
“Come, Let Us Reason About the Bible”
What Is the Church of the New Testament?
Bible Study Series

And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”—(Matthew 16:18)

LESSON EIGHT, Part 1 — What About the Church’s Worship Services?

Estimated Time to Read this Lesson: 8 – 9 minutes

You know, when you talk about *worship*, you’re talking about something incredibly personal and deeply meaningful. It’s not just about showing up to a service or going through motions—it’s about showing reverence and adoration for God. Worship is really about honoring Him with everything in us—our heart, soul, mind, and obedience. It’s not just ceremony. It’s communion. It’s connection.

I. The Universal Desire to Worship

Have you ever noticed how, no matter where you go in the world—or what time line you study—people have always had a desire to worship? That’s not a coincidence. God put that desire in people. From the beginning, He created the need to reach out to something greater—ultimately, to reach out to *Him*. Take a brief walk-through history and culture. You’ll see this longing everywhere:

- In ancient Egypt, they worshiped gods like Ra and Osiris, even building those massive temples and pyramids for worship.
- The Greeks and Romans had gods like Zeus, Apollo, Jupiter, and Venus. They offered sacrifices and held festivals in their honor.
- In India, Hinduism emerged with worship focused on deities like Vishnu, Shiva, and Lakshmi.
- Chinese traditions like Buddhism and Taoism emphasized enlightenment and rituals, even ancestor reverence.
- In Central and South America, the Mayas and Aztecs worshipped gods of nature and war, sometimes even practicing human sacrifice.
- Polynesian cultures honored nature-based deities with chants, dances, and totems.

All these different systems might seem worlds apart, but they all point to the same truth: humanity wants to connect with the divine in which the Bible tells us exactly why—you were created to worship the one true and living God. He alone is worthy of our worship.

II. God’s Desire for Worship: From the Beginning

From the very beginning, God has wanted His creation to honor Him. Worship wasn’t something that developed later—it’s always been part of God’s plan for mankind.

Worship in the Patriarchal Age

Before the Law of Moses was given, people still worshipped God. They used altars and sacrifices to do so. Take Noah, for example:

“Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar” (Genesis 8:20).

And Abraham? He, too, built multiple altars during his journeys:

“And there he built an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him” (Genesis 12:7).

His son Isaac and grandson Jacob continued this pattern (Genesis 26:25; 35:1–7). They didn’t just do whatever they felt like—they responded to God’s will with reverence. Their worship, though simple, was intentional and submissive.

III. Worship in the Mosaic Age

Later, when God formed the nation of Israel, He gave very specific instructions about worship. It became more structured—more ceremonial.

The Tabernacle and the Priests

During their wilderness wanderings, the Israelites had the tabernacle—a portable sanctuary built exactly the way God told Moses to build it (Exodus 25–27). This was where God would dwell among His people and where they would come to worship.

The priests—specifically from the tribe of Levi, and the family of Aaron—had sacred duties. Every day, they offered burnt sacrifices, kept the golden lampstand burning, burned incense, and placed showbread before God. These acts were all symbolic—meant to show continual devotion, thanksgiving, and intercession.

“Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two lambs of the first year, day by day continually” (Exodus 29:38).

This was called the continual burnt offering—one lamb in the morning, one in the evening. There were other offerings too: grain offerings, peace offerings, sin offerings, and guilt offerings (Leviticus 1–7).

The High Priest had the special task of going into the Most Holy Place—*once a year*—on the Day of Atonement. That’s when he offered blood of animals for the sins of the people (Leviticus 16). Only he could go behind that sacred veil, and only on that day.

Their worship involved detailed rituals, special garments (like the ephod and breastplate), and holy objects. Everything was about holiness, obedience, and reverence. But it wasn't just about the moment—it was all pointing forward to something greater.

The tabernacle worship was symbolic. It prepared the way for Jesus, the true High Priest, who would later offer Himself—once and for all (Hebrews 9:11–12).

Temple Worship

When Solomon built the temple in Jerusalem, it was a big shift. Now Israel had a *permanent* place to worship. It was built on Mount Moriah—the same place where Abraham had nearly sacrificed Isaac (2 Chronicles 3:1). This temple became the spiritual center of the nation.

At the temple's dedication, Solomon offered thousands of sacrifices. God showed His approval:

“And the glory of the Lord filled the house of God” (2 Chronicles 5:14).

Worship here followed the same pattern as the tabernacle but on a larger scale. Morning and evening sacrifices continued. Incense, showbread, and lamp lighting were all part of it.

Throughout the year, Israelites from all over came to Jerusalem for major festivals—Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles (Deuteronomy 16:16). It was a time of joyful, communal worship.

Yet even with all its beauty and holiness, the temple was still just a shadow. The writer of Hebrews tells us that it pointed to something greater—a heavenly reality (Hebrews 8:5). And one day, Jesus would declare:

“One greater than the temple is here” (Matthew 12:6).

Through His death and resurrection, Jesus established a new and better way into the presence of God (Hebrews 10:19–22).

IV. A Prophetic Glimpse of a New Way to Worship

Even back in the Old Testament, God gave hints that something new was coming. The prophets talked about a time when worship wouldn't be tied to a temple or a specific place—or a national priesthood.

“Behold, the days are coming... when I will make a new covenant... not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers... But this is the covenant... I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts” (Jeremiah 31:31–33).

“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you” (Ezekiel 36:26–27).

The Messiah would bring a new kind of worship—not based on rituals or places, but based on truth and spirit.

Jesus confirmed this during His ministry. Remember what He said to the Samaritan woman at the well?

“But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:23–24).

V. The Establishment of the New Covenant in Christ

When Jesus came, He fulfilled the old law and brought a *new* covenant.

“For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matthew 26:28).

“He takes away the first that He may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Hebrews 10:9–10).

“He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises” (Hebrews 8:6).

Jesus was the Lamb of God (John 1:29). His sacrifice ended the need for repeated offerings. His covenant changed worship forever. No more altars or incense or elaborate rituals—worship would now be about the heart.

VI. Worship Under the New Covenant

So what does worship look like now—under the new covenant?

Jesus, through His one sacrifice, has perfected us forever:

“For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified” (Hebrews 10:14).

And again:

“He takes away the first that He may establish the second...” (Hebrews 10:9–10).

With the Old Covenant gone, and the new one in place, God no longer calls for physical temples or animal sacrifices. Instead, He wants worship that comes from a transformed heart—worship that's grounded in *truth* and offered in *spirit*.

As Jesus said:

“The hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth...” (John 4:23–24).

So what does it *mean* to worship in spirit and in truth?

- **In Spirit:** This is worship that comes from the heart—sincere, reverent, full of understanding. It's not about where you are physically, but where your heart is spiritually.

“For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh” (Philippians 3:3).

- **In Truth:** This means our worship must align with God's Word—not human ideas or traditions.

“Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth” (John 17:17).

“And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men” (Matthew 15:9).

True worship isn't about impressing others or checking off a ritual—it's about knowing God, obeying Him, and honoring Him in the way He has asked.

Remember that worship is more than an event or a habit—it's a spiritual offering to a holy God. And thanks to Jesus, you now have the privilege of worshiping in a way that's simple, powerful, and directly connected to our Creator.

Questions to Confirm Understanding

Estimated Time to Answer the Questions: 3 – 5 minutes; With Scripture Lookup: 20 - 30 minutes

Read and answer the following set of questions about this lesson, and circle your answer: “True | False” or “Yes | No”. Look up the scriptures provided to confirm your answers. Then compare your answers with the Answer Key provided after these questions.

1. God created mankind with the capacity and desire to worship.
True | False
2. Ancient civilizations worshiped the same true God revealed in the Bible.
True | False
3. According to Genesis 8:20, did Noah build an altar and offer burnt offerings after the flood?
True | False
4. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob built altars and offered sacrifices according to their own preferences without regard to God's will.
True | False
5. Worship in the Patriarchal Age involved obedience to God's revealed will.
True | False
6. According to Exodus 29:38, were two lambs offered daily as part of the continual burnt offering?
True | False
7. Under the Law of Moses, only priests from the tribe of Judah could offer sacrifices in the tabernacle.
True | False
8. The tabernacle was a portable sanctuary constructed according to God's specific instructions.
True | False

9. Leviticus 16 describes how the High Priest entered the Most Holy Place once every month.
True | False
10. According to 2 Chronicles 5:14, did the glory of the Lord fill the temple so completely that the priests could not continue ministering?
True | False
11. Worship in the temple under Solomon was based on the same pattern as the tabernacle but on a greater scale.
True | False
12. Did Jesus take away the Old Covenant and establish a New Covenant through His sacrifice?
True | False
13. In 2 Chronicles 29:25, were Levites stationed in the temple with cymbals, stringed instruments, and harps to lead in worship?
True | False
14. Hebrews 9:11–12 teaches that Jesus, as our High Priest, entered the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands.
True | False
15. According to Jeremiah 31:31–33, God foretold a new covenant where His law would be written on people’s hearts.
True | False
16. In John 4:23–24, did Jesus teach that true worshipers must worship the Father in spirit and in truth?
True | False
17. Under the New Covenant, worship involves outward rituals rather than inward sincerity and truth.
True | False
18. According to Hebrews 10:9–10, did Jesus take away the first covenant in order to establish the second, through which believers are sanctified?
True | False
19. In Philippians 3:3, does Paul say that Christians worship God in the Spirit and place no confidence in the flesh?
True | False

20. According to Matthew 15:9, did Jesus say that worship based on human commandments is offered in vain?

True | False

Answer Key

Estimated Time to Read the Answers: 10 - 15 minutes; With Reflection and Contemplation: 40 minutes

1. God created mankind with the capacity and desire to worship.

Answer: True

Explanation: The lesson explains that all human cultures have expressed a desire to worship, which aligns with the biblical truth that God created mankind to seek and honor Him (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

2. Ancient civilizations worshiped the same true God revealed in the Bible.

Answer: False

Explanation: While they expressed a spiritual instinct, these civilizations often worshiped idols and false gods. The Bible teaches that there is only one true God (Isaiah 45:5).

3. According to Genesis 8:20, did Noah build an altar and offer burnt offerings after the flood?

Answer: True

“Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.” — Genesis 8:20

Explanation: Noah’s worship after the flood was directed to the Lord and done through sacrificial offerings, demonstrating obedience and gratitude.

4. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob built altars and offered sacrifices according to their own preferences without regard to God’s will.

Answer: False

Explanation: They worshiped by responding to God’s revelation and guidance. Their worship was marked by reverence and obedience, not personal innovation (Genesis 12:7; 26:25; 35:1–7).

5. Worship in the Patriarchal Age involved obedience to God's revealed will.

Answer: True

Explanation: The patriarchs built altars and offered sacrifices in response to God's presence and instruction, indicating reverence and submission.

6. According to Exodus 29:38, were two lambs offered daily as part of the continual burnt offering?

Answer: True

“Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two lambs of the first year, day by day continually.” — Exodus 29:38

Explanation: Daily offerings symbolized Israel's continual need for atonement and devotion to God.

7. Under the Law of Moses, only priests from the tribe of Judah could offer sacrifices in the tabernacle.

Answer: False

Explanation: Only the tribe of **Levi**, and specifically the descendants of **Aaron**, were appointed as priests (Exodus 28:1). Judah was the tribe of kings, not priests.

8. The tabernacle was a portable sanctuary constructed according to God's specific instructions.

Answer: True

Explanation: God gave Moses exact instructions for the tabernacle's construction (Exodus 25–27), showing that worship must be according to God's revealed plan.

9. Leviticus 16 describes how the High Priest entered the Most Holy Place once every month.

Answer: False

Explanation: The High Priest entered the Most Holy Place only **once per year** on the Day of Atonement to offer a blood sacrifice for the people's sins (Leviticus 16:2, 29–34).

10. According to 2 Chronicles 5:14, did the glory of the Lord fill the temple so completely that the priests could not continue ministering?

Answer: True

"...so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God." — 2 Chronicles 5:14

Explanation: God's presence filled the temple at its dedication, making it impossible for the priests to carry out their duties.

11. Worship in the temple under Solomon was based on the same pattern as the tabernacle but on a greater scale.

Answer: True

Explanation: Temple worship expanded the practices of the tabernacle, including sacrifices, incense, and festivals, but was more elaborate and permanent (2 Chronicles 3–7).

12. Did Jesus take away the Old Covenant and establish a New Covenant through His sacrifice?

Answer: True

"He takes away the first that He may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." — Hebrews 10:9–10

Explanation: Jesus fulfilled the Old Law and brought in a New Covenant through His one-time, perfect sacrifice. This ended the need for temple rituals and animal offerings, making way for spiritual worship under the New Covenant.

13. In 2 Chronicles 29:25, were Levites stationed in the temple with cymbals, stringed instruments, and harps to lead in worship?

Answer: True

"And he stationed the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals, with stringed instruments, and with harps..." — 2 Chronicles 29:25

Explanation: Instrumental music was part of Old Testament temple worship and conducted by appointed Levites.

14. Hebrews 9:11–12 teaches that Jesus, as our High Priest, entered the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands.

Answer: True

Explanation: Jesus entered heaven itself—the true tabernacle—by offering His own blood for eternal redemption (Hebrews 9:11–12).

15. According to Jeremiah 31:31–33, God foretold a new covenant where His law would be written on people’s hearts.

Answer: True

Explanation: God promised a new spiritual covenant, inwardly written, to replace the outward Law given at Sinai (Jeremiah 31:31–33).

16. In John 4:23–24, did Jesus teach that true worshipers must worship the Father in spirit and in truth?

Answer: True

“But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth...” — John 4:23–24

Explanation: Jesus redefined worship, teaching that it must come from the heart and align with God's truth—not tied to a place or ritual.

17. Under the New Covenant, worship involves outward rituals rather than inward sincerity and truth.

Answer: False

Explanation: Worship under the New Covenant emphasizes inner devotion and obedience to revealed truth, not external ceremonies (John 4:24).

18. According to Hebrews 10:9–10, did Jesus take away the first covenant in order to establish the second, through which believers are sanctified?

Answer: True

“He takes away the first that He may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” — Hebrews 10:9–10

Explanation: Jesus replaced the Old Covenant with the New through His once-for-all sacrifice, sanctifying believers.

19. In Philippians 3:3, does Paul say that Christians worship God in the Spirit and place no confidence in the flesh?

Answer: True

“For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.” — Philippians 3:3

Explanation: Paul emphasizes spiritual worship and trust in Christ rather than in physical rituals or lineage.

20. According to Matthew 15:9, did Jesus say that worship based on human commandments is offered in vain?

Answer: True

“And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.” — Matthew 15:9

Explanation: Jesus condemned worship that is based on man-made traditions rather than God's Word.
