

Is There A Pattern For Worship?

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True worship is that which Jesus has ordained in his New Covenant. Listen to Jesus as He is speaking to the woman of Samaria at the well: “But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:23-24). To be recognized as a true worshipper, there must be some standard by which we are to be judged. From Matthew to Revelation, we find scattered statements about what to do in our worship. The New Testament speaks of prayer (1 Thessalonians 5:17), communion (Acts 20:7), singing (Colossians 3:16), offering (2 Corinthians 9:7), and the proclamation and study of God’s Word (Acts 20:7; 2 Timothy 2:15). Those things set forth in Scripture, we can be assured of and know that Christ has authorized, approves of, and accepts.

In the New Testament, we also find much about how we worship. That is to say, it must be sincere and not hypocritical according to Matthew 6:16. It must be genuine and not to be seen of men (Matthew 6:2-5). We are expected to be fervent in spirit (Romans 12:11). We are to be obedient to Christ in all things (Matthew 28:20). A very important and key ingredient or mindset, is that our worship must be in spirit and in truth (John 4:24).

Paul describes the message of the New Covenant as a form or pattern: “Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 1:13). In Romans, he says “But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you” (Romans 6:17). “Tupos” is that which is set forth for us to imitate or follow. Of the several aspects of Christianity which we should seek to imitate, the worship of God would be high on the list. Not what someone else says, or based on their feelings, but what is solely supported by the Word of God.

If, as some say, there is no pattern (know this, they have to trounce and deny Paul’s words to say this), then every man is left free to do that which is right in his own eyes (Judges 21:25). You can see what that did for the Hebrews in the era of the Judges. This strange view is the promotion of rebellious children who no longer wish to be subject to the authority of Christ. It is joined at the hip to the view that, under Christ, there is no law. To believe that is to deny Galatians 6:2. The difference between a true Christian and a sinner is simply that the true Christian bows before King Jesus as his Lord and gladly submits his will to do the will of Christ (Romans 10:9-10). The sinful heart rebels at the thought. If the rebellious person wants to be known as a respectable “Christian,” he must find a way to rationalize and justify his position. To do that, he denies that God has given us a pattern and that Christ has given us a law to be obeyed. We must remember the warning and admonition that Paul gave, “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him (Colossians 3:17). Is your worship authorized by Him?