

## True Worship Includes Prayer

(Acts 2:42)

### Introduction:

1. In John 4:23 Jesus said that the Father seeks "true worshippers" to worship Him.
2. He also said that true worshippers are those who worship God "*in spirit and in truth.*"
3. God does not accept all worship -- He only accepts true worship.
4. To help us be true worshippers, we are studying a series of lessons on worship.
5. In this lesson we are showing that "true worship includes prayer."
6. The first step we need to take is to determine whether . . .

### Discussion:

- I. THE NEW TESTAMENT AUTHORIZES CHRISTIANS TO PRAY IN WORSHIP
  - A. This is where we must begin because we are to only say and do those things that Christ has authorized in His Word (Colossians 3:17, 16a).
  - B. As we examine the Bible in general we see that God's people have been praying to Him for many centuries.
    1. (Genesis 20:17) Abraham prayed for Abimelech and his people.
    2. (Numbers 21:7) Moses prayed for the Israelites.
    3. (1 Kings 8) Solomon prayed when the temple was dedicated.
    4. (2 Kings 19) Hezekiah prayed when the Assyrians threatened to destroy Jerusalem.
    5. (Daniel 6:10) Daniel prayed when he knew the penalty was being cast into the den of lions.
    6. Jesus prayed often (ex: Luke 6:12).
    7. (Acts 12:5) The early Christians in Jerusalem prayed for Peter.
  - C. The New Testament certainly teaches Christians to pray (1 Thessalonians 5:17).
  - D. More specifically, a number of passages show that Christians are to pray in worship (Acts 2:42; 1 Corinthians 14:15).
  - E. The New Testament clearly teaches Christians to pray in worship.
  - F. Since this is the case, we must pray "*in spirit and in truth.*"
- II. PRAYING "*IN SPIRIT*" [from the heart, sincerely, with the proper attitude]
  - A. To pray in spirit, our attitudes must be right toward:
    1. God (James 5:16b; 1 Peter 3:12)
    2. our fellow man (Matthew 6:14-15).
  - B. To pray in spirit, we must:
    1. pray "*believing*" (Matthew 21:22)
    2. pray with proper motives (James 4:3).
  - C. To pray in spirit, extremes must be avoided.

1. We must avoid the extreme of failing to pray in spirit.
    - a. Failing to pray in spirit results in ritualistic prayer because the heart is not in it.
    - b. Jesus taught His followers to avoid prayers such as those offered by hypocrites and heathens (Matthew 6:5, 7).
  2. We must also avoid the extreme of over-emphasizing the spirit.
    - a. The church in Corinth had a problem in this area (1 Corinthians 14:14-17).
    - b. The cure is to pray "*with the spirit*" and "*with the understanding.*"
- III. PRAYING "*IN TRUTH*" [according to God's will revealed in the New Testament]
- A. Prayer is offered to God (Matthew 6:9).
  - B. Prayer is offered to God through Christ (John 16:23b).
  - C. (1 Timothy 2:1) Various ways in which we are to talk to God include:
    1. "*prayers*": addresses made to God
    2. "*supplications*": asking God to supply needs (Matthew 6:11)
    3. "*intercessions*": making petitions on behalf of others (James 5:16a)
    4. "*giving of thanks*": expressions of gratitude (1 Thessalonians 5:18).
  - D. Prayer must harmonize with God's will (1 John 5:14-15).
  - E. In mixed assemblies, men are to lead prayer (1 Corinthians 14:34).

Conclusion:

1. The Bible has much more to say about prayer; however,:
  - a. we have shown that true worship includes prayer
  - b. we have covered a number of basic principles that relate to praying in spirit and in truth.
2. Are you among those who can call God "Father?"
3. Only His children can address Him in this way.
4. The Bible teaches in Galatians 3:26-27 how we become children of God so we can have the privilege of calling Him "Father."