

# Fulton County Gospel News

*Good News About Christ And His Church For All Of The World*

“... Christ is the head of the church: and He is the Savior of the body.” - Ephesians 5:23

Established 1953

March 2004

Vol. 38 / No. 3

## WORSHIP

by Owen D. Olbricht

Departure in the worship of God is usually the starting point of becoming involved in many other departures from the ways of God. After the sin of Adam and Eve, failure to worship according to God's will was the first major sin mentioned in the Bible. Cain failed to offer by faith the sacrifice God wanted while Abel through faith offered the acceptable sacrifice (Genesis 4:3-5; Hebrews 11:4). Abel's faith and obedience still sends the message to us today that we are to restrict our service to God's commandments.

Israel's broken relationship with God occurred because its citizens began serving other gods. Their worship of other gods ended in their becoming involved in other sinful practices. "And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a-whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the Lord; but they did not so" (Judges 2:17).

### WARNING FOR TODAY

People who add to and depart from worship revealed by God fail to listen to the message Abel's obedience gives us, that God wants in worship only what He has instructed to be used in worship. Those who do not worship according to the truth (John 4:24) taught by Jesus (John 1:17) usually take a liberal view of the obligation to govern their lives by

the teaching of Jesus. An attitude that leads people to take liberties in worship will be carried over into all aspects of their lives.

Many people today feel that Jesus has no restrictive teaching and no commandments to obey. For this reason they contend that what is used in worship is not important. This is not true. Jesus taught that the source of eternal life is in the commandments of God (John 12:49, 50). He told a crowd that was following Him, "My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it" (Luke 11:28). In response to a woman who praised Mary, Jesus said, "Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it" (Luke 11:28). At another time He taught, "And that servant, which knew his lord's will and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes" (Luke 12:47). God expects us to restrict our ways to His ways.

Worship that is acceptable to God is worship revealed in the truth Jesus taught (John 4:24). "Whosoever transgresseth [goeth onward, ASV], and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (2 John 9).

Bringing into worship practices based on human traditions and man's commandments is worthless and useless (Mark 7:7-13). Only what God has chosen is to be used in worship. All else is to be excluded.

## CONCLUSION

While Moses was in the mountain, Israel quickly became immoral after they began to worship the golden calf which they made (Exodus 32:8). They became sinful when their worship began to be incorrect. Most of the departures that are mentioned in the Bible started when people began to worship contrary to the will of God. This is the reason a stand for true worship is so important. Perhaps this is why Jesus mentioned worship of God first and then mentioned service. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Matthew 4:10). The attitude that will cause people to respect the worship of God will also cause them to be careful to live the lives God wants them to live.

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## THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE WORD OF GOD

Part Two

by Ted J. Clarke

### INTRODUCTION

Last month's article gave several comparisons to show that in the Holy Spirit's work to influence the conscious mind of every accountable human being, He operates only through the medium or means of God's Divine Word. That does not mean that the Holy Spirit is only the Word of God. It does mean that God has chosen to channel the Spirit's power to convert the sinful spirits of

**FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS**

USPS Publication #211780

... is a Periodical publication issued monthly by the Church of Christ at Third and Bethel (P.O. Box 251), Mammoth Spring, AR 72554-0251. **POSTMASTER: Please mail all changes of address to the above address.**

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**FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS**

P.O. Box 251

Mammoth Spring, AR 72554

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unbelievers and to strengthen the inner being of Christians only by the appeal of that Word upon the conscious minds of those who hear or read it. Remember the passage cited in the previous lesson: *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly [completely, American Standard Version] furnished unto all good works”* (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Christians should always desire every gift God has given us to convert unbelievers and be strengthened ourselves, but there was no promise of a **direct aid** of the Spirit upon the minds of unbelievers or Christians, even during the limited age of miracles in the first century, in order to effect their conversion or strengthening. The **direct influence** of the Holy Spirit upon a human spirit would be a miraculous influence and miracles were not for that purpose.

**THE PURPOSE OF THE MIRACULOUS GIFTS**

God sent the Holy Spirit upon the apostles to equip them to receive by inspiration His revealed will for mankind in the New Testament (John 14:26; 16:12-15; Acts 1:5, 8: 2:1-47 et al.). Additionally, the Holy Spirit empowered the apostles to perform miracles of various kinds, just as Christ had done, to prove they were God’s chosen messengers. *“And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen”* (Mark 16:17-20). *“Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands (Acts 14:3). “For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will? (Hebrews 2:2-4).*

It is also true that the Holy Spirit was given for a time through the laying on of hands by the apostles (cf. Acts 8:12-22). However, when the last apostle died the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit ceased (1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 13:8-13). Note

that these miraculous gifts were for revelation of truth and confirmation by miracles. But Jesus promised that “all truth” would be delivered to the apostles (John 14:26; 16:13). There were no more revelations needed when the NT was completed in the first century (cf. Jude 3; 2 Peter 1:3). Paul said that Christ’s new covenant had been confirmed by His death (Galatians 3:15) and the Hebrews writer said it had been confirmed by miracles (Hebrews 2:2-4). Once fully revealed and confirmed there is no need for more miracles to reveal or confirm it.

**THE CLAIM OF “DIRECT” HELP TODAY**

Those who make claims for the direct operation of the Holy Spirit upon the human spirits of people today warp the time frame God set for the duration of the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit and the purpose for those gifts as well. They may deny they are contending for the miraculous operation of the Spirit, but that is exactly what such claims imply.

For example, the apostle Paul told the brethren at Ephesus that they were able to understand God’s revelation to them by reading what he wrote. *“How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit”* (Ephesians 3:3-5). To contend, as some do, that we need a direct operation of the Holy Spirit upon our spirits in order to receive an inspired understanding of what God revealed in the Scriptures makes Paul’s statement to the Ephesians false. Why give the Scriptures at all if one needs the Holy Spirit giving us more

inspired information in order to understand them? If the Holy Spirit gives us a direct understanding of the Scripture, He is giving us more information (which is additional inspired revelation), and thus He is implanting directly in our minds an inspired explanation. However, the Holy Spirit most certainly does not work in this manner.

Those today who make the claim of being directly influenced by the Holy Spirit to have an inspired understanding of the Scriptures are unable to prove their claims by miraculous signs, as were those who received God's revelation in the first century (Mark 16:15-20; Acts 14:3; Hebrews 2:2-4). They can only produce a subjective feeling that says, "I feel that God spoke this understanding to my heart." Such uncertainty has given rise to all sorts of false doctrines and unauthorized denominations.

## SCRIPTURE IS THE STANDARD

God has channeled the power of His Holy Spirit through His revealed will in Scripture. This is God's permanent arrangement. Direct revelation and miraculous ability to prove the revelation was from God were temporary provisions of the first century. The effectiveness and power of that Spirit inspired Scripture are seen in the following passages. "*For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*" (Hebrews 4:12, NKJV). "*For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe*" (1 Thessalonians 2:13).

*"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works"* (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

If those who make the claims for the direct operation of the Holy Spirit in their lives cannot prove these claims as the first century Christians did by miraculous powers (and they cannot), then let them cease to make such claims and get back to the objective standard of God's Word as our only source of God inspired information, equipping us for every good work.

## CONCLUSION

We do not limit God when we follow the teaching of Scripture presented in these two articles. We simply recognize that while God has the power to do anything He desires, that He has chosen to inform, motivate and empower people to become Christians and live faithful lives by the influence of the Holy Spirit upon our spirits only through His Word. We have shown by these Scriptures that we can understand, believe and obey God's will for us, without a direct operation upon our hearts.

## CHRISTIANS AS EXAMPLES

by Clovis Ragsdale

In I Tim. 4:12 Paul advises the young gospel preacher, Timothy, to "be an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith and in purity." This instruction is good for any Christian because as such we are constantly on trial in the eyes of all men. The power of example is great for good or for

evil, even more powerful than oral teaching. The world judges Christianity by the words and deeds of individual Christians. There is no way that we can escape this responsibility. The only thing that we can do is to see that our lives are kept pure in the sight of all and thus be a credit to the one whose name we wear, Jesus Christ.

Every noble deed that we perform may be the means of encouraging some one to choose to become a Christian. Oftentimes small deeds which at the time may be taken very lightly by us will have momentous effects on others. The same applies to our words. Christ stated, in Matt. 12:36, that we shall give account of every idle word that we shall speak in the day of judgment. Christians need to give heed to the saying that we should "think twice before we speak." This rule might save a lot of heartache and embarrassment to many. Also it would help us to avoid saying things which might discourage others from becoming Christians. No one wants to be a stumbling block in the path of any soul whatsoever. Yet I have heard people say that the reason they were not Christians was because of the ways of someone who was. Oftentimes this charge is used more for an excuse by a hardened sinner, looking for a way to ease a goading conscience, but no true Christian wants to be an excuse for some one to serve the Devil.

[FCGN, April 1959]

Don't try to live tomorrow  
Until you live today.  
To live each moment as it comes  
Is much the better way.  
Tomorrow you may never see  
But surely if you do,  
The One who helped you live today  
Will help tomorrow, too.



**BOOK  
BLURBS**



Owen D. Olbricht has done those who seek to know about the true worship of God a great service in his recent book, *Worship: Life's Greatest Moments*. See his lead article on page one. In thirteen chapters (211 pages) suitable for personal or class study he has authored a study that will assist your understanding of biblical worship and help you to draw closer to God in your personal and corporate worship. The book is plainly written, easy to understand, filled with Scripture and references to numerous resources are provided.

Chapter titles are: *Meaning of Worship; God, Center of Worship; Pre-Law Worship; Worship Under the Law [of Moses]; David's Contribution to Worship; Pagan Worship; Worship in the Prophets; True Worship; Worship with Singing; Worship through Prayer; Lord's Supper; Christian Contribution; and True Worshipers*. While I am disappointed brother Olbricht did not include a chapter on "Preaching as Worship," he does cover a number of the abuses in worship today such as praise teams, solos, choirs, mechanical instrumental music, all of life is worship, women leading worship in the assemblies, partaking of the Lord's Supper other than on Sunday, using only "one cup" (container) in the Lord's Supper and other matters. All of the book is quite good but the chapter on *Worship with Singing* is worth the price of the book.

In an extraordinary offer, brother Olbricht is offering readers of FCGN copies of this book for \$7.00 each, which includes postage. He simply wants to get it into the hands of as many as possible to promote true worship and combat the errors in worship that are so prominent today. At this price you can buy more than

one copy and give one to a family member or friend. We do not sell books at FCGN so order directly from the author. His address is 305 W. Maryland Ave., Sherwood, AR 72120.

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"Life is a lot like tennis. . .the player who does not serve well usually loses in the end."

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**GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION**

1. Hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17; Acts 16:32).
2. Believing what is taught (Mark 16:16; Hebrews 11:6).
3. Repentance (Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30).
4. Confession (Romans 10:9, 10; Acts 8:37).
5. Baptism (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; I Peter 3:21; Romans 6:3, 4).
6. After the above five steps, faithful Christian Living (I Peter 2:11, 12; Revelation 2:10).

**THE CHURCH OF CHRIST**

1. The Bible is its only guide (Romans 1:16; I Thess. 2:13).
2. Wears a Biblical Name (Romans 16:16).
3. Established at the right place (Isaiah 2:2, 3; Acts 2).
4. Established at the right time (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2).
5. Established on the right person (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:36).
6. Saved are in it (Ephesians 5:23; Acts 2:47).
7. Its members are enrolled in heaven (Hebrews 12:23).
8. Membership in it is obtained by obedience to God's commands including baptism (Acts 2:41-47; I Corinthians 12:13).

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