

Pentecostal Worship

Many people don't understand Pentecostal worship or why Pentecostals worship the way that they do. Pentecostal worship is Spirit-filled worship under the direction of the Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost. During Pentecostal church services, we lift our voices in praise, we raise our hands in honor and respect, we make a joyful noise unto the Lord. The Bible says God inhabits the praises of his people. The Pentecostals love to offer praise and worship unto God Almighty. If you have never had the opportunity to be in a Spirit-filled Pentecostal service before, you will discover that biblical expressions of worship are still practiced today. The following are a some biblical references as to why we conduct our church services as we do:

WE PRAY TOGETHER ALOUD because in the Bible we read, "They lifted up their voice to God with one accord." - Acts 4:24

WE LIFT OUR HANDS IN PRAISE because in the Bible we read, "Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord." - Psalm 134:2

WE SING WITH ALL OUR HEARTS because in the Bible we read, "Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise." - Psalm 98:4

WE PLAY MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS because in the Bible we read, "And all the house of Israel played before the LORD on all manner of instruments." - II Samuel 6:5

WE CLAP AND SHOUT UNTO GOD because in the Bible we read, "O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph." - Psalm 47:1

WE DANCE BEFORE THE LORD because in the bible we read, "Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs." - Psalm 150:4

WE TESTIFY PUBLICLY because in the bible we read, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee." - Psalm 22:22

WE ANOINT WITH OIL FOR DIVINE HEALING because in the Bible we read, "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elder of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." - James 5:14

WE ALLOW THE OPERATION OF THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS because in the Bible we read, "When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation." - I Corinthians 14:26

The Priority of Pentecostal Worship

By G. Raymond Carlson

Non-Pentecostals have questioned the form of worship in a Pentecostal meeting as much as the doctrinal distinctive. Historically the Movement has had an informal manner and freedom of expression in worship.

In perpetuating the Pentecostal revival we need to safeguard the factors that produce the Pentecostal blessing. This does not mean we make a case for that which is fanatical. The Pentecostal revival has never been a fanatic's revival; fanatics have tried to attach themselves to the revival. Physical reaction to the power of the Holy Spirit must pattern according to that which is choice and edifying; otherwise, it will offend true spiritual sensibilities. Paul, in his letters to the Corinthians, laid down corrective measures for demonstrations which are not of the Holy Spirit.

Worship is a consciousness of the presence of God and a response to that consciousness. It is the outreach of the deepest emotions of the soul in adoration, reverence, homage, exaltation, and praise to the Almighty.

Worship is not dependent upon environment and circumstance, but most people are not oblivious to environment. Therefore, leaders are responsible for creating the right attitudes to inspire anticipation of the Holy Spirit's moving and an appetite for spiritual things. Attitude, appetite, and anticipation create atmosphere.

The Pentecostal church is marked by a wonderful atmosphere of worship. Atmosphere is important. Sinner and saint alike can sense God's presence in a truly Pentecostal church. In such a meeting the Holy Spirit has unhampered opportunity. Herein lie the excitement and attraction of a Pentecostal meeting. This is the New Testament standard and is in accord with the divine plan. This freedom also poses peril, for worship must truly be worship. True worship is not religious excitement, nor does it appeal to the flesh.

Worship services may take one or two undesirable directions—there may be formality with lack of spiritual liberty, or there may be lack of scriptural order and control.

Spiritual leaders are responsible for bringing people into God's presence and making them realize "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24).

Formality can develop in the ritual of the informal church. Neither Pentecostal routine nor ecclesiastical liturgy is true worship. When Pentecostal churches follow an order of service that degenerates into meaningless habit, they have nothing more than ritual.

The mind of God is the important matter in the service if we are to have a Pentecostal meeting. This Pentecostal climate hinges, to a greater or lesser degree, upon the leader. He must be in vital contact with God and maintain sensitivity to the voice of the Spirit. When leading people in worship, he constantly needs to know the mind of the Spirit for the moment.

The Holy Spirit must be allowed to settle in conviction or blessing upon a congregation. The spirit of the day is to rush. People need God's therapeutic rest. Let us refuse to rush through the order of service; rather, may we bring men and women to deliberate and worshipful rest in the Lord. Guard the freedom of Pentecostal worship. Neither wildfire nor fleshly manifestations are to be condoned, but let us never be so painfully nice that we perish from propriety.

Paul outlined a beautiful worship pattern for the church: "How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying" (1 Corinthians 14:26).

Furthermore, he said, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Colossians 3:16). We are told to exhort one another and not to forsake "the assembling of ourselves together" (Hebrews 10:25).

This is congregational worship based on scriptural instruction. All members of the whole body of believers share in worship as the Holy Spirit indwells them and they yield to Him. Then people who fill church pews are no longer spectators, wondering how they will be entertained.

God rejected King Saul in favor of David, a "man after his [God's] own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14). Saul intruded into religious action without waiting for the prophet Samuel. He said, "I forced myself" (1 Samuel 13:12). The kingdom was given to David, a man who continually counseled his soul, "Wait thou upon God."

When we fail to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit, we are prone to force ourselves. As a result, we have forced singing, forced praying, forced testimonies, forced giving, and forced preaching. How much better it is when the Holy Spirit comes. Then we have Holy Spirit singing, praying, giving, testimonies, and preaching (Romans 8:26,27; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 14:15; Ephesians 5:18–21; 6:18; 1 Thessalonians 1:5; Jude 20). The gifts of the Holy Spirit will be in operation and controlled according to the scriptural pattern of 1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14.

May Pentecostal people in Pentecostal churches pray that Pentecostal worship shall be strengthened. May the sound of song and praise and prayer ring forth from our assemblies. May we give ourselves to waiting upon God. May our altars be filled with seeking souls, and may they not be soon emptied. May the altar service have priority in our worship.

May the Holy Spirit quicken us with a healthy spiritual *appetite*, a keen *anticipation*, and a faith-producing *attitude*. Then we shall have a Pentecostal *atmosphere*, and when the spiritual atmosphere is right, the rain from heaven will fall.

The Way We Worship

Introduction

If you have never had the opportunity to be in a Spirit-filled service before, you will discover that Biblical expressions of worship are still practiced today. Join in with us as we praise God together in spirit and in truth.

Biblical Expressions of Worship

- We pray together aloud because in the Bible we read, "They lifted up their voice to God with one accord" (Acts 4:24).
- We lift our hands in praise because in the Bible we read, "Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord" (Psalm 134:2).
- We sing with all our hearts because in the Bible we read, "Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise" (Psalm 98:4).

- We play musical instruments because in the Bible we read, "And all the house of Israel played before the LORD on all manner of instruments" (2 Samuel 6:5).
- We clap and shout unto God because in the Bible we read, "O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph" (Psalm 47:1).
- We dance before the LORD because in the Bible we read, "Praise Him with the timbrel and dance: praise Him with stringed instruments and organs" (Psalm 150:4).
- We testify publicly because in the Bible we read, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee" (Psalm 22:22).
- We anoint with oil for divine healing because in the Bible we read, "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord" (James 5:14).

We allow the operation of the spiritual gifts because in the Bible we read, "When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation" (1 Corinthians 14:26).

Apostolic worship - a lifestyle!

As Apostolic Christians we are used to going into a service and letting the anointing of worship trickle over us. Worship in the past was always something that did us good, it served us and stroked our feelings. We are always moved by good, anointed worship. Apostolic Worship is more by far!

It is that conscious, deliberate awareness during the singing, that you are in this moment with the song you are singing, working a change in the spiritual world, that then works its way out into the natural world and at some point will be visible as a victory over the enemy.

This change comes through the act of singing and is brought into operation, through faith that in that moment when you sing God's work is effective.

A definition of apostolic worship can be for example: A particular way of worship, for a specific need you or the church have now, (be it spiritual-warfare, healing, intercession, or worship and adoration), enabling you through the sanctification of the Holy Spirit, to move in the Spirit, so that effective manifested results can be reached, which continue to build and stabilize the Kingdom of God.

Commitment

Praise and worship is a way to express your commitment to God. Your relationship to God is as far as your praise and worship life.

We pretend very easily to be committed, but if it really comes to the point, even more, if it really costs us our whole being, our commitment comes quickly to an end. We are

quick to sing in the church service: "I commit my whole life to you!" but how intensely do we really live it? Jesus gave His life for us in dying for us. He lived and gave a 100% commitment.

True commitment can be described as follows:

"Complete renunciation of determining your own life goals and ambitions because of your love for God and for his creation."

With the same measure that you try to control how your own life goes, is the same measure you demonstrate your level of commitment to the Lord. Your personal, intimate love relationship with God is decisive of the measure of your commitment.

A key is Thankfulness

Start to thank God for everything that is in your life. Begin in a totally personal way to talk with God, in a way in which you would talk with someone that you know, that you like and care for. Tell God that you love him and need him. Search the Bible for themes which express your needs. God will meet you and reveal His love for you.

Do this every day with all your might. When you are sad, cry but say to God: "I love you." When you are rejoicing it isn't so hard to do this. When you are angry then say to God twenty times: "I love you, I'm angry, but I love you!"

When you do this the love of God will move into your life like never before. You will see it and feel it. Out of this will come more thankfulness and willingness for God to work. You will have less fear of people or situations, then you know: Your God is there. No-one can take this security away from you. A new power can grow in your heart with this security and you can give more of the control in your life over to God, then you have experienced that God up till now has worked and given you a deep peace and rest in your heart.

Now you begin really to surrender yourself to God. And God starts to say to you: "Do this, do that!" and you simply do it. You don't think too long about it, because you have learnt to trust your God. **This love relationship is what really matters!**