

SUNDAY MORNING

Announcements
Cole Meador

Song Leader
Daniel Allgor

Lord's Supper
Jon Barry, Mark Davis,
Randy Ellis

Prayers
Alec Capel, Joseph Barry

WEDNESDAY EVENING

Announcements
Jack Calvert

Song Leader
Clay Morris

Prayers
Jon Barry, Randy Ellis

Invitation
Daniel Allgor

ABOUT US

Elders
Jack Calvert Rodney Ellis

Deacons
Jon Barry Mike Davis
Clay Morris

Evangelist
Bryan Garlock

SERVICE TIMES

Sunday
Bible Study9:30 A.M.
Worship10:15 A.M.

Monday (Zoom)
Bible Study7:00 P.M

Wednesday
Bible Study7:00 P.M.

WWW.TXKCHURCH.COM

GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION

Hear the word of truth Romans 10:13-17

Believe the truth..... Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24

Repent from all sins Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38

Confess the name of Christ ... Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

Be Baptized in His name Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21; Colossians 2:12

Walk in newness of life and **be faithful** unto death Romans 6:1-4; Revelation 2:10

own preferences as creatures of free choice. But we'd best not expect our actions to have the approval of heaven.



Volume XXVII

May 15, 2022

Issue 20

A Test of Fellowship
Doy Moyer

When brethren begin to try to study an issue, the first question should not be, "Are you going to make this a test of fellowship?" There's a time when fellowship may need to be considered, depending on the issue at hand, but it shouldn't be the first order of business. The first order should be to lovingly work together and learn truth. That often takes time, and brethren are typically in different places of growth and understanding. As long as this process can be maintained without being ugly to each other (Eph. 4:32), brethren can generally get along pretty well. Patience, longsuffering, and love are staples of a growing relationship that fosters a better knowledge of truth and understanding (Eph. 4:1-3).

My experience generally has been that fellowship issues tend to work themselves out without being forced. Yet there are questions to consider. Is one being divisive and causing strife? Is one refusing to study

while dogmatically holding a view? Is one attempting to go behind the backs of others (e.g., the shepherds) in order to teach a pet idea? These are always dangers that need to be avoided and handled. In these cases, swift action is in order (Rom. 16:17; Titus 1:9).

However, when an issue first arises, and brethren genuinely want to work together in love, the fellowship question is a distant second. Why bring it up first? Why not instead simply seek to study, pray, and grow together? In time, the fellowship between brethren may indeed grow much closer, and this is a wonderful outcome.

Never look for excuses to divide and isolate; always pursue peace and love. Divisions happen, but let it never be because we have failed to do all within our abilities to bring others together first.

FAMILY TALK

Continue to remember the health concerns of *Francine Davis, Gerald Eaton, Joey Avance, Jerry Schnelle, Bonnie Allgor, Pat Buls, Sonny & Cathy Monaghan, Beth Ellen, and Pete Rowland.*

Please remember Jennie as she is pregnant.

If you have any announcements that you would like to share with the church family, please call/text Bryan at 478.256.0325.

Can Man Worship As He Pleases? Steve Dewhirst

Historical evidence abounds that man can, indeed, worship as he pleases. As creatures of choice, God affords us the privilege of opting for His guidance or striking out on our own. The real question, however, is whether or not humanly-designed worship will be acceptable to Him.

The very nature of the term worship demands careful attention to the instructions of God. Worship denotes reverence or obeisance (bowing down). One can hardly “bow down” reverently before the Creator, while ignoring His divine will. So much has been introduced into modern worship, not because of biblical instruction, but because

of human tastes and preferences. It is the height of presumptuousness to assume that God will be pleased simply because we are pleased. “O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps” (Jer. 10:23). Not only does that principle apply to man’s general course of life, it also has application to our public expressions of worship and devotion to God.

At the core of this issue lies not the matter of “forms” or “acts of worship,” but the matter of love and dedication to the God of heaven. Even correctly-executed public worship can be an abomination to Jehovah, if congregants offer it as mere routine. “To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?” begins the plaintive cry of God in Isaiah 1:11-15. The lack of genuine devotion makes worship a sham. To serve God with less than “the whole heart” is to fail to serve Him (see Jer. 3:10). By contrast, God directed Jeremiah toward a day when He would give His people “a heart to know me...I will be their God, for they shall return to Me with their whole heart” (Jer. 24:7).

The incongruity of worshipping God without the whole heart surfaces again in the New Testament. Jesus’ famous interview with the Samaritan woman at the well illustrates the human preoccupation with form over reality. When she states, “Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship,” Jesus doesn’t debate the issue with her. Instead, he strikes at the very heart of Samaritan misunderstanding. “You worship what you do not know...” (Jn. 4:22). Certainly the Samaritans were in error for violating God’s

instructions for Old Testament worship, but theirs was a more fundamental problem: they had no real knowledge of the God they purported to honor. The Samaritans were ignorant because they rejected most of the Old Testament scriptures, and apart from divine revelation, man can know neither the person nor the will of Deity. By contrast, Jesus taught that “true worshippers” in every age “worship the Father in spirit and truth” (Jn. 4:23-24). In other words, true worshippers worship with their spirits (their whole hearts) and, therefore, worship God in reality.

We can never claim to worship or reverence a God whose will we ignore. Genuine faith in God establishes His will as our rule of life and conduct (Rom. 3:31). No aspect of human life is exempt from the sovereign rule of Christ, and particularly not the public expressions of our devotion to Him. “Why do you call me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?” (Lk. 6:46). Why, indeed? If the term Lord implies rule and authority, our only logical response is to understand and implement His will.

Disciples have eternal life by virtue of faith in Christ, and are to live by faith (Rom. 1:16-17). But what we do, as a matter of faith in Christ, is governed by principles found in God’s word, for “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17). We cease to “live by faith” when we base our convictions and practices on human desire, however well-intentioned. Jesus exposed this spirit in the Pharisees by quoting the prophet Isaiah. “These people draw near to Me with

their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men” (Mt. 15:8-9). Jesus wasn’t condemning their worship practices; He condemned their self-service that rendered worship meaningless. That same spirit thrives today.

When men say, “I want to worship God in my own way,” it ceases to be the way of God. When one decides that he must employ his “special talent” in the public worship of God, public worship becomes a showcase of talent, rather than a demonstration of reverence for God and His word. And it must also be stated that human egos lie at the heart of much sensationalism in modern worship, coupled with the assembly’s desire for entertainment.

We eat the Lord’s supper, sing, pray, and teach in our worship assemblies because God’s word shows those same practices by first century Christians under the direction of the apostles (see Acts 20:7-12; Col. 16; 1 Cor. 11:17-34; 1 Cor. 14). We contribute money to the furtherance of God’s work because God’s word so orders (1 Cor. 16:1-4). Moreover, we limit the day of eating the supper and giving of our means to Sundays, because that seems to be the clear of import of our Bible examples. By faith, we employ the same practices as revealed in God’s word. But outside of divine revelation, we have no basis for faith or religious action.

If we are discontent with Bible-directed worship, we can certainly introduce our