

Theme: Worship and related issues.

1. What is your definition of worship?

Worship is homage; it is an attitude and activity designed to recognize and describe the worth of a person...It is first and foremost a verb, an action. It is motivated by a desire to honor another.

■ Dictionary of Biblical Imagery

That human emotions and reactions are involved in worship is, of course, undeniable. Awe, fear, gratitude, and love may all be experienced in worship. The point is, however, that these are not the controlling factors. They do not constitute the true essence. In the Bible the beginning lies in the object of worship rather than the subject.

■ Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible

Worship is not defined by man nor ultimately for man's benefit, although there are benefits. It is defined by God and is for and toward Him.

Throughout Scripture God gives us a large variety of scenes of man's worship of Him. Some are considered unrighteous worship, but most are given as examples of righteous worship.

Worship of the true and living God can come in a variety of forms, but whatever form it comes in, it must be reflective of Him and His worthiness. We are worshiping a Holy God, therefore our form or worship, must be holy.

2. What elements constitute corporate worship? (i.e., what should you include in a worship service?).

In Acts 2:41-45 we see the NT church's first corporate worship service. In this passage we see the following things taking place:

- Baptisms (vs. 41)
- Devotion to the apostles teaching (Preaching on (a) Tj 6.0

There is nothing in the NT that would seem to indicate that all of these took place at every worship service. Although, it does seem that they all took place regularly.

- The Nature of True Worship By Wm J. McRae, EmJ Vol 6:2 (Winter 1997) 229
- Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible

I believe the Sine Qua Non of corporate worship are as follows:

- Redeemed people. Seeing that our worship is directed to a Holy God, non-redeemed people cannot worship Whom they do not know. This would also provide for the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- The Word of God. The Word was and is the only source we have to understand the mind of God. If we are to worship God in a way that He is worthy of, we must have a focus on His word.
- Prayer. Without prayers in the form of confession, praise, adoration and supplication, we cannot truly communicate with a Holy God. God desires worship that flows out of a unrestricted relationship with Him. This could take place in the form of song, but would not be required, nor always appropriate.
- Fellowship. The very fact that there are multiple redeemed people present, fellowship will take place.

Any of the other aspects listed above and possibly others not listed could be included as long as they do not detract from the focus of worship – God. However, I do not believe that they are required in the sense if they are not present, then this is not a worship service.

3. Explain the meaning of I Cor. 14:34,35

In this passage Paul is not addressing a specific problem at the church of Corinth, however according to vs. 33b he is addressing an issue that was present in the churches of that time, telling the church in Corinth to conform to the practices of the other churches.

The immediate context of the passage both preceding and following is prophecy in the church. He just finished telling them in verses 29-33 that the people should be allowed to prophecy, but that the other prophets are responsible to determine whether, their prophecy is from the Lord. In this context the women are not to take part in questioning the prophets or determining whether their prophecy was from the Lord. He then concludes in verses 37-40 giving more instruction on prophecy.

Paul cannot be teaching in this passage that women cannot speak at all in the church. In I Cor. 11:5 he states very clearly that women are allowed to pray and prophecy.

4. Explain the meaning of I Tim. 2:11,12

The key to this passage is found in the Greek:

1 Timothy 2:11 Γυνή ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ μαθησθήτω ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ·

“A woman in silence must be taught with total obedience” (Joe Fleener translation)

1 Timothy 2:12 διδάσκειν δὲ γυναικὶ οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω οὐδὲ ἀθροῦν ἀνδρός, ἀλλ’ εἶναι ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ.

“I do not allow a woman to be teaching a man in a controlling way, but to be in silence” (Joe Fleener translation)

To begin with verse 11 is instructing on how a woman ought to learn in the church. She ought to learn in silence and with total obedience. This is related to the passage in I Cor. 14:34,35 where a woman is not allowed to learn in a vocal way in the church, so as to question or give spiritual direction by her comments to the church, but to be in total obedience to the leadership of the church and her husband.

The verbs in verse 12 (διδάσκειν and ἀθροῦν) are both present active infinitives, indicating a present state of continuous action. Also, they are joined in such a way that links them as being one and not two completely different things. Both of these aspects can be seen in my translation above.

Considering Paul chose to use the infinitive form of the verb, he is obviously trying to emphasize the continuous action. Therefore, Paul is not forbidding a woman to ever teach a man under any circumstance. However, he is forbidding a woman to be placed in a position of continuous authoritative teaching over a man.

This would then forbid a woman from being a pastor, adult Sunday School teacher over men, or any other position that gives her continuous authority in teaching things spiritual in the church. I believe Paul’s intentional use of the word ἀνδρός for man is specifying a mature male, which is why I would not have a problem with a woman being the Sunday School teacher to children that would include boys.

However, related back to verse 11, any teaching a woman might do in the church must always be done in submission to her authorities with total obedience to their leadership.

- Bible Works 4.0
- Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament – Louw & Nida

5. Can/should a woman speak during a business meeting?

Can a woman speak during a business meeting? – Yes.

Should a woman speak during a business meeting? – It depends!

I believe that a woman should be allowed to speak in a business meeting on matters pertaining to the fiscal business of the church and virtually all areas.

According to the above passages, I would restrict women from speaking on subjects pertaining to the doctrinal and spiritual direction of the church. This should be discussed and decided by the spiritual leaders in the church – men.

6. Music issues:

A. Is music worship?

Yes, music can be a form of worship when it is done while keeping the focus of worship in view and the music reflects His worthiness. However, I would not say that worship is music, in the sense that you must have music to give worthy worship to God.

B. What should be the purpose of the vocal solo/duet just before the message (i.e., sometimes labeled “special music”)?

This is an excellent question. This is an argument from silence, but it does not seem like there was “special music” in the NT churches, during the beginning stages. Therefore, this is a modern invention of the church. However, even though the NT does not directly comment on something that we do in our churches today, everything we do must hold to the principles given in Scripture. Everything we do in the name of worship, must not violate the terms of true worship as outlined in Scripture.

Therefore, the purpose of “special music” must be the same as the purpose of all worship. It must point those in attendance to a Holy God that demands worship that is worthy of His character and attributes.

C. If special music is considered “sharing the gospel in song”, is this preaching?

No, I don't believe “special music” is preaching as in ‘κηρύσσω’, but could be looked at as teaching as in ‘διδασκω’.

D. If this is a form of preaching, should women be permitted to sing specials in church?

By defining “special music” as teaching and with the explanation given above for the passage in I Timothy 2:11,12, it is very appropriate for a woman to sing special in church, as long as it is under submission to her husband and church leaders.

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- I Corinthians – Albert Barnes
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