rom. 1:16-17).
  - ✓ Scriptures entirely sufficient (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
  - ✓ Scriptures contain all truth (Jn. 16:13).
  - ✓ God has provided everything we need! **2 Pet. 1:3**: “as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,”
  - ✓ New Testament is complete (Jn. 16:13; **Jude 3**: “Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.”).
  - ✓ Only “one faith” (Eph. 4:5).
  - ✓ We are commanded to “speak the same thing” (1 Cor. 1:10; 1 Pet. 4:11).
- (iv) Reject human creeds:
- ✓ Made by men, therefore, unreliable (Jer. 10:23; Prov. 14:12).
  - ✓ Always incomplete, therefore, insufficient for man’s needs.
  - ✓ Continually revised, therefore, unstable (**Matt. 7:24-27**: “whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them”).
  - ✓ Lack authority, therefore, unenforceable (Matt. 4:4; 28:18-20).
  - ✓ Creates conflict because all do not agree, therefore, cannot be true and results in division (1 Cor. 1:10).
  - ✓ Conflicts with God’s word, therefore, cannot be right and an accurate guide (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
- (v) Identity of church tested by what it teaches:
- ✓ Compare what made you a member of your church with what God required of people in the first century (i.e., conversions in the book of Acts).
  - ✓ Does the church of which you are a member excuse you from doing what the New Testament required of first century Christians? Mk. 16:16; Matt. 19:9
  - ✓ In order to find the teachings of the church of which you are a member can you turn only to the New Testament?
  - ✓ Does the church of which you are a member leave you free to believe and teach exactly what the New Testament says or do you have to subscribe to their manuals, creeds, or catechisms?
  - ✓ Can you depend on the New Testament to learn how to worship as your church prescribes or do you have to look to other sources? (e.g., mass, holy days, special services, etc.)

“CONCLUSION: The identity of the Church can as easily be destroyed by corrupting its teaching as it can by corrupting its worship or wearing an unscriptural name.”

(Cogdill, *The New Testament Church*, p. 77)

## **25 More on scriptural teaching/preaching:**

- (i) First century Christians “continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine (teaching, ASV)” (Acts 2:42)



- ✓ Doctrine comes from Christ not man (**1 Cor. 2:6-13; Gal. 1:11-12**: “*But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. I 2 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.*”; Jn. 17:8).
  - ✓ Church must “observe all things that I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:20).
  - ✓ Christ’s commandments intended to fully guide the church (**Phil. 4:9**: “*The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.*”).
  - ✓ To reject/refuse apostolic teaching is to reject God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit (**1 Cor. 14:37**: “*...the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord.*”; **1 Jn. 4:6**: “*We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.*”; **1 Thess. 2:13**: “*For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God...*”).
  - ✓ To “think beyond the things which are written” is disobedience (1 Cor. 4:6; 2 Jn. 9-11).
- (ii) First century Christians had the correct attitude toward the doctrines and commandments of men:
- ✓ They tested “all things” and held “fast what is good” (1 Thess. 5:21; Acts 17:11).
  - ✓ They abounded “still more and more in knowledge and all discernment” which enabled them to “approve the things which are excellent” (Phil. 1:9-10).
  - ✓ They held “fast the faithful word as he has been taught” spoke “the things which are proper for sound doctrine” (Titus 1:9; 2:1).
  - ✓ They were vigilant to not be “tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine” (Eph. 4:11).
  - ✓ They did “not believe every spirit” but tested “the spirits whether they are of God” and rejected those teaching error (1 Jn. 4:1-6).
  - ✓ They took heed “lest anyone cheated you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ” (Col. 2:8).
  - ✓ They took heed “lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away by the error of the wicked” (2 Pet. 3:17).
  - ✓ They spoke only “the things which we have seen and heard” from the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:19-20).
- (iii) First century Christians had the correct attitude toward false teachers:
- ✓ Jesus warned us of such (**Matt. 16:11**: “*...beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.*”).
  - ✓ Paul warned them about “false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.” 2 Cor. 11:13).
  - ✓ They were instructed to give no fellowship or encouragement to those not abiding in apostolic teaching (2 Thess. 3:6, 14-15; 2 Jn. 9-11).



- ✓ They were instructed to reject factious and divisive men (Titus 3:9-11).
  - ✓ They were instructed to “*note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.*” Rom. 16:17).
  - ✓ They were instructed not to receive or associate with false teachers (2 Jn. 7-11).
- (iv) Compromising with false doctrine is disastrous:
- ✓ “*A little leaven leavens the whole lump.*” (Gal. 5:9).
  - ✓ Compromise with error results in Christ’s disapproval and ultimate rejection (**Rev. 2:14-17**).
  - ✓ Elders (i.e., bishops, pastors) and evangelists are responsible for protecting the church against false teachers and false teaching (Acts 20:27-32; **1 Tim. 1:3-4**: “*As I urged you when I went into Macedonia — remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith.*”).

### III. CONCLUSION: **26**

1. The goal of this lesson has been to examine what the local church is to practice as it meets regularly on the first day of the week.
2. We must remember, however, although critically important, public worship is only a fraction of what we do as a Christian; regular worship can never substitute for our daily devotion and service to God.
3. Let us be determined that whether it is in our Sunday assembly, our daily lives in the home, at school, on the job, etc. that “*whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.*” (Col. 3:17)

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