

Christ Authorizes His Followers to Worship

(John 4:23-24)

Introduction:

1. Last week we studied passages that relate to "the authority of Christ."
2. According to Colossians 3:17, we are to say and do the things that the Lord authorizes us to say and do.
3. We learn what the Lord authorizes us to say and do from His Word, the New Testament (Hebrews 9:15; Colossians 3:16a).
4. In our lesson we are concentrating on the fact that "Christ authorizes His followers to worship."
5. Before we examine the Lord's instructions, let us consider . . .

Discussion:

I. SOME GENERAL MATTERS

- A. We first need to examine the setting for these passages in John 4.
 1. Jesus was having a conversation with a woman of Samaria.
 2. At the time Jesus was travelling from Judea to Galilee.
 3. During this trip Jesus came to Sychar in Samaria where Jacob's well was located.
 4. Jesus rested at the well while His disciples went into the city to buy food.
 5. While the disciples were in the city this woman came to the well to draw water, and Jesus talked to her.
 6. One of the subjects they discussed was "worship."
- B. Since we are studying "worship" today we need to understand what it is.
 1. Worship: to prostrate oneself, to bow down before, to pay reverence to, to adore
 2. This is illustrated in Psalm 95:6: "*O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker.*"
- C. With these general matters before us, let us examine the Lord's Word to determine what He authorizes for worship.

II. THE LORD AUTHORIZES HIS FOLLOWERS TO WORSHIP GOD

- A. Worship is not to be directed to:
 1. man (Acts 10:25-26)
 2. idols and images (Acts 17:29)
 3. angels (Revelation 22:8-9).
- B. Worship is only to be directed to God (John 4:21, 23, 24).
- C. The place where God is to be worshipped was about to change.
 1. (John 4:21) Jesus said that a time was coming when worshipping the Father would not be limited to "*this mountain*" or "*Jerusalem*."
 - a. "*This mountain*" is Mt. Gerizim where the Samaritans had built a temple.
 - b. The Jews worshipped in "*Jerusalem*" where their temple was located.
 2. In a relatively short time, Jesus was going to establish His kingdom.
 - a. In His kingdom a new way of worshipping God would be introduced.
 - b. This worship would be offered to God in the church, and it would not be limited to Mt. Gerizim or Jerusalem (Matthew 18:20).

III. THE LORD AUTHORIZES HIS FOLLOWERS TO OFFER A CERTAIN TYPE OF WORSHIP TO GOD

- A. The Lord said that the Father is to be worshiped "*in spirit and in truth*" (vs.23-24).
 1. "*In spirit*": to worship from the heart, to be sincere, to have the proper attitude and disposition
 2. "*In truth*": according to God's will as it is revealed in the New Testament
 3. This is extremely important because it is possible for a person to:
 - a. put his heart into his worship without following God's will
 - b. participate in the right acts without having his heart in what he does.
 4. True worship is offered "*in spirit*" and "*in truth*."

- B. The fact that Jesus talked about "true worship" implies that there are types of worship that are not true.
 - 1. Illustration: Matthew 15:7-9
 - 2. We need to examine ourselves regularly to determine if we are offering to God the type of worship that He desires.
- C. Concerning the acts of worship, the New Testament authorizes us to worship God through:
 - 1. *singing* (Colossians 3:16b; Ephesians 5:19; 1 Corinthians 14:15)
 - 2. *praying* (1 Corinthians 14:15)
 - 3. *giving* (1 Corinthians 16:1-2)
 - 4. *eating the Lord's Supper* (1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Acts 20:7)
 - 5. *teaching the Scriptures* (Acts 20:7).
- D. Concerning the time of worship, the church is to assemble for worship on "*the first day of the week.*"
 - 1. We are to participate in all the acts of worship on the Lord's Day.
 - 2. Eating the Lord's Supper and weekly giving are to be done on the Lord's Day.
 - 3. However, according to Acts 2:46, the church may assemble daily to participate in the other acts of worship.
 - 4. Worship assemblies are not to be forsaken (Hebrews 10:24-25).

Conclusion:

- 1. Worship provides special opportunities for God's people to reverence Him and to praise His great name.
- 2. When we worship God as He desires we are able to receive a number of blessings in return.
 - a. Worship helps us to maintain a proper focus in our lives: God.
 - b. Worship gives us spiritual strength, and it gives us direction for our lives.
 - c. Worship helps to lift our spirits.
 - d. Worship helps us to become like the One we worship.
 - e. Worship provides opportunities for personal examination so we can make our lives right with God.
- 3. This last point is especially important because God will not accept our worship if our lives are not right with Him.