

WORSHIP

The Nature of Worship

Psalm 103:1-5

Churches meet together to meet also with God. He is present with His people. Jesus said in Matt. 18:20, "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." More often than not we forget that point! God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit meet with his people at church.

What do you think about being in the presence of God? Perhaps it is frightening (Rev. 1:17)? John fell at Jesus' feet. Perhaps it is exciting. Perhaps it alarms your conscience to be in God's presence? Perhaps it is comforting, a solace in the midst of your storms? Perhaps it is a time to say "thank you"? I hope that you have come to meet Him, to worship and praise Him. I am afraid that many of us go through the motions never reaching out to God. Perhaps some are coming out of habit and not getting much from being together. I hope to remind you of what being together is all about and to challenge your sincere hearts to enter into a deeper relationship with God as you worship HIM

We Must Today Turn Our Hearts toward God

Each Lord's day, is the day we remember the great sacrifice for us--His body and His blood. Today, this Lord's day, is the day we praise our God, lift our voices in adoration and love. From Psalm 103:1-5 we learn He is the one we sing to. Eph 5:18-19 tells us to sing with our hearts to God. Today we say, "thank you," by our prayers, our songs, and by our contribution (Col. 3:15-17). Today we call upon our Father to help us and send our petitions to God for the things we as a body need. Peter reminds us in 1 Pet 5:7 to cast our cares upon Him. The Hebrew writer in Heb. 4:16 encourages us to draw near the throne of grace.

What Worship Is And Is Not:

In John 8:23-24 Jesus tells us what God wants from the worshipper. "Give unto the Lord the glory due His name; Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness" (Psalm 29:2). "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be held in reverence by all those who are around Him" (Psalm 89:7). Psalm 95:1-7 reminds us of our personal need to worship God.

The English word "worship" comes from the old word "worthship"! It is by our words and actions telling God that He is worthy of our praise and adoration. He deserves our love and thanksgiving. Worship is a mental act, a sense of awe and reverence in the presence of the DIVINE. Worship (*proskuneo*) means "throwing oneself on the ground to show respect and awe." We should recall the words of God to Moses "Take your shoes off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground." (Ex 3:5) In Rev. 4:11 we see the heavenly host saying, "Worthy art Thou!" In Rev. 5:9-13 we learn worship is an important event in heaven. William Temple said, "To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God, to devote the will to the purpose of God."

Our Part in Worship

It is good to remind ourselves in church that we are not the audience. God is! He is here to observe us and to be praised by us. Our task is to "please Him." This is why we can never cheapen our worship by turning it into entertainment. Entertainment is "a pleasant way to pass the time." We cannot cheapen worship by making it a performance, where some perform for others. Worship is not for self-glory but to glorify God and Him alone. Paul said in Acts 17:24-25 that God is not worshipped by man's device.

Let us prepare our hearts and spirits to praise and glorify our God before we get to church. Let's enter the services with celebration, praise and thanksgiving in mind. While we worship let's devote ourselves to God, singing and praying with our hearts aflame with love (1 Tim 2:8). When we leave worship, let's say it was good to draw close to our God and to show Him we love Him. Let's live lives that reflect we are God's people.

Israel worshiped in vain by living immoral and godless lives (Isa. 1:12-20). They needed to repent of their sins before they came to worship God. James reminds us that we must control our tongues every day if we wish for our religious worship to come before our God (James 1:26,27).

What will please God most is a heart that is right with Him! Is your heart right with God? washed in the crimson flood?

Prayer--Man Speaking to God

What Is Prayer?

In its simplest definition prayer is merely that man is speaking to Almighty God. What makes this spiritual is not that man is speaking but that God is listening. God invites men to pray to Him (Matt. 7:7-11) and cares about our everyday lives and burdens (1 Pet. 5:7).

The Different Forms of Prayer listed in 1 Tim. 2:1,2

- Requests: an earnest asking of God for our needs
- Prayers: the whole range of petitions made to God
- Intercessions: seeking the hearing of God on behalf of others
- Thanksgiving: expressing gratitude for God's blessings

Prayer is the act of speaking to God as our Father. As a Father He cares for us and for our needs (Matt. 7:7-11; cf. 2 Cor. 12:14). In the model prayer of Jesus, He addresses God as "Father," remarking that He is "Our Father." (Matt. 6:9-15).

How Should Christians Pray?

- Luke 18:1 pray always
- 1 Thess. 5:17 "pray without ceasing" cf. Col. 4:2
- John 14:13 "in the name of Jesus Christ"
- 1 John 5:14,15 "according to His will"
- Mark 11:23,24 believing that we have received our request
- Heb. 4:15,16 with confidence, boldness
- James 1:5-8 without doubting
- James 4:1-3 with proper motives, not for our pleasure
- Luke 18:10-14 with humble hearts
- Matt. 6:14,15; 18:21-35 with forgiveness in their hearts for others
- Matt. 26:41 with watchfulness against temptation

For Whom Should the Christian Pray?

- 1 Tim. 2:1 for all people
- 1 Tim. 2:2 kings and rulers
- Eph. 6:18 for all the saints
- Heb. 13:18; Col. 4:3 pray for open doors for the gospel
- Matt. 9:36-38 pray for workers to reach out to the lost
- Matt. 5:43,44; Luke 6:28 for those who mistreat us, our enemies
- James 5:14 for the ill
- James 5:16 confess your sins and pray for one another
- 1 John 5:16 for a sinful brother

There are some sin-hardened people for whom we are not to pray (Jer. 7:13-16; 14:12-14; 1 John 5:16:17).

Whose Prayer Will God Hear?

- Matt. 6:9 His children
- Matt. 5:16; 1 Pet. 3:12 the righteous
- 1 John 3:22 the obedient
- James 1:5-8 the trusting
- Heb. 4:16 the confident
- Acts 10:1-6 the lost but God-fearing man

Whose Prayer Will God Not Hear?

- James 4:3 those with wrong motives
- 1 Pet. 3:7 men who mistreat their wives
- James 1:6,7 those who doubt
- Zech. 7:12,13 those who hardened hearts against the law
- Isa. 59:1,2 those who continue in sin
- Prov. 28:9 those who turn from hearing the law
- Prov. 21:13 those who do not hear the cry of the poor
- Prov. 15:8,29 the wicked
- Psa. 66:18 those who regard iniquity in their hearts
- Prov. 1:24-28 those who refuse His call

In What Ways Shall I Expect God to Answer My Prayer?

1. Sometimes God says, "Yes." He did so to Elijah (James 5:13-16). Let's remember that God expects His children to keep on asking until we receive (Luke 18:1-8).

2. Sometimes God says "No." A negative answer may be the answer of a loving God who cares for His people. Remember Paul's thorn (2 Cor. 12:7-10) and Jesus at the garden of Gethsemane (Matt. 26:36-44). In such cases Christians must learn to pray that God's will be done, realizing that God's grace will be sufficient for our needs.

3. Sometimes God says, "wait awhile." He did so with Israel until Moses was eighty years old (Exodus 1-3). Jesus also responded slowly to Mary and Martha when Lazarus was sick but raised him from the dead. See also Jer. 42:1-7.

4. Sometimes God gives us something different from what we ask. The thief on the cross only wanted to be remembered but Jesus took him to Paradise. We don't always know what is best to ask for or how we should pray (Rom. 8:26). With confidence we can be assured that God, as a loving Father, will do what is best for us.

5. Often God gives us much more than we ask or think (Eph. 3:20,21). Solomon only asked for wisdom but received much more in addition to the wisdom. He received honor, riches and length of days.

The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is a memorial feast instituted by our Lord on the night in which He was betrayed. It is a memorial of His body and His blood, which was shed for the remission of our sins.

The Institution of the Lord's Supper

(Matt. 26:17-19; Mark 14:12-24; 1 Cor. 11:17-34)

1. The Lord's Supper is a meal eaten by citizens of the kingdom, the church (Luke 22:29,30)
 2. Those born of water and of the Spirit are in the kingdom (John 3:3-5)
 3. The Lord's Supper was the practice of the early church (Acts 2:42; 20:7)
- taught by the apostles (Matt. 28:18-20)
 - Paul received the instruction from the Lord (1 Cor. 11:23)
 - Christ instituted the Supper and delivered its observance to the apostles (Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:19,20)

The Significance of the Supper

1. It commemorates the forgiveness of our sins found in the shed blood of Jesus Christ, the blood by which we entered into the new covenant with God (Matt. 26:26-29; 1 Cor. 11:26)
 - a. it is a memorial: "this do in remembrance of me" (1 Cor. 11:25-33)
 - b. it is a proclamation of the death of Christ (1 Cor. 11:26)
 - c. it is a time of examination of our manner of worship (1 Cor. 11:28-32)
2. We are to examine ourselves to see that we are partaking of the bread and cup in a worthy manner, "discerning the Lord's body."

The Focus of the Supper

1. *Backwards* to the cross, remembering His body and blood (1 Cor. 11:23-26)
2. *Upwards* toward God, communion with Christ (1 Cor. 10:15-17; 11:27-29)
3. *Inward*, examining one's heart so as to maintain spiritual vigor (1 Cor. 11:29-32).
4. *Forward*, partaking "until he comes" (1 Cor. 11:26).
5. *Outward*, maintaining unity and harmony in the church (1 Cor. 11:17-22).

The Day and Frequency of Observance

1. The apostle's teaching included "breaking bread" (Acts 2:42; 20:7)
2. The church at Troas came together "on the first day of the week" (Acts 20:7). Paul tarried for six days before the church met together "to break bread." They took the supper at the time "when" they gathered for this purpose, suggesting they did not meet at other times.
3. The Lord's (κυριακον) Supper (1 Cor. 11:20) was eaten on the Lord's (κυριακη) day (Rev. 1:10). This word is used only twice in Scripture. Early church history confirms that the Lord's day, the day of the Supper, was the first day of the week. We have no record of the Lord's Supper being observed on any other day.

The Elements to Be Used

1. The bread of the Lord's Supper was unleavened bread, since the Lord initiated the Lord's supper at the Passover feast (Matt. 26:17-26). The only bread eaten at the Passover was unleavened (Deut. 16:1-8).

2. The fruit of the vine (Matt. 26:29) was grape juice, which probably was fermented in the early centuries.

Giving To God and Meeting the Needs Of The Church

Why We Should Give

1. Because God has given to us all that we possess (James 1:17).
2. Because God owns everything.
 - the heavens and the earth (Gen. 14:19,20; Deut. 10:14; Psa. 24:1; 89:11)
 - the land we live on (Lev. 25:23)
 - every beast (Psalm 50:10-12)
 - every soul belongs to Him (Ezek. 18:4; Luke 12:15-21)
 - we have been bought by the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 6:19,20)
3. Because by giving we express our love to God (Luke 16:13-15; 2 Cor. 8:1-24)
4. Because by giving we find blessing (Acts 20:35; Mal. 3:10; Luke 6:38; 18:28-30; Phil. 4:17-19)
5. Because by giving we share with others in the work of evangelism (Phil. 4:10-20; 3 John 5-8)
6. Because, by failing to give we rob God (Mal. 3:8,9)

How We Should Give

1. Regularly (1 Cor. 16:1,2) "every first day of the week"
2. Systematically (1 Cor. 16:1,2) "lay by in store"
3. Individually (1 Cor. 16:1,2) "each one of you"
4. Bountifully (2 Cor. 9:6-8) "he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully"
5. Purposefully (2 Cor. 9:7) "as he has purposed in his heart"
6. Cheerfully (2 Cor. 9:7) "God loves a cheerful giver"
7. Readily (2 Cor. 8:12) "For if the readiness is present, it is acceptable according to what a man has, not according to what he does not have."
8. Accordingly (1 Cor. 16:1,2) "as he may prosper"

While tithing (giving one tenth of one's income) was commanded in the Old Testament (Lev. 27:30-33; Deut. 12:6,7,17,19; 14:22-29; 26:12-15), the practice is not taught in the New Testament. God asks us to give as we have been prospered and as we have purposed in our hearts (1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:7).

Does The Bible Authorize Christian Worship with Musical Instruments?

The Scriptures of Christian worship in Song:

- Matt. 26:30; 14:26 after the Supper instituted

- Acts 16:25 Paul and Silas in prison
- Rom. 15:9 confess to Thee, sing to Thy name
- 1 Cor. 14:15 sing with spirit and understanding
- 1 Cor. 14:26 individuals had psalms to share
- Eph. 5:18,19 speaking, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord
- Col. 3:16 teaching and admonishing with songs
- Heb. 2:12 proclaim, sing
- James 5:13 Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praises.
- Heb. 13:15 sacrifice of praise = fruit of lips

We are living in a time in which the concepts of "worship" and "entertainment" have been blended. Our religious world has instituted the "gospel music" business; religious "stars" entertain. In some cases worship becomes a performance, so some churches get the best singers and the best instrumentalists. One must wonder where God is in all this. He is to be the focus of our worship and not us. The purpose of worship is to please God (John 8:28,29). We have sometimes left the true notion of worship. Worship is the expression of an individual's devotion. It comes from the inside. Through time this has changed to the idea of performing and attempting to make an impression on the individual by stimulating his emotions. Too often men have cheapened the music of the church by making it entertainment. We sometimes feel as if we have been cheated by having no performance and miss the excitement of an orchestra, while not realizing the beauty of a spiritual feast in our own hearts filled with praise.

Three Basic Arguments for the Instrument

1. *The use of Psallo (ψαλλω) in Eph. 5:19.*

Over time *psallo* has gradually changed in meaning. It first meant "to touch, twang, strike strings." Next it meant "to touch or play strings of harp." Later it meant, "to sing with the harp." At last it meant, "to sing praises." (without any thought of any instrument of music). The only time in the LXX that *psallo* meant play was when the instrument was specified in the context; otherwise it meant to sing (LXX 150 B.C.). In the New Testament *psallo* is used four times. It meant

- "sing" Rom. 15:9; 1 Cor. 14:15; James 5:13
- "make melody or make music" in Eph. 5:19. The maker of the music or melody is to be the heart (no instrument even considered here)

Everett Ferguson said of *psallo*, "If the precise meaning of certain verses may be in doubt, what is clear is that an instrument did not inhere in the word *psallo* in the Septuagint. *Psallo* could translate a word meaning 'play' (*nagan*), or a general word (*zamar*). The meaning which would cover all occurrences is 'make melody.' This could include making melody on an instrument, but in the preponderance of occurrences it clearly refers to making melody with the voice." F. F. Bruce said of *psallo* in Eph. 5:19, "Nor should the etymological force of the terms be pressed, as though *psalms* inevitably meant a song sung to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument... while such plucking of the strings is the original sense of *psallo*...it is used in the NT with the meaning 'to sing psalms.'" In confirmation of this view, the Greek Orthodox Church (who knows Greek better than anyone) has never used instruments of music in worship.

B. *The use of instruments in the Old Testament.*

Psalms 150 and 2 Chron. 29:25-27 show that the use of instruments in Jewish worship is a command from God. However, Christians are not obligated to the Old Covenant that God made with the Jews. We are under a new covenant ratified by the blood of Christ and taught in the New Testament. For this reason, we don't offer incense, dance, or make animal sacrifices. The New Testament is a better covenant than the old and is spiritual (Heb. 8:6-13; 10:1-10). The Old

Testament had a temple building; in the New Testament we Christians are the temple of God. Our laws are written on our hearts not on tablets of stone. Our worship is not an outward and showy but inward and spiritual (John 4:21-23).

2. *There are harps in heaven (Rev. 5:8; 15:2)*

Each of these passages refers to a vision John had of the throne of God, not Christian worship. Each reflects Old Testament literature where the worship of the temple is considered ideal. But Christians do not worship in the Jerusalem temple; instead they are the temple of God. Incense is burned in heaven as well; are we to burn incense? Saints in heaven wear crowns and cast them toward God? Are we to do the same? Our task is not to imitate what is done in heaven but to be obedient to Jesus and His teachings for us. If Christians should play harps, why didn't the church do it in the New Testament? Why didn't they understand they were to imitate what is done in heaven? Heaven is heaven and earth is earth.

D. *The use of instruments is an aid to singing.*

Some say, "Instrumental Music in worship is justified in Christian worship as an aid to worship in song in the same way a song book is an aid. What is the difference in having a song book aiding in following the words of the song and a piano aiding in following the music of the song?"

Expedients or aids must first be lawful; expedients aid in doing that which is instructed. Nothing more than singing is done when a songbook is used, but a piano involves something more than singing, speaking, teaching or admonishing. Song books aid in accomplishing the purpose of singing. Pianos make a different kind of music. Expedients must truly aid. Organs, bands often hinder the singing, which must compete to be heard. Expedients must edify. Pianos produce musical sounds that are meaningless to the mind. The songbook does not. Organs may stimulate the emotions, but they do not instruct the mind. Expedients must not divide, but the instrument has been a source of division everywhere it is used.

The Basic Arguments against the Instrument

A. *The argument from history.*

The history of the church conclusively shows that instrumental music was an innovation. For many centuries no church used instruments of music. The use of the instrument is of human origin and not of Divine instruction.

"The general introduction of instrumental music can certainly not be assigned to a date earlier than the fifth or sixth centuries; yea, even Gregory the Great, who towards the end of the sixth century added greatly to the existing Church music, absolutely prohibited the use of instruments. Several centuries later the introduction of the organ in sacred service gave place to instruments as accompaniments for Christian song, and from that time to this they have been freely used with few exceptions. The first organ is believed to have been used in Church service in the 13th century. Organs were, however, in use before this in the theatre. They were never regarded with favor in the Eastern Church, and were vehemently opposed in some of the Western churches."

Everett Ferguson noted: "It is quite late before there is evidence of instrumental music, first the organ, employed in the public worship of the church. Recent studies put the introduction of instrumental music even later than the dates found in reference books. It was perhaps as late as the tenth century when the organ was played as part of the service. This makes instrumental music one of the late innovations of the medieval Catholic church. When introduced in the Middle Ages, the organ was still not part of the liturgy proper. That is, it did not initially accompany the hymn service, but was a separate item in the service. The type of chant employed left no place for instrumental accompaniment until new styles of music developed."

"Primitive Christians employed no instrumental music in their religious worship, says Lyman Coleman.

“Only singing, however, and no playing of instruments, was permitted in the early Christian church.”

“There can be no doubt that originally the music of the divine service was everywhere entirely of vocal nature.”

“Indeed, all evidence points to the chant and music of the primitive church as practically identical with the customs and traditions of the synagogue (vocal).”

James W. McKinnon, in his 1965 doctoral dissertation at Columbia University, shows that the early church music was wholly vocal, and that the opposition of the church fathers to instrumental music in worship was both monolithic and vehement.

Early Church Fathers opposed instruments of music in Christian worship.

- Justin Martyr (ca. 150 A.D.) condemned any association with musical instruments as worldly.
- Tertullian (150-222 A.D.) mentions only vocal music in worship.
- Clement of Alexandria (200 A.D.) severely denounced the use of instruments among Christians even at banquets.
- Augustine (354-430 A.D.) displays the general attitude of the early church against instruments of music for any purpose. “Let no one’s heart revert to the instruments of the theatre.”
- Gregory of Nazianus (330-390 A.D.) mentions instruments but not in any way to approve them. He believed their only use was the arousal of sensuousness.
- Jerome (347-420 A.D.) speaks only of vocal music and emphasizes that the heart is the source of songs.
- Theodoret (ca. 400 A.D.) says the use of the instrument is a “childish” relic of the Old Testament and is excluded from the worship of the church.
- Chrysostom (4th century A.D.) says of the instruments of the Old Testament allegorically look forward to the pure worship of the lips.

What Various Men Have Said through the Centuries

- Thomas Aquinas (1250): “Our church does not use instruments, as harps and psalteries, to praise God withal, that she may not seem to Judaize.”
- Martin Luther: “The organ in the worship to God is an ensign of Baal.”
- John Calvin: “It is no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting of tapers, or revival of other shadows of the law. The Roman Catholics borrowed it from the Jews.”
- John Wesley: “I have no objection to the organ in our chapels provided it is neither seen nor heard.”
- Adam Clark: “I am an old man and an old minister, and I here declare that I have never known instrumental music to be productive of any good in the worship to God, and have reason to believe that it has been productive of much evil. Music as a science I esteem and admire, but instruments of music in the house of God I abominate and abhor. This is the abuse of music and I here register my protest against all such corruptions in the worship of that infinite Spirit who requires his followers to worship Him in spirit and truth.”
- Charles Spurgeon: “I would as soon pray to God with machinery as to sing to God with machinery.”
- John Knox called the organ: “a kist (chest) of whistles.”
- Alexander Campbell: “To the really spiritually minded, it (using instruments in worship) would be like a cowbell in a concert.”
- J.W. McGarvey: “And if any man who is a preacher believes that the apostle teaches the use of instrumental music in the church, by enjoining the singing of psalms, he is one of those smatterers in Greek who can believe anything he wishes to believe. When the wish is father to the thought, correct exegesis is like water on a duck’s back.”

Our purpose is to restore the New Testament church, which never used and greatly opposed the use of instruments of music in worship.

B. The lack of authority, the absence of instruments in NT worship.

Jesus never taught the disciples to use them. They were long in existence but ignored in the teaching and the practice of the entire New Testament. The New Testament contains God's complete will for our time, from Pentecost till the Second Coming. Had God wished that we use it, He would have said so. Where is the Bible authority for instrumental music? Where is the instruction? Approved Example? Implication? Expedient?

Some one says, "The Bible doesn't say we can't play the organ! Therefore, it must be all right." But neither does the Bible specifically condemn: burning incense, praying to Mary, roast lamb with communion, sprinkling for baptism, infant baptism, or a mourner's bench. How can we justify organs and reject these?

C. Playing an instrument adds a new form of worship.

The instrument is not merely an aid but was itself a means of praising God in the Old Testament but is unauthorized in the NT. (2 Chron. 5:13; 29:25) Playing lyres and psalteries were themselves forms of worship not merely aids. An expediency aids in the performance of an instruction, but an expediency does not change the instruction. An addition changes the instruction so that people do something different than the instructions required. Expedients are lawful, whereas additions are not lawful.

The Difference between Expedients and Additions Expedients Help Fulfill the Instruction, but Additions Change the Instruction.

Bible Example Lawful and Authorized	Expedient Addition	Addition Unlawful and Unauthorized
Unlawful and Unauthorized Noah's Ark Gen. 6:13-22	Tools to cut, join, and to spread pitch	Larger size, additional windows, additional woods
Tabernacle Ex. 25:9,40; 26:30 Ex. 39:32,42,43	Tools to work silver, gold, and wood in making the tabernacle and its furniture.	Making ark of covenant out of both acacia and pine wood
Lord's Supper Bread and Fruit of the Vine Baptize, Be Baptized Are different actions. Singing Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 13:15 Different kind of music Different means of praise	Trays and Cups Baptistry, pool, river, lake, or bathtub Songbook, pitch pipe	Roast Lamb Sprinkle and pouring Piano, Organ

3. *The Scriptures show that God condemns innovations:*

- Lev. 10:1,2 Nadab and Abihu's strange fire
- 1 Sam. 10:8; 13:8-14 Saul's offering
- 2 Chron. 26:4,16-21 Uzziah's offering

To perform any action without divine authority is sinful. Will God approve our offerings of praise if we act without authority in our singing?

E. Instruments cannot speak, teach, admonish, give thanks, praise, proclaim, confess or make melody on your heart.

These are the things God wants us to accomplish in our singing. Instruments of music fail to do anyone of them. This is what makes them additions; they do something different from the instruction.

Jesus taught us in Matt. 7:24-27 that Christians are to do what He says in order to obey His will and enter heaven. The burden of proof for pianos and organs must be on the one who introduces it to show where Jesus has instructed this form of worship. There has never been any evidence from the Bible, language, or history to show that instrumental music in Christian worship has won God's approval.

The Sabbath and The Lord's Day

The terms "Saturday" and "Sunday" are both of human origin and do not affect what the Bible teaches as to when Christians should worship. Both are Latin terms referring to various days named after their gods: Saturday named after Saturn, the god of agriculture and corresponding to the Greek god Cronos; and Sunday named, for the day of the Sun god. Many mistakenly regard Sunday as a Christian Sabbath and bind the laws of the Sabbath, which were binding only on the Jews on Saturday, on Christians on Sunday, the first day of the week.

The Bible and the Sabbath:

1. "Sabbath" comes from a Hebrew term meaning "to cease or desist." The idea is not that of relaxation or refreshment but a ceasing from activity.

2. Israel was commanded to keep the Sabbath for two reasons: (a) because after the sixth day of creation, God rested from his labors or ceased from His activity (Gen. 2:3; Ex. 20:8-11; 31:16,17; Deut. 5:15). and (b) because Israel had been delivered from slavery in Egypt (Deut. 5:15).

3. The covenant which included observance of the Sabbath was made with Israel only (Ex. 19:3-6; 20:1,2; Deut. 5:2,3). The Sabbath was a sign between God and Israel, not a sign between God and all nations (Ex. 31:12-17).

4. Observance of the Sabbath was never commanded as a part of a covenant with the fathers before the time Israel came out of Egypt (Deut. 5:1-3; Neh. 9:13,14; Ezek. 20:10-12). The Law of Moses spoke to those who were under the Law (Rom. 3:19).

5. The words of the covenant God made with Israel when they came out of the land of Egypt was the Ten Commandments, the fourth of which demands observance of the Sabbath (Ex. 31:12-17; 34:27,28; Deut. 4:13; 9:11; 1 Kings 8:9,21).

6. Because Israel did not keep the covenant, the Old Covenant was to be nullified, and a new covenant was to be made (Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:6-13; 10:9).

7. Paul expressly stated that Christians are dead to the Law, released or delivered from the Law containing the Ten Commandments (Rom. 7:4-7). Those who would be justified by the Law are severed from Christ and have fallen from grace (Gal. 5:1-4).

8. The Law contained in ordinances, which separated Jews and Gentiles, was abolished, taken out of the way, so that Christ could make peace by joining the two into one new man (Eph. 2:11-16; cf. Col. 2:14).

9. The Christian is not to be judged for not keeping the Sabbath, which is only a type of better things to come (Col. 2:16,17). The Sabbath for Christians is yet future in a heavenly calling (Hebrews 3,4).

The New Testament and the First Day of the Week, the Lord's Day

1. Jesus Christ arose from the dead on the first day of the week (Mark 16:1,2; Luke 24:1,7,13,20-22; John 20:1,19). These verses are sometimes held to contradict Matt. 28:1, which in some versions use the phrase, "late on the Sabbath." The word "late" (οψε) should be translated "after" when it is used as a preposition (as it is in Matt. 28:1). "Late" here does not mean late as opposed to early, but late as in tardy or later. Some scholars regard this word as a technical term referring to that period of time between sundown (the official end of the Sabbath) and sunrise of the first day of the week. This would remove any possible disagreement between the gospels or as to when Jesus arose from the dead.

2. Pentecost always came on the first day of the week (Lev. 23:15,16). All the events of Pentecost (after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ) happened on the first day of the week (Acts 2): (a) the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles; (b) the first preaching of the gospel in fulfillment of Isa. 2:2-4; and (c) the beginning of the church (Acts 11:15).

3. The churches assembled on the first day of the week to (break bread) observe the Lord's Supper and to give their contributions (Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1,2).

4. "Breaking bread" refers to the eating of the Lord's Supper (κυριακον), which occurred on the Lord's Day. The term "κυριακον" occurs only twice in Scripture, once in reference to the Lord's Supper (κυριακον in 1 Cor. 11:20) and once in reference to the Lord's Day (κυριακη in Rev. 1:10). It is no coincidence that early Christians observed the Lord's Supper on the Lord's Day, the first day of the week, since the term is only used of these two matters.

5. The Sabbath, the seventh day of the week, should not be confused with the Lord's Day, which is the first day of the week. While early Christians worshipped on the Lord's Day, they did not observe it as a day of rest. According to the *New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*:

"No evidence for the equating of Sabbath and Sunday is found before the end of the third century, but by that time there was an increasing stress on the true, i.e., spiritual, observance of the Sabbath, and it was, at least in theory observed as a day of worship alongside Sunday. Emperor Constantine in 321 issued an edict requiring "rest on the venerable day of the sun" by the cessation of public works and the closing of the law courts, but agricultural labor was expressly excepted. From then on we find a growing stress on the necessity of Sunday rest, but the reason given is that men should be free to attend worship, not that Sunday is the "Christian Sabbath"--a phrase not found until the twelfth century." (p. 940)

The Early Church and the Sabbath

By Wayne Jackson

In 1847, Ellen G. White, founder of the Seventh Day Adventist cult, claimed she had a vision of the holy of holies in heaven. She contended that she saw the fourth commandment of the Decalogue surrounded by a halo, which indicated that the sabbath day was to be observed today. In fact, Mrs. White wrote: "In the last days the Sabbath test will be made plain. When this time comes. Anyone who does not keep the Sabbath will receive the mark of the beast and will be kept from Heaven."

It is out of this background that modern apologists for Adventism attempt to defend Sabbath observance for the Christian age. One Adventist theologian, in an article entitled "How Long Did The Early Church Keep Sabbath?", asserted that the documents of church history afford "striking evidence that the seventh-day Sabbath was widely preserved in the Christian Church for

centuries" (*Liberty*, Jan./Feb., 1968). It is quite significant that the author of that article made no attempt to establish his case on the basis of New Testament evidences rather, an appeal was made to certain writings of the post—Nicean age (after 325 A. D.) for an accumulation of the coveted evidence.

Support for "Christian" Sabbath-keeping was secured from the following sources: 1. Socrates (385-445 A.D.). 2. *Sozomen* (early 5th C. A.D.). 3. Athanasius (298—373). 4. *Constitutions of the Holy Apostles* (late 4th century). 5. Augustine (354-430). 6. Council of Laodicea (365). 7. Jerome (340-420). 8. *Patrologia* (specific author unnamed). 9. Pope Gregory I (590-604).

It is certainly revealing that none of these citations is from a source earlier than the middle of the 4th century A. D., *two hundred and fifty years after the death of the last apostle!* And yet the author brazenly concludes. "The evidence thus shows that the Sabbath was generally observed by Christians during the first four centuries." If the early church kept the Sabbath, one wonders why quotations in abundance were not introduced from writings nearer the apostolic age. Any student of church history knows that the patristic writings are purer the closer they are to the NT era. The truth of the matter is, those documents nearest to the NT itself (the ante-Nicean writings, before 325 A. D.) bear unmistakable testimony to the fact that the early church was not authorized to keep the Sabbath nor any other vestige of Judaism. Note the following quotations:

"Incense is a vain abomination unto me and your new moons and Sabbaths I cannot endure. He has, therefore, abolished these things." "Wherefore, also, we keep the eighth day with joyfulness, the day, also, on which Jesus rose again from-the dead" (*Barnabas* - 120 A.D.). "But every Lord's day do ye gather yourselves together. and break bread, and give thanksgiving" (*Didache* - 125 A.D.). "And on the day called Sunday. all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place... But Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly..." (*Justin Martyr* - 140 AD). "We passed this holy Lord's day. in which we read your letter, from the constant reading of which we shall be able to draw admonition" (*Dionysius* - 170 A.D.). "On one day, the first day of the week, we assembled ourselves together, and on the days of the readings we abstain from sustenance" (*Bardesanes of Syria* 180 A.D.). "He, in fulfillment of the precept. keeps the Lord's day.. .glorifying the Lord's resurrection in himself" (*Clement of Alexandria* - 194 A.D.). "The old law is demonstrated as having been consummated at its specific times, so also the observance of the Sabbath is demonstrated to have been temporary." "We neither accord with the Jews in their peculiarities in regard to food, nor in their sacred days" (*Tertullian* - 200 A.D.). "If it be objected to us on this subject that we ourselves are accustomed to observe certain days, as, for example, the Lord's Day..." (*Origen* - 225 A.D.). "The solemn festival of the resurrection of the Lord can be celebrated only on the Lord's Day." "Our regard for the Lord's resurrection which took place on the Lord's Day will lead us to celebrate it on the same principle" (*Anatolzus* - 270 A.D.).

Lest we should appear to observe any Sabbath with the Jews which Christ. . in his body abolished" (*Victorinus* - 300 A.D.). "But the Lord's day we celebrate as a day of joy, because on it he rose again, on which day we have received it for a custom not even to bow the knee" (*Peter of Alexandria* 306 A.D.). "They [the patriarchs prior to the flood] did not, therefore, regard circumcision, nor observe the Sabbath, neither do we; ... because such things as these do not belong to Christians" (*Eusebtus* - 324 A.D.).

These quotations certainly refute the Adventist allegation that "the Pope changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday." The testimony of history is clear — *Christians were worshipping God on the first day of the week, Sunday, for centuries before there was any such creature as a "Pope."* But that aside, surely the biblical information on this theme should be given consideration. Study these points carefully:

(1) The Sabbath was not required as a holy day during the patriarchal age; it was first given as a preview testing for Israel in the wilderness (Ex.16: 4ff) and later formally incorporated into the law of Moses (Deut.5:1-5). [Note: for an excellent discussion on whether the Sabbath was observed from the beginning of creation, see Dan Winkler's material in *Difficult Texts of the Old Testament Explained*, Winkler Publications, 1982, pp. 195—198).

(2) Just as circumcision was a "token's [sign] between God and Abraham (and his descendants) (Gen. 17: 11). so the Sabbath was a "sign" between Jehovah and Israel (Ex. 31:13~17; Ezek.20:12). How could the Sabbath function as a "sign" between the Lord and Israel if that ordinance had been given to every other nation as well?

(3) Certain restrictions connected with the Sabbath indicate that it was not designed to have application for all time and in all regions of the earth. On the Sabbath, for example, no man could "go out of his place" (Ex. 16: 29), and no fire could be kindled on the Sabbath (Ex .35:3).

(4) It was foretold that the law of Moses (including the ten commandments) would be superseded by a "new covenant" (Jer. 31: 31ff; cf. I Kings 8:21; 8:9; Heb.8: 6ff).

(5) The NT clearly teaches that the law of Moses has been abrogated (Col.2: 14ff; Eph.2: 15); man is dead to, discharged from that law (Rom.7:4, 6) and that includes the ten commandments, for within this context the apostle says, "I had not known coveting, except *the law had said, Thou shalt not covet*" (Rom.7:7). Those who attempt to bind the Sabbath should, if consistent, argue for keeping all the Law of Moses today (Cf. Gal.5: 3), but they do not. A careful investigation of the books of Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews (cf. also 2 Corinthians 3) would eliminate this error of supposed Sabbath-keeping.

(6) Concerning the first day of the week, it may be said:

(a) Christ rose from the dead on this day (Jn.20: 1) and appeared to His disciples that day (Jn.20: 19) and also on the following Sunday (Jn.20:26).

(b) The church was established on Pentecost (Acts 2: 1], which always came on the first day of the week (Lev. 23: 16).

(c) Christians met for worship on Sunday (Acts 20: 7).

(d) The first century saints were commanded to give into the treasury of the local congregation on "the first day of every week" [Greek text] (I Cor. 16: 2).

(e) When the apostle John received the vision in preparation for the great book of Revelation, he "was in the Spirit on the Lord's day" (Rev. 1:10), which certainly was Sunday [see the patristic quotations above].

The renowned church historian, Phillip Schaff, summed up the matter in his monumental work, *History of the Christian Church*, when he wrote: "The universal and uncontradicted Sunday observance in the second century can only be explained by the fact that it had its roots in apostolic practice" (Vol. I. p. 478). And so we must kindly but firmly point out that the Seventh Day Adventist and other Sabbaterian groups are grossly in error.

(Note: This article is reprinted from the *Christian Courier*, of which Wayne Jackson is editor.)

**Does the Bible Authorize Women
To Lead Men
In The Worship of the Church?**

1. The political and philosophical changes of the last century have caused us to look at the place of women in our society. These changes have affected the home, the market and workplace, and politics. Many of these changes are for the good.

2. The effects of changing roles outside the church have also influenced ideas of how we ought to view the woman's role in the church.

3. No church could function well without women. More than a few churches were begun and held together by women, whose faith and commitment are a shining example.

4. Our question for this discussion is "Does the Bible authorize women to lead men in the worship of the church?"

- Does God give different roles to men and women?
- Not: What does society think the roles of men and women ought to be in worship?
- Not: What do "church growth" experts say concerning women?
- But what do the Scriptures say? We must have Bible authority!

Some Universal Principles Regarding Males And Females

1. God created both male and female (Gen. 1:27). He created the male first and then the female (Gen. 2:18; 1 Cor. 11:7-9).

2. God created the male and female different (Gen. 2:18). She was created to be a helper suitable to him. She was to complement him and was by no means an afterthought. In fact, she is indispensable and there is no other creature like her. (1 Cor. 11:12,13).

3. From the time of the fall, the husband is to rule over his wife (Gen. 3:16; Eph. 5:23,24).

4. God is the head of Christ, who is the head of man, who is the head of woman (1 Cor. 11:3). The relationship between Christ and the Father is like the relationship of woman to man. To be in subjection is not the same as being less than equal (Phil. 2:5-8). Just because a woman is to be in subjection to a man does not mean she is less than his equal.

5. Christ chose men to have places of authority in the church: the twelve apostles were all men; the seven of Acts 6 were men; elders and deacons are men (1 Timothy 3:1-14; Tit. 1:5-9).

6. Women in the New Testament were given various, praiseworthy roles of teaching and ministry. (Acts 18:37; Rom. 16:2; Phil. 4:2; Tit. 2:3,4).

7. With respect to salvation, both men and women are heirs of God (Gal. 3:28; 1 Pet. 3:7).

8. People sin when they assume a role that God has not authorized. (Acts 8:18-24; Lev. 10:1,2; 1 Sam. 13:8-14.)

The Woman's Role in the Public Worship of the Church

1 Cor. 14:33-37

1. 1 Corinthians 14 is a discussion of spiritual gifts and their use in the assembly of the church. Apparently at this time, there was a lot of confusion and disruption in the assemblies. This chapter was written to regulate abuses.

2. Some were told to "keep silence" in the assembly:

- tongue speakers who had no interpreter (14:28)
- when a revelation is given to a prophet, he is to speak; but when a second prophet receives a revelation, the first is to keep silence.

sigao: "to be silent, to keep still, to say nothing, to stop speaking, to become silent."

3. Women were told to "keep silence in the churches (plural); for they are not permitted to speak, but let them subject themselves, just as the Law also says."

"And if they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is improper for a woman to speak in church."

4. Apparently, some women were "praying and prophesying" in the assembly at Corinth. In 1 Corinthians 11:5 Paul mentions the problem of their doing so without a veil, a sign of modesty

and subjection to their husbands. To be unveiled was immodest and improper. In 1 Corinthians 14 he forbids women to speak at all. Three reasons:

a. It was improper or "disgraceful." Jewish synagogues did not allow women to speak in their assemblies. Jewish women did not speak to men in public (John 4:9). This is cultural.

b. This is not the practice of all the churches.

c. But Paul then appeals to the Law. (probably Gen. 3:16, referring to men's role of leadership).

5. 1 Corinthians 14:36,37 Paul underscores these statements by insisting "the things which I write to you are the Lord's commandment."

1 Timothy 2:8-15

1. Paul, by apostolic authority, wills that men (males) pray "in every place" without wrath or dissension.

a. "Men" is the specific term *aner* and not common word for men, *anthropos*, a reference to people. We further know that he is speaking of males because of the contrast with *gune*, women.

b. "In every place" is a reference to where people come together to worship and pray.

Moffatt: "at any meeting of the church." Lydia and the women met at a "place" of prayer (Acts 16:13,16). In 1 Cor. 1:2, it speaks of "all who in every place call upon the name of the Lord."

F.F. Bruce: "The word 'place,' in Hebrew and Greek alike, was sometimes given a special significance among Jews as a place of meeting for divine service"

(Answers to Questions, p. 114).

2. Women are encouraged to dress in modest apparel--not to overdress so as to bring attention to themselves. They are to be people who dress and act as one who fears God.

3. "Let a woman quietly receive instruction." *hesuchia*: "to be quiet, to be at rest, to be in silence or quietness in general," speaking of the spirit and attitude. It is tranquility arising from within, causing no disturbance to others. It is self-control.

4. "With entire submissiveness" means "to submit to the orders or directives of someone, to obey, to submit to." "Submissiveness" is primarily a military term which means, "to rank under," to voluntarily submit or surrender one's own rights or will. Jesus showed this spirit in Philippians 2:5-8. Submissiveness is a readiness to renounce one's own will for the sake of others, i.e., to give precedence to others." The issue is keeping a divinely willed order. Christ is not inferior to the Father because he is submissive. He voluntarily forsook his equality with God to perform the role He was to perform.

5. Paul, by apostolic authority, does not "allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet."

a. Teach: "to be a teacher" (in this context of a "place" where Christians are meeting)

b. Exercise authority: "to be in a position of authority, to have authority"

c. "Over a man": This does not preclude teaching other women or teaching children (2 Timothy 1:5; Titus 2:3-5). Nor does this apply to private teaching occasions such as Priscilla and Aquilla's explaining to Apollos the way of God more accurately (Acts 18:26). See also Philippians 4:2,3.

6. Reasons for this instruction:

a. The priority (time) of Adam in creation (2:13)

b. The deception of Eve but not Adam (2:14). Adam sinned not by deception but by listening to the voice of his wife (Gen. 3:17)

c. The role of woman in the home (2:15). Rather than seeking a role of leadership in the home or the church, the women are to devote themselves to childbearing while they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint (discretion).

Some Objections to This Teaching:

1. *These instructions are cultural and relevant only to the circumstances surrounding the first century church. Times have changed and these instructions no longer apply to our day.*

On both occasions (1 Corinthians 14 and 1 Timothy 2), Paul appeals to a universal basis for his instructions, going back to the creation account in Genesis. The emphasis is on God's ordained order of things from the beginning. These things cannot and do not change.

2. *If the teachings of 1 Corinthians 11 and 14 about women being silent are to continue, why don't women wear veils today?*

The practice of wearing a veil is regarded by Paul as a "custom" (1 Cor. 11:16) that was widespread in his culture and time. The custom of wearing veils does not have the same meaning today that it had at that time. Uncovered women were regarded as immoral, shaming not only herself but also her husband. Prostitutes may have been compelled to keep their hair short or may have been used to shearing their heads. For a woman to cast aside her veil also indicated she was behaving like a man, who is not obligated to cover his head. While the principles of behaving like another gender and dressing modestly not immorally remain, the specifics of culture dictate what is immoral and what is out of gender. Consequently, Christians would not want to dress as prostitutes do today or dress as do transvestites.

3. *Doesn't 1 Cor. 11:5 show some women were praying and prophesying in the church assembly?*

Apparently some women were praying and prophesying on some occasions at Corinth during the first century. Whether this occurred in assembly or in another setting is not indicated. Such things were done by the special gifts of the Spirit (one could also pray with the Spirit, 1 Cor. 14:15). Even though the Holy Spirit inspired her, she was to pray or prophesy with her veil on, as a sign of subjection. Those gifts are no longer available today. Paul does not address whether it was right for them to pray or prophesy where men are present in 1 Corinthians 11. When he does address this problem in 1 Corinthians 14, he forbids women to speak. He would not have told them not to speak if they had not been speaking. 1 Corinthians 11 is descriptive of the behavior of the women, whereas 1 Corinthians 14 is prescriptive as to women in the presence of men.

Conclusion

The focus has been on specific areas regarding the leadership in worship. What we must also focus on is what women are permitted and should by all means be doing. There are far more areas in the work of the church for women to be involved in, and each is vitally important. Strong churches need the commitment of their women to fulfill the work God has given them to do.