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### Worship: The Items Composing the Worship of the Church of Christ on the First Day of the Week.

J. C. McQuiddy

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# W O R S H I P

The Items Composing the Worship of  
the Church of Christ on the First  
Day of the Week

By  
J. C. McQUIDDY

*All things praise Thee, Lord most high,  
Heav'n and earth, and sea and sky;  
All were for Thy glory made,  
That Thy greatness, thus displayed,  
Should all worship bring to Thee;  
All things praise Thee—Lord, may we!*

*All things praise Thee—night to night  
Sings in silent hymns of light;  
All things praise Thee—day by day  
Chants Thy pow'r in burning ray;  
Time and space are praising Thee,  
All things praise Thee—Lord, may we!*

*All things praise Thee, heav'n's high shrine  
Rings with melody divine;  
Lowly bending at Thy feet,  
Seraph and archangel meet;  
This their highest bliss, to be  
Ever praising—Lord, may we!*

—G. W. CONDER.

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Nashville, Tenn.  
Gospel Advocate Co.

# WORSHIP

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**W**EBSTER defines "worship" in the verb form: "To pay divine honors to; to reverence with supreme respect and veneration; to perform religious exercises in honor of; to adore; to venerate." God is the object of all true worship. Christ said to the tempter: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." We read in John 4: 23. "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers." Thus it will be seen that worship directed to God shall come from a sincere and pure heart and shall be as directed by divine truth. The Savior admonishes in the Sermon on the Mount: "Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men to be seen of them; else ye have no reward with your Father who is in heaven." While we may do the very thing that God commands to be done, we must have right motives in the doing of his commandments. Hence the Savior again says: "Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." Thus it is clear that Christians should not render service to be seen of men or to glorify themselves, but to the glory of our Heavenly Father. Those who thus do, with a pure motive, the things that God has commanded them to do as service to him, worship God acceptably and not ignorantly, as did the Athenians, of whom Paul says: "For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, To an Unknown God. What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this I set forth unto you." (Acts 17: 23.) This is true worship and not vain worship. The worship directed to God must not be based on the doctrines and precepts of men. The Savior said: "This people honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men." (Matt. 15: 8, 9.)

No one can worship God intelligently until he learns from the Truth the service that God requires. Hence it is necessary for us to examine the Scriptures in order that we may learn the items of true worship as laid down by the Holy Spirit. After the kingdom had been established on the day of Pentecost and about three thousand souls had been added, we learn of the early

disciples: "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers." (Acts 2: 42.) Thus we have clearly set out four things in which the early church continued as worship: (1) The teaching of the apostles; (2) the fellowship, or contribution; (3) the breaking of bread; (4) the prayers. So those who meet and teach the Scriptures upon the first day of the week, who contribute as God has prospered them, who break the bread and engage in praying, are worshiping God in truth and as the Holy Spirit directs. All Christians can engage in these items of worship as a matter of faith and not of opinion. "So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." But we learn another item of the worship from Eph. 5: 19, which reads: "Speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord." Also Col. 3: 16: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God." Thus we have clear, distinct, and unmistakable authority for teaching the Scriptures, for the contribution, for the communion or the breaking of bread, for the prayers, and for singing as worship to God.

## The Teaching

While Christians are commanded to admonish and to exhort one another daily, this exhortation is but one form of teaching. When all authority had been given unto Jesus, he commanded his apostles: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Teaching the word of God is just as much worship and is just as binding as is partaking of the Lord's Supper. I have never been able to discriminate between the commands God and contend that one thing that God has commanded is more important than another. Christians do not do their full duty upon the first day of the week in worshiping God unless they meet and study the Scriptures. The command is positive—"teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you." But, while the command to teach is clear and explicit, there is no specific method of teaching, to the exclusion of other methods, laid down in the Bible. As Christians,



we are under obligations to use the most efficient method in teaching the word of God, and our failure to do this makes us blameworthy in the sight of God. Those who serve at the Lord's table make a mistake when they insist that the communion is the most important part of the worship.

In order that our service may be acceptable, it is very necessary that it be an intelligent service. Of Israel, Paul wrote: "Brethren, my heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them, that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God but not according to knowledge. For being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God." (Rom. 10: 1-3.) Without constant study of the Bible, coupled with serious and prayerful meditation, we cannot expect to be intelligent Christians.

## The Contribution

The fellowship, or contribution, is also another item of worship in which the early church continued. As I said of teaching, so I say of this item, it is important because God commands it. 1 Cor. 16: 1, 2 reads: "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye. Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come." Christians, in making their contributions, should remember that "the Lord loveth a cheerful giver." They should not overlook the fact that the fellowship, or contribution, is as much worship of God as is the breaking of bread and the prayers. Yet many people in their practice indicate very clearly that the communion is far more important than the contribution. Often have I heard the one who was ministering at the Lord's table request that any one who had been overlooked with the bread or the fruit of the vine hold up his hand or stand up, in order that the deacons might wait upon him. Yet in all my life I have never heard any one say: "If you have been overlooked with the contribution basket, if you will hold up your hand the brethren will take pleasure in waiting on you. Why this distinction?"

I remember a good woman, who has long since gone to her reward, who said that she did not feel that she had worshiped God acceptably unless she made a contribution upon the first day of the week as God had prospered her. A gentleman was getting ready to be

baptized. A friend who was standing by and knew that he had his pocketbook in his pocket asked him if he were not going to take it out. He also had his watch in his pocket, of which he made the same inquiry. The candidate for baptism replied that he was not going to take out either—he wanted to be baptized, pocketbook and all. He wanted his time to be baptized. This is in harmony with the Bible teaching; and whenever any one comes to baptism, he should come and give his whole life, time, talents, pocketbook and all, to the service of our Lord.

Note.—While *Fellowship* and *Contribution* are used above interchangeably, Young and Thayer use fellowship in most instances in the broader sense, meaning “the share which one has in anything, participation,” as to “the benefits of Christ’s death.” Or, “the intimate bond of fellowship which unites Christians: absolutely, Acts 2: 42.” Or, “the fellowship of Christians with God and Christ, 1 John 1: 3, 6, 7 (which . . . consists in the fact that Christians are partakers in common of the same mind as God and Christ, and of the blessings arising therefrom).” Or, “a benefaction jointly contributed, a collection, a contribution, as exhibiting an embodiment and proof of fellowship.” (See Young’s Analytical Concordance, and Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon.)

Where the context demands it the original word is translated *contribution*, as in only two passages, Rom. 15: 26 and 2 Cor. 9: 13, Revised Version. In the latter reference it is *distribution*, in the King James Version. The word meaning *fellowship*, in Acts 2: 42, is translated *communicate*, *distribute* or *fellowship*, in about twenty passages, meaning, in the fullest sense, to share in common, or participate, not only in the contribution, or material things, but in all the joys and benefits of the Christian life. (See Rom. 12: 13; 2 Cor. 8: 4; Gal. 6: 6; Phil. 2: 1; 3: 10; 1 Tim. 6: 18; Gal. 2: 9; 1 Cor. 1: 9, etc.)—E. G. C.

## The Breaking of Bread

It should be a delight to assemble around the Lord’s table upon the first day of the week and hold sweet communion with our dear Savior, forgetting, as far as possible, the things of this world. Fixing our thoughts and affections on Jesus, we should behold him as he suffered and died in order that we might live. We should appreciate as a very great privilege the opportunity that we enjoy in doing this in memory of him.

## The Prayers

Our blessed Savior has given us the example of seeking solitude for meditation and most serious, earnest prayer. Not only should we pray without ceasing—at home and everywhere—but we have the example of the early church engaging in the prayers. This is a very great privilege. It rests the weary. We should draw near unto our Father in order that he may come near unto us; and, holding close communion with him, we should thank him for all the blessings of life and petition him for his guidance and direction during all the responsible years of our lives. He has assured us that, if we come to him in faith and in harmony with his holy will, we shall have the petitions that we desire of him. However, we should not ask amiss, that we may consume it upon our lusts.

## The Singing

We also learn that when they were come together they sang with the spirit and with the understanding. Paul, in writing to the whole church assembled together, says: "What is it then, brethren? When ye come together, each one hath a psalm, hath a teaching, hath a revelation, hath a tongue, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying." (1 Cor. 14: 26.) Thus we learn that when they assembled each one engaged in singing a psalm. Hence he says again: "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." (Verse 15.) So we find clear and unmistakable authority for singing as an item of worship when the church is come together. Again, we read in Heb. 2: 12: "I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the congregation will I sing thy praise." The marginal reading for "congregation" is "church." Thus the Holy Spirit admonished the church at Ephesus and at Colosse when they were assembled together to teach and admonish one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. Churches who are seeking to be guided by "it is written" in the word can do all of these things in faith, because we find clear scriptural authority for each act as here laid down. It is dangerous to go beyond what is written. Almost the last words in God's holy book forbid either adding to or taking from what is written. (See Rev. 22: 18, 19.)



# Supplement

BY E. GASTON COLLINS

*(Following is an epitome of a good article of another, with some added thoughts.)*

GOD is worthy of our most profound adoration. By giving time and thought to the worship of God we grow, and become more useful and happy Christians. We often stress service yet neglect sacred privilege of worship.

We should worship God only. To John, on Patmos, the angel said, "I am thy fellow-servant—Worship God." See also John 4: 23 and Matt. 4: 10. Because of the fact that Jesus is divine, he also is entitled to our worship. "And when he again bringeth in the firstborn into the world he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." (Heb. 1: 6.) When Thomas was convinced that his triumphant Master stood before him he exclaimed, "My Lord and my God."

We frequently find the word "worship," in the Old Testament, which is usually translated from the Hebrew word meaning "to bow down," "to prostrate one's self." So, we read, "they bowed their heads and worshipped"; "Moses bowed his head toward the earth and worshipped"; "Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshipped." In the New Testament in a few cases a Greek word is used meaning "to venerate"; but the word used in the New Testament most for "worship" means "to kiss (the hand) toward." This is the word used in John 4: 22, 23, 24, according to Young. On worship, Thayer says that in the Septuagint the word is used "very often" meaning "to prostrate one's self; properly to kiss the hand to (towards) one, in token of reverence." "In the New Testament by kneeling or prostration to do homage (to one) or make obeisance, whether in order to express respect or to make supplication."

"To kiss (the hand) toward" is doubtless a figurative expression, signifying the promptings of the inner man. Real love and adoration spring from the heart. The proverbial strong attachment between David and Jonathan is expressed by the most significant words—"The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." David's thirsting soul was satisfied only in God. He said, "So will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name." In Solomon's prayer of dedication he kneeled upon a brazen scaffold before the altar, "and spread forth his hands toward heaven." Over near



Bethany Jesus "lifted up his hands, and blessed" the apostles. The poor sinful woman was willing to go much further than "kissing the hand toward," when she anointed his feet with ointment, wet them with her tears, wiped them with her hair, and "kissed his feet"—the Greek denotes "kissed much"—out of sheer, penitential gratitude. Paul instructed the men to "pray in every place lifting up holy hands."

Therefore Christian worship consists not in mere externals, but in a sincere attitude of the inner man coupled with comely physical acts. One may go through all the forms, yet not worship. True worship is the bowing of the soul in love and adoration before God. In the Old Testament God was revealing the nature of worship. Then Jesus revealed the Father more fully, and showed men how to worship him. He declared that not on Mount Gerizim nor in Jerusalem, exclusively, should men worship, but "the hour cometh and now is when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth," anywhere on earth. Those who fail to worship God do not appreciate the meaning of his love and his majesty.

When Pentecost came, and the gospel was fully preached, and the thousands were added to the newly established church, then the "hour" had come for true worshippers to worship God, because Christ had been exalted to God's right hand and the Holy Spirit had been given. "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto the Father." Thus God had provided for Christian worship.

When we engage in this worship, these solemn moments should be given to the most serious meditations on our Friend and Brother, who has promised to be in our midst. In no other way can we receive the spiritual blessings. "They that wait for Jehovah shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint."

Nothing can take the place of true worship. It weans our desires and affections from the things of earth to the spiritual and eternal; it helps us keep our minds set on the things above, and not on the things on the earth. It helps us "put to death" the sinful members of "the old man," and, putting on "the new man," take unto ourselves "the fruit of the Spirit," enabling us to gain the mastery over the flesh. Those who really worship have a foretaste of the joys of the heavenly home, for heaven is preeminently a place of worship.