

Worship

In the time of the Old Testament God laid down strict requirements for his worship. Among other things, the Mosaic law described in great detail how the worshiper was to bring his sacrifice and how he was to keep himself ceremonially clean. The holy of holies, where God dwelt, could be entered only once a year by the high priest, and then only after an elaborate ritual.

With the New Testament there came a new freedom. The apostle Peter declared that these many rules had been a great burden to the Israelites, one that they had been unable to bear. But now the sacrifice had been made once and for all by Christ; now the real sanctification had come through God's Spirit; now the veil to the holy of holies had been torn from the top to the bottom, opening the way to God for all who would worship him in spirit and in truth.

But this new freedom did not mean that the worship of God was to be any less pure. The New Testament worship is to be that of the heart; but it is not to be what the New Testament calls "will worship." That is, one may not worship God just as he happens to be inclined. The true worship of the heart is according to the will of God.

Some people take it for granted that they can approach God in their own time and in their own way. Perhaps they substitute Bible reading at home for attendance at church; perhaps they believe they can worship God without coming to him through his Son, Jesus Christ. They think it is their human right to worship God as they will.

True worshipers do not come simply as they will; but they search the word of God, so that they may come to worship in spirit and in truth.

*God is spirit,
and those who
worship him must
worship
in spirit and in truth.*

John 4:24

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