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Lakeland Hills Leader

Proving The Practices Of Christianity

By Chuck Richardson

As we continue to prove the practice of Christianity using direct command, necessary inference, and divinely approved example, let us turn our attention to the worship of the Christian. What does God approve? Far too many do not believe it matters what we do in worship as long as our heart is into worshipping the God of heaven and His son, our Savior Jesus the Christ. Is our desire all that God requires? Let us see what the New Testament church was commanded to do in worship, and what they did as an example.

We noted earlier in our series that the Apostles' teaching is our authority {Acts 2:42}, because Jesus gave them this authority {Matthew 16:19; John 16:13}. In the first text we have a divinely approved example, because it states they continually devoted themselves {NASB 95}, and in the second instance we have a direct statement by Jesus that they would receive the keys to the kingdom, and the direction by the Holy Spirit in all truth {NASB 95}.

Therefore, we will begin from this basis to examine the worship pattern of the New Testament church.

Fellowship is the unique relationship that the disciples shared in accordance with the Apostles' teaching, thus it is the beginning of the worship of the disciples. So, we are in fellowship with one another implying a participation in activities that make that fellowship possible. Therefore, we note the disciples also broke bread together as recorded in Acts 2:42. Does this mean they shared a meal for nourishment together? It can, but notice the use of the same phrase in Acts 2:46: *and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart*. This Greek phrase simply means to break bread without regard to the kind of meal, therefore we must surmise by context which meal is under consideration.

In the case of its use in Acts 2 we know the first is the Lord's Supper, since all the practices listed are spiritual in nature. The second use tells us plainly the disciples ate their food from house to house, denoting a meal to satisfy hunger, and implying the entire body weren't all together. However, the best text to illustrate the memorial celebration of our Lord's death for our sins is Acts 20:7. We begin with the Lord's Supper practice because Jesus the Christ's death is the reason we have to worship; thus, all other practices follow this practice.

On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, [Acts 20:7a] Paul began talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight. [Acts 20:7b]

When we dissect this verse from beginning to end, we notice there was a gathering of this church at Troas {Acts 20:6} to worship together in a particular practice. We see the day of the week was the first day of the week, so we conclude a divinely approved example is given to meet on the first day of the week, since the church at Troas gathered on the first day of the week. Likewise, we have two specific activities practiced on this first day of the week: breaking bread and delivery of a message. The breaking of bread constituting a divinely approved example of eating the Lord's Supper, since we see this practice in connection to the delivery of a message by Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ. Thus Paul, being an Apostle

of Jesus Christ, delivering a message would necessarily infer the message was a gospel message. So Paul's message is both a divinely approved example and a necessary inference that we too need to break bread {i.e., partake of the Lord's Supper} on the first day of the week. Further, this is the single example in the New Testament of the first century church eating the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week. Jesus commands His disciples to eat the unleavened bread and drink the fruit of the vine {Mat.26:26-29} and Paul admonishes the Corinthian church {1Cor. 11:23-25} to do the same. We will examine the food and drink to be eaten in our next edition of proving our practices.

- * "Confess your sins, not your neighbor's!"
- * "Darwin and the dead know better now!"
- * "Dusty Bibles lead to dirty lives!"
- * "Circumstances are just raw material out of which God makes Character, Strength, and Virtue!"