

News and Notes

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Paul Brantley - Elder at Bellview, Pensacola, Fla. Heart damage and constant pain.
Earlene Holley - Sherlene's mother. On hospice care in Elkwood Assisted Living.
Janice Ruffner - Roelf Ruffner's wife, Columbia, TN. Blood clots, Fibromyalgia, Lung problems.
Nancy Reed - Various health issues.
Patrick King - Hemiplegic Migraine.
Sandy Craig - Ongoing kidney problems.
Jo Ann McLerran - COPD.
Glenda Marble - Lexington, Okla. - Heart problems.
Paul Marble - Glenda Marble's son. Recurrence of cancer, now doing well.
Charles and Linda Pogue - Congestive heart failure.
Nancy Verkist - Ellensburg, Washington. Von Hippel Lindau disease.
Chuck Verkist - Ellensburg, Washington. Undergoing treatment for Prostate Cancer.
Don Smith - Brother in Christ persecuted for teaching fellow inmates in an Ohio prison.


SPEAKING THIS WEEK - Earl Reed will preach at both worship periods this Lord's Day. Jerry will preach the fourth Sunday.

GUEST SPEAKER - Pat Craig, who preaches in Lexington, Okla., will speak in Jerry's absence on June 10 while the Brewers are at the Bellview Lectureship.

KENYA REPORT - Recent contributors to the Kenya Fund were Charles and Nancy Verkist, Ellensburg, Wash.; Cliff and Joann Massengale, Lexington, Okla.; and the Berea church of Christ, Rives, Tenn. Thank you all for your support of this good work.

BELLVIEW LECTURESHIP - The 43rd Annual Bellview Lectureship in Pensacola, Fla. is set for June 8-12. Theme is "The Church" and Jerry will speak three times. Benard Kagaga will attend from Kenya and report on his work during the Open Forum at 3 p.m., Saturday, June 9, and speak on the topic of, "What's Right With The Church" at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, June 11. Lectures will be live streamed on Bellview's website at www.bellviewcoc.com. The Brewers will be two days on the road each way, accompanied by Dub McClish, leaving June 6 and returning on June 14.

Website - www.necocelkcity.com Face Book - www.facebook.com/nechurchofchristecok You Tube - www.youtube.com/channel/UCjd5rSEV1vXCXN52ouOrXoQ	
Those Who Serve Sunday Morning, May 20, 2018 First Prayer - Earl Reed Closing Prayer - Dylan Brewer Communion - Patrick King Offering - Landry Brewer Sunday Afternoon, May 20, 2018 First Prayer - Patrick King Closing Prayer - Landry Brewer	Records - May 13 Bible Class.....17 Morning Worship.....18 Afternoon Worship.....17 Contribution.....\$184.00
Weekly Meeting Times Sunday Morning Bible Classes.....9:30 Sunday Morning Worship.....10:30 Sunday Afternoon Worship.....5:00	



Sound Doctrine

“But speak thou the things that become sound doctrine” (Titus 2:1)

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The Worship Of The New Testament Church

Jerry C. Brewer

Though most people think it doesn't matter how you worship God, the Bible shows that it *does*. Jesus said in John 4:24 that "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

Rejected Worship

In Genesis 4, God accepted Abel's worship and rejected Cain's. We're not told why in Genesis. We have to turn to the New Testament to learn the reason. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts" (Heb. 11:4). Abel was righteous because he worshipped God "by faith." According to Romans 10:17, faith comes by hearing God's word. Abel offered what God told him to offer. Cain must have ignored what God said and offered what he wanted instead, so God rejected his worship. And, Aaron's two sons—Nadab and Abihu—were killed in Leviticus 10 for using fire God hadn't specified for burning incense.

All worship must be in spirit and in truth, or God rejects it. To worship in spirit means to worship from the heart, offering to God the thanks and praise He's due, especially for sending His Son to die for us. Just as important is worshipping in truth. Jesus refers to God's word as truth in John 17:17. Paul does the same in Second Timothy 2:15. Worship "in truth" is according to the requirements in God's word. Since Jesus established a *New Testament*, we find in it God's worship requirements for us today. Worship "by faith" is the same as worship "in truth." If your worship isn't according to God's word in the New Testament, it's rejected just like Cain's, Nadab's, and Abihu's. The same is true if it isn't from the heart.

Acceptable Worship

To find out how to worship God acceptably today, we have to look in the New Testa-

ment. The Law of Moses in the Old Testament doesn't apply today because we're answerable to the New Testament law of Christ. It's there where we find God's requirements for worship in our day.

Paul writes in Colossians 3:17 that whatever we do in word or deed must be in the name of the Lord. All religious activity, including worship, must have the Lord's authority. Worship in the name of the Lord is what the Lord has authorized. Inspired men gave the commandments of the Lord to Christians in the first century, teaching them how to worship acceptably. Jesus commands the apostles to teach those who obey the gospel to "observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" in Matthew 28:20. This includes worship. And we can learn how to worship acceptably by reading Acts and the epistles.

Jesus said our worship must be what God wants in the way He wants it (John 4:24). Paul says the same thing in Colossians 3:17. Otherwise it will be rejected just like the worship of Cain, Nadab and Abihu. Friends, can you find your worship in the New Testament? Does God accept your worship? Those who say it doesn't matter how you worship God don't understand what Jesus and Paul taught. God only accepts worship offered on *His* terms. Man has no choice in the matter.

Prayer

According to the New Testament, five acts of worship are required today—singing, praying, studying God's word, eating the Lord's supper and contributing money. God wants these five things done without addition or subtraction on the first day of every week. Prayer is so important that Jesus taught His disciples how to pray (Matt. 6:9-13). Note that Jesus did not teach *what* to pray, but *how*. Paul addressed acceptable worship, and singled out prayer in First Corinthians 14:15-16. In First Timothy 2:8 he also commanded that prayer in worship be led only by men.

The Lord's Supper

God also wants us to remember the Lord's death every week by eating the Lord's supper. Paul writes about the proper observance of the supper in First Corinthians 11:23-33. The food is unleavened bread, and the drink is fruit of the vine. These represent the body and blood of Jesus. In verse 27, Paul emphasizes respectful observance of the supper.

Can we eat the Lord's supper on Thursday, or Tuesday, or to celebrate holidays like Easter or Christmas? The church in the New Testament ate it when they came together (1 Cor. 11:20) on the first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:2). To eat the Lord's Supper any other day is to do so without the Lord's authority. That's a violation of Jesus' command to worship in truth (Jno. 4:24) and Paul's command to have the Lord's authority for religious activity (Col. 3:17). Does the church you're a member of include the Lord's supper every Sunday? If not, why? The apostles taught the church to include it in worship on the first day of each week.

Singing

Multiple passages in the New Testament deal with Christians singing in worship to God. For example, Paul writes that we are to engage in "singing with grace in your hearts unto

God" (Col. 3:16 ASV). He tells the Corinthians that they must "sing with the spirit...and...with the understanding also" (1 Cor. 14:15). Singing also teaches and encourages. Paul said that "teaching and admonishing one another" (Col. 3:16) results from singing, and that indicates a reciprocal action. "Special groups," and "choirs" are forbidden by that passage. We learn of God and are encouraged to be faithful to Him as we sing biblical songs.

Note that God specified *singing*. That eliminates accompaniment with mechanical musical instruments. Using a piano, organ or any other mechanical instrument lacks New Testament authority. It is *not* worship in truth (Jno. 4:24) and is *not* in the name of the Lord (Col. 3:17). "But," some say, "the New Testament doesn't say not to." God's silence does not authorize, a point made in arguing that Jesus couldn't be a priest under the Law of Moses (Heb. 7:12-14). For the same reason, we have no authority for mechanical instruments of music in worship today.

Another argument is that people in the Old Testament used instruments, so we can. But we live under the New Covenant that Jesus established with worship requirements peculiar to that covenant. People in the Old Testament also sacrificed animals, but that does not authorize to do that today. A third defense of instrumental music is that "it sounds better." Whether it does or not is irrelevant. There is no worship in a song's tune. The worship is in the words, accompanied by man's heart.

Giving

Paul commands us to give money on the first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:1-2). The amount is determined by how much we've prospered by God. There's no set amount. Most people think that we are to tithe, or give 10 percent. But tithing was part of God's Old Covenant with the Jews. Under the New Testament, we're simply told to give as we've prospered, and we are to give cheerfully and from the heart (2 Cor. 9:7).

The Hebrews author writes of the New Testament's greater blessings and obligations. While ten percent is a good place to start, it's important to remember our debt to God for offering His Son to die for us when considering how much to contribute. And it's only on the first day that we're to offer. Some religious groups collect money other days, but Paul commands to contribute each first day of the week. Specifying the first day excludes every other day, thus, taking up a collection any other day is forbidden.

Preaching

Each first day of the week we're also expected to study God's word, and this is done by hearing preaching (Acts 20:7). It's vital to study God's word so that we'll know how to please Him and our faith will increase. That's why it's so important to hear only "sound doctrine" (Titus 2:1). It's only through hearing the proper preaching that we'll be saved (1 Tim. 4:16).

Many people consider worship optional, but God doesn't. He expects to be worshiped the way He wants, *not* the way *I* want. If we don't offer God the worship He wants, He'll reject us like He did Cain, Nadab and Abihu in the Old Testament.