

WORSHIPING GOD IN TRUTH

Edwin Morris

It is very essential that we worship God in spirit and in truth. When we worship God, it is pointed out in the scriptures, that this is a must. When Jesus said in John the fourth chapter verse 24, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth"; this term 'must' simply means a necessity of law and command. It's a necessity of duty. It's not something that's left up to man or something that we might do but it's a command that we must worship Him in spirit and in truth. By truth we simply mean what is true in any matter under consideration. It's opposite to what is false, what is feigned, what is fictitious or what is not according to the word of God. In John 4:23, He told us that we certainly must worship in truth, that is, truly as the case is according to facts as accords with the divine nature.

When we speak of truth, we simply speak of the word of God or as God has taught us that we should worship him. Many times we might get the idea that when we come together it's not necessary to worship God in truth. This has been true in many religious assemblies but I believe the Bible teaches us and we are commanded that we should. The Truth is taught in the Christian religion respecting God and the execution of His purpose through Christ. When we worship Him in truth we respect God in all of the executions of His purposes through Christ Jesus our Lord. In respect to the duties of man, we oppose the like of the superstitions of the Gentiles, the inventions of the Jews and the corrupt opinions and precepts of false teachers even among Christians. When we worship God in truth we worship Him not according to man or any of the superstitions or any of the precepts, doctrines or commandments of men. In the eleventh chapter of 1 Corinthians is a passage of scripture that we should emphasize at all times. Beginning with verse 1, Paul said, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." Paul is simply telling us that we are to imitate him as he has pointed out in verse thirty-three of the previous chapter. In the next verse he says, "Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the- ordinances, as I delivered them to you." This term 'keep' here where Paul tells us that we're to keep the ordinances as they've been delivered to us simply means to hold fast, keep secure or keep firm possession of. It means to have and to hold fast, to hold fast in one's mind and heart, to keep in mind or to retain faithfully. This is the definition of this term. Paul points out here and praises us that we might keep these ordinances as he has delivered them to us.

I want to make this clear at this particular time. Many times people say that you and I, we that worship God according to the dictates of the Bible, are a people of traditions; that we are following traditions. Take your King James version and also look up the meaning of the word ordinances. The King James version renders this tradition. "... keep the traditions now as I've delivered them unto you." I affirm that this is a command. It is a command that we keep the traditions or the ordinances as they have been delivered unto us. I do not believe that I, in any way, have any right in this modern age to change that precept or command to please mankind. It's simply because he has taught us that we are to worship God in Spirit and in truth.

We find today that many people feel like religion should be changed because it's getting outdated or outmoded, and they are trying to make ways it might be attractive unto the people. I affirm tonight that if we preach Christianity and if we practice it in the way it should be then it will be attractive to people. If we will teach people the significance and the meaning of worshiping God in truth I believe that they will understand what they should do.

First of all, I would like to notice just briefly that we're commanded in the scriptures that we might sing praises unto God. We might wonder sometimes why we sing as we do sing. We

have nine scriptures that teach us or that have something to say concerning singing. We find in Matthew 26:30 that they sang a hymn and then they prayed and the scripture says they sang praises unto God. I want you to notice that in this place they sang praises unto God. I would like to point out that they were not in a worship service at this time as we are now. They were in prison and they were bound there and when they sang they sang praises unto God. Now I'm simply getting at this: It's always been my belief that when I praise and worship God in song, whether it be in this assembly or wherever it might be, that it is very important that I should worship God and that I should sing and make melody in my heart. At no time could I conscientiously go out and sing with any type of instrumental music my praises unto God. We have an example here where these men sang praises unto God and they praised God. Now if I go out and I worship God I want to worship Him in a way that will be acceptable to Him. When we sing our praises to God they ought to be unto God.

I would like to call your attention to Eph. 5:19. We find that Paul teaches the church at Ephesus, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." He points out to us that when we sing that we are to sing and make melody in our hearts. Notice, that there are two ways of making melody. You can make melody on the strings of a musical instrument or you can make melody in your heart. Notice now this says as far as making melody is concerned instrumental music does not violate this, but we must go further than this because he says now that we must make melody in our hearts, not that we are to make melody on the instruments of music but that melody is to be made in our hearts. We've had beautiful singing during this meeting. I think that we have beautiful singing when we come together to praise God and that we do praise Him in song. I believe it is beautiful if it's from the heart. I may not have the most beautiful voice; I may not be able to sing at all times. I may get off key sometimes but in my heart there is to be melody and that melody is to be made in my heart.

In the Colossian letter the third chapter and verses 15 and 16, the Apostle Paul pointed out there, "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts ..." He was speaking to the church at Colossae and the word 'hearts' here refers to the church or all the members of the church ... "to the which also ye are called in one body ..." Now as was previously taught the body is the church. We're all in one church. Notice now "... and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you..." This word '*you*' refers to the church. "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."

We as a congregation are to sing praises unto God and this is to be done when we start singing. We combine our voices and we mix our voices together. We carry out this command when we sing and make melody in our hearts unto the Lord.

Now let us notice what else we are to do when we come together. We come together and have joint participation in the Lord's Supper. I would like to say that it has been given to us how we are to worship God. We'll not go into many scriptures tonight in connection with this but we do find that we have one bread. When we have this one bread it means something to us. I think it's high time that we come to ourselves, think more deeply and teach on this more. We must stress that it is very important that during the time we take this bread, that in our hearts and in our minds this is the body of Christ. It is very essential that we do this. I want you to know when the bread is passed around and each one partakes of that bread we have a communion of that one body and the same is true of the cup. We have twelve scriptures that teach us how we are to observe the Lord's Supper. I suppose the one subject, that I've talked

to people on more than any other subject in home studies, is that of the cup. Most people never realize what the cup is. I believe it is very essential and very important that when we come together that we use the cup, that is, the one cup as the Lord has given us. This we must do in order that we might worship God in truth. I will admit tonight no doubt if it were left up to me, if I had my choice in the matter, probably I would prefer something else but it is not my preference that counts. It is what the Lord has told me that I must do. We have scriptures like Matt. 26:27, Mark 14:23 and Luke 22:17 that teach us concerning this.

As I studied with a fellow the other night he said to me, "Jesus said, 'Take this and divide it among yourselves ...' " I pointed out to him how that Matthew, Mark and Luke agree that Jesus took the cup, number one; number two, He gave thanks; number three, he gave it to them and then He said, "Drink ye all of this ..." or all of you drink this. "... and they all drank of it," Mark says. Luke says, "Take this and divide it among yourselves." I impressed upon his mind that when we study a subject, any given subject, that we must take all the scriptures that are connected with it.

I tried to explain about the one cup to a man and he said he believed that each one there had their own cup. He said the Lord took the cup and when he came to each of the Twelve he may have poured some in each of their cups. The man said this was possible. After he was through with his explanation I said, "Well, I'll tell you how Jesus may have done it. Each of the twelve was sitting there by a window and when Jesus took the cup and poured it into their cups they turned around and tossed the contents out the window. The man said, "I know he didn't do that because the scripture says, "... they drank of it". I answered, "You're beginning to get the point how that we're to worship God in truth." In other words, it's very important that we drink of the cup. The Bible teaches us that we are to worship God in spirit and in truth. There are other scriptures concerning this but we'll not take time explain.

We're commanded in the scripture how we are to teach. We are told that we are to teach. The word of God is to be taught. I would like to emphasize this; that when we get into the pulpit we are to expound the word of God; we are to teach the word of God. I've appreciated this meeting in this one fact. We've heard truths preached we've heard for years and some might say that it's just repetitious preaching but I'll tell you one thing if you'll study the gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John you'll find that Jesus repeated or that He was one that was repetitious teacher. He taught things over and over again.

I don't have time to get in the pulpit and spend my time talking about other things. We don't have time to waste talking about those things that are not *truth*. We have too much truth that is to be taught. I'm a firm believer that each time the church comes together that we are to be prepared to teach. We ought to have a lesson and we ought to teach these truths and teach them in such ways that even our children can understand what is taught. The Bible teaches that if we teach the truth in such ways and explain it in such a way that people will understand it.

I work for the Oklahoma Tax Commission and sometimes they want to send out something to tell the tax payers how to fill out different forms; so they write letters. I've explained to my supervisor several times that we have to draw a picture of things to make them plain so people can understand them. Many times when we that work there don't understand the procedures we certainly can't explain them to people and make them understand. The same is true if I get in this pulpit and I don't understand the truth. If I don't understand the word of God then I can't make it plain to you.

The other night as I studied with this one man he amused me quite a bit. I talked about fifteen minutes before I gave him an opportunity to talk. The first statement he made was, "I can see by what you have said and how you approach this subject you have anticipated what I was going to say."

He was exactly right, I had anticipated what his argument would be and what he would say, so I endeavored to put up truths to begin with that he would have to disprove.

The men are to do the teaching. We are to teach one by one. The scripture says, "For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted." When we teach in this manner it is to be one by one. It does not say we must have two or more speakers at each service but that we may have more than one speaker. I'll say this, if we have two or more speakers as we've had tonight each speaker is to speak as the oracles of God.

We have examples in the New Testament that when the church comes together they were taught in the same assembly. I have not taken time to count them but I am told there are over one hundred times in the New Testament that it points out that the church came together in one assembly. The congregations were not divided into classes. I might say this, in the scripture we don't find the Sunday School. We cannot find in the Bible, the name of Sunday School, the practice of Sunday School, the idea of Sunday School or the regulation of Sunday School. It's not found in the Bible where the Church came together to teach the Bible then they divided into classes, both men and women doing the teaching.

I believe the women have a place to teach. I believe every man has a place to teach. I want to say this that there are some conditions under which man could not teach from the pulpit. Tonight if French were all I could speak and if there were no interpreter here to interpret, the Bible forbids me to speak. Sometimes people say that we are picking on the women and that we just don't want them to talk. I want you to know that there are occasions when a man could not even speak. If Brother David Macy, down in old Mexico, does not have an interpreter or if he cannot speak the Spanish language that he is to remain in silence the scriptures teach us. When we come together it is for the purpose of teaching the truth.

When we come together we are to contribute and I want to say just a few things about this contribution. I talked to a man who was remarking about new clothes that I was wearing and stating how that we should give to the Lord. He also mentioned that many children were hungry. I pointed out to him that we believed in feeding children and helping the people and so forth. We began to talk about giving and I asked him this question. "How much do you give?" I told him I probably gave more than he did. He answered, "I give 10%." I said "that's real good but I give more than that." We talked on and I said, "What do you give 10% of? Do you give 10% of your gross, or what you earn, or do you give 10% after everything else is taken out?" He said, "Well, I used to give 10% of the gross but now I give 10% of my take-home pay." I said, "Why don't you just have them pay your grocery bills, pay off your refrigerator and just let them take all expenses out of your check and when it finally gets down near to nothing then give 10% of the remainder?"

I want you to know friends that if you make \$600.00 a month or \$700.00 a month you are to give of that amount. I don't care if they take insurance out or what they take out, whether it be bonds or retirement, if you benefit from it, you have been prospered. If you draw \$450.00 and you've made \$600.00, you prosper \$600.00 not \$450.00. I believe from the depths of my heart that we are to give in that manner.

How are we to give? We are to give as we've purposed in our hearts. We give as we've prospered and we are to give cheerfully not grudgingly because God loveth a cheerful giver." Now I want to say this tonight, I daresay that everyone in this audience is a member of the church and we ought to know right now what we have already prospered this week. I don't think there will be anybody here that will work tonight and draw a pay check in the morning but I daresay most of us have already drawn the pay check this week and we should have already purposed in

our hearts exactly what we are going to give in the morning. The Lord said, "... as ye have purposed in your hearts so let him give." We ought to purpose in our hearts and we ought to teach on this and explain this. I went into a congregation several years ago and looked upon the board and the contribution was small. They told me they needed to be taught on how to give so I taught on it several times. I explained to them how they were to give. Many of them had been giving of the net and not of their gross income. After I explained they were to give as they had prospered the contribution continually increased and now it is up four or five times of what it had previously been simply because they were taught.

When we worship God we are to worship God in truth and it's very important that we do this. Every time, regardless of where we are or what we are doing, we are to worship God in this manner. When I sing a song, when I pray, when I do these things I am to worship God in truth.

Next year most of us will probably take a vacation and it is very important that we worship some place that meets regularly. It is a *must* that we worship God on the Lord's Day in the assembly of a place that meets regularly for worship. What I am saying is this; sometimes when people want to go to some area for pleasure they may feel like they can take a little bread and buy a bottle of grape juice and stop in a roadside park or motel and think they are observing the Lord's Supper. I do not believe this. A sister told me one time that she and her husband went to a certain place so he could sell some land. She said that she was preparing the bread and the people came for him to take out to look at the land. They were gone all day and it was night before her husband returned. She said it was dark and so they didn't worship that day. She asked what they should do? I told her I was not worried about her being in the motel room and not having some type of communion. What concerned me about it was why they were not at a place of worship on the Lord's Day. That should have been first in their lives. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things (these material things) will be added unto you."

God bless you.