

True Worship Includes Eating the Lord's Supper
(Acts 20:7)

Introduction:

1. In John 4:23 Jesus said that God seeks "true worshippers" to worship Him.
2. This indicates that God does not accept all worship -- He only accepts true worship.
3. Jesus identified true worshippers as those who worship God "*in spirit and in truth.*"
4. We are studying a series of lessons designed to help us be true worshippers.
5. In this lesson we are showing that "true worship includes eating the Lord's Supper."
6. The first step we need to take is to determine whether . . .

Discussion:

- I. THE NEW TESTAMENT AUTHORIZES CHRISTIANS TO EAT THE LORD'S SUPPER IN WORSHIP
 - A. This is where we need to begin because we are to only say and do those things that Christ has authorized us to say and do (Colossians 3:17, 16).
 - B. We read about the occasion when Jesus instructed His followers to eat His Supper in Matthew 26:26-29.
 1. Vs.26 begins by telling us that Jesus and His disciples "*were eating.*"
 2. According to vs.17-20, they were eating the Passover meal.
 - C. Passover was 1 of the 3 great feasts observed by the Jews each year.
 1. It provided a time for the Jews to remember what God had done for them in Egypt when He brought the 10th plague [death of the firstborn] upon the Egyptians.
 2. The Passover meal was eaten in the evening of the 14th day of the 1st month.
 3. This meal consisted of roast lamb, unleavened bread, and bitter herbs.
 4. A 7-day feast followed in which the Jews were not allowed to eat anything with leaven in it.
 - D. It was while Jesus was eating the Passover meal with His disciples that He gave instructions for eating His Supper.
 1. Jesus chose unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine as the elements of His Supper.
 - a. Concerning the bread, He said, "*this is my body.*"
 - b. Concerning the fruit of the vine, He said, "*this is my blood of the new testament.*"
 2. Jesus said He would eat this Supper with His followers in His Father's kingdom [the church -- Matthew 16:18-19].
 - E. Just before Jesus was crucified, He authorized His followers to eat His Supper in worship.
 - F. Since the Lord has authorized us to eat His Supper in worship, we must do so "*in spirit and in truth*" (John 4:24).
- II. EATING THE LORD'S SUPPER "*IN TRUTH*" [according to God's revealed will in the New Testament]
 - A. Let us keep in mind certain guidelines that we covered earlier.
 1. We must not loose the restrictions that the Lord has given.
 2. We must not elevate customs, traditions, opinions, preferences, and doctrines of men to the level of inspired commands.
 3. We must not bind restrictions where the Lord has not bound them, especially concerning the way that the Supper is served.
 - B. We have already seen which elements the Lord has authorized for His Supper.
 1. He authorized unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine.
 2. This is also taught in Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:17-20.
 3. The fact that Jesus specified unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine eliminates anything else.
 4. To eat the Lord's Supper in truth, we must use the authorized elements.
 - C. To eat the Lord's Supper in truth we must also eat it at the authorized time.
 1. It is not recorded that Jesus commanded a specific time when His Supper is to be eaten, but He did say that it would be eaten in His Father's kingdom.

2. To find out the authorized time, we must search the Scriptures and see when the members of the early church ate the Lord's Supper.
 - a. (Acts 2:42) The members of the Jerusalem church were steadfast in eating the Lord's Supper [gave constant attention to it].
 - b. (Acts 20:6-7) The Christians in Troas ate the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week [an inspired apostle was present to endorse this practice].
 - c. The authorized time for eating the Lord's Supper is every first day of the week when the church assembles for worship.
 - D. To eat the Lord's Supper in truth we must use the authorized elements, and it must be eaten at the authorized time.
- III. EATING THE LORD'S SUPPER *"IN SPIRIT"* [with the proper attitude and disposition]
- A. To help us eat the Lord's Supper in spirit we must realize exactly what it is.
 1. (1 Corinthians 10:16-17) It is the communion of the body and blood of Christ.
 2. (1 Corinthians 11:23-25) It is a memorial of Christ.
 3. (1 Corinthians 11:26) It is the showing forth of the Lord's death.
 - B. Jesus instructed His followers to eat His Supper so we would remember His sacrifice.
 - C. (1 Corinthians 11:27-29) We must eat the Lord's Supper *"worthily."*

Conclusion:

1. Lord willing, we will study the instructions in 1 Corinthians 11 in more detail this evening.
2. When we eat the Lord's Supper in spirit and in truth we show our love and appreciation to Christ for the death that He suffered on our behalf.
3. This is a special privilege for certain people [*"disciples"* -- Acts 20:7; 11:26b].
4. Are you a disciple of the Lord?
5. You can become His follower by contacting His death (Romans 6:3-4).