

LESSON 6

WORSHIP IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Introduction

"A new broom sweeps clean." This old saying reminds us that there are many rewards to be gained from a fresh start. It also warns us of a critical pitfall at this strategic turning point in our journey. The New Testament may be a "new broom," but we dare not use it to sweep away all that has preceded. You will notice that the New Testament maintains a strong continuity with the Hebrew patterns of the Old Testament in all that follows. In fact, the first challenge to the early followers of Christ is the necessity of moving beyond their Hebrew heritage in order to engage in world mission within the larger context of the Greco-Roman world.

The lofty ideals of Hebrew public worship are quickly translated into Christian experience. This continuity is expressed by two resounding themes: the forgiveness of sin and joy in the Lord. While the New Testament does not present a lucid picture of early Christian worship, it is obvious that Jewish converts to Christianity continue to be faithful in their attendance and participation in the services of the Temple and synagogues. This practice continues for some years after the death of Christ and is only abruptly changed when Jerusalem falls to the Roman conquerors in A.D. 70.

Both Jews and Christians consider Jesus to be the Master Teacher. He taught in the synagogues, in the streets, in homes, beside lakes and on the sides of mountains.

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Christians actively proclaim the gospel message in the synagogues. Eventually the Jews tire of the Christians' fervour, take offense and force them out. As a result, Christian fellowship gradually loses its Jewish connection as the early Christian Church begins to devote itself more fully to its Gentile world mission. But let's start at the beginning when the Jewish connection is the strongest. Our New Testament journey will be initiated from inside the four walls of the Jewish synagogue. It will continue as we notice the skilful way in which our Master Teacher, Jesus Christ, moves within and outside of this familiar institutional framework of His own Jewish heritage. This part of our travelling together will end with the establishment by Christ of the New Testament Church as a new institution for the perpetuation of Christian worship, especially the two ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Is the following statement true or false?

Christians bring over into their tradition the ideals of Hebrew public worship. _____

(true)

Synagogue Worship During the New Testament Era

By the time of Christ the synagogue had become extremely important for both worship and educational purposes. Synagogues are nerve centres for teaching cultic practices along with the obligations of obedience under Jewish religious law. Outside of Jerusalem, synagogues surpass the Temple in influence. They are scattered throughout Palestine and beyond during the time of Christ, being formed with as few as ten men. There are probably as many as four hundred synagogues in Jerusalem alone by the time of Christ.

Synagogues are rectangular in construction, usually facing towards Jerusalem. The principal furniture consists of a pulpit and a box containing the scrolls. Men, women and children are accommodated in the synagogues. At the age of twelve the Jewish child becomes *bar mitzvah* ("son of the law"), that is, he is admitted to the synagogue and is considered qualified to participate. Jesus follows Jewish culture when at this age He goes to the Temple and amazes the teachers with the depth of His understanding (Luke 2:47).

The cultic expressions of synagogue worship are very simple. W.O.E. Oesterley outlines these worship practices as follows:

- (1) reading of the Scriptures and their interpretation;
- (2) recitation of the Jewish creed, the *Shema* (Deut. 6:4);
- (3) the use of Psalms, the Ten Commandments, the Benediction, and the Amen;
- (4) the prayers;
- (5) and the *Jewish Kedushah* or prayer of sanctification, which became in the Christian tradition the *Ter Sanctus* ("Holy, Holy, Holy").¹

There are several basic differences between synagogue and Temple worship. Since the primary purpose of the synagogue is the purifying of Jewish faith through teaching, the services are less formal than Temple worship (with evening services even less formal than those in the morning). The teacher is the prominent figure in the synagogue, while the priest is predominant in the Temple. Furthermore, the people are active participants in synagogue worship whereas they are more passive in the Temple.

¹ W.O.E. Oesterley, *The Jewish Background of the Christian Liturgy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925), chapter 2. Quoted by Franklin M. Segler, *Christian Worship: Its Theology and Practice* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1967), p. 26.

The _____ became important for both _____ and _____ purposes.

(synagogue, worship, educational)

The principal furniture in a synagogue was a _____ and a box containing the _____.

(pulpit, scrolls)

Name five things normally included in a synagogue worship service.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Who was the dominant figure in the synagogue service?

(Compare your answer with the text.)

Worship with the Master Teacher

Jesus refers to the Temple as His Father's house and He is a frequent teacher in the synagogues (Matt. 13:54; John 6:59; 18:20). Findley Edge aptly states that while Jesus accepts the synagogue as an institution, He does not refrain from presenting His unique teachings:

His matchless message and dynamic teaching burst through the hard crust of the religious traditionalism that had engulfed the Jewish people and fanned the smouldering embers of their faith until it became a living fire.²

As an embodiment of the message which He proclaimed, Jesus considers Himself a teacher. Of the ninety times that Jesus is addressed in the Gospels, He is called "teacher" sixty times. In modern versions of the Bible, the word "Lord" is sometimes substituted for "teacher." The disciples ("learners") use the term "teacher" predominantly when referring to Jesus. This is also true of those outside the immediate circle of Jesus' followers. The gospels relate that both Nicodemus (John 3:2) and the rich young ruler (Mark 10:17) regard Jesus as a wise and learned teacher. Even the scribes and Pharisees recognize that Jesus teaches as one having authority.

What could have been a more worshipful experience for the disciples than to sit at the feet of Jesus and learn from the Master Teacher? While scribes and Pharisees teach by quoting from the rabbis in the *Talmud*,³ Jesus alters this by saying: "You have heard that the ancients were told. . . but I say to you. . ." (Matt. 5:21,22). The Sermon on the Mount is presented with such authority, clarity and ease that people are astonished in contrast with the teaching procedures of the scribes. Numerous books have been written concerning methods and literary forms used by Jesus in teaching.

Although Jesus does not directly command His disciples to worship, He speaks of the

Jesus considers Himself a _____.

(teacher)

Jesus taught with _____.

(authority)

² Findley B. Edge, *Teaching for Results* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1965), p. 1.

³ In a wide sense, this term refers to the body of Jewish civil and ceremonial traditional law, consisting of the *Mishnah* or binding precepts of the elders, additional to and developed from the Pentateuch, and the later *Gemara* or commentary upon these, forming a complement to the *Mishnah*.

inwardness of worship. The Samaritan woman at Jacob's well near Sychar at first feigns misunderstanding when Jesus asks her for a drink, then follows this petition with jest and deception. Her last subterfuge is to precipitate a religious argument with Jesus. She recognizes Jesus as a prophet, but cannot accept His religious views. Therefore, she shrewdly changes the subject, saying: "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain; and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship" (John 4:20).

At issue here is the fact that the woman refers to rugged Mount Gerizim as the mountain sacred to the Samaritans while the Jews contend that Mount Moriah in Jerusalem is sacred. Jesus reveals effectively a religious truth to her in terms of the dawning of a new era in which God will establish His Temple in the hearts of His people; therefore, the old issue regarding mountains as places of worship is now dead. As Spirit, God must be worshipped in spirit and in truth (John 4:24). Although this statement is not recorded in the Gospels until near the end of the first century, it would certainly have had a dynamic effect upon the life of the early Church. This affirmation has even more significance when undergirded by the earlier coming of the Holy Spirit. Charles Trentham states:

Worship is involvement with the Father and the living Lord through the Spirit in the wonder of reverential praise, penitent confession, self-giving and expectant hope.⁴

God must be worshipped in reality, without the vanity of pretense or the mockery of hypocrisy through unfaithfulness.

According to Jesus, the essence of religion is found, not in conforming to external, legalistic requirements, but in loving God supremely and one's neighbour as one's self. He also teaches the principle of the spiritual "new birth" (John 3:3). Jesus' claim of authority and His call for obedience and discipleship are irreconcilable to Jewish religious leaders; therefore, they decide that He must die. For Christians the sacrificial and ceremonial systems of Judaism terminate with Jesus' death. The only exceptions may be the times of prayer and the occasional observance of a feast or ritual of purification (e.g. Acts 21:26).

⁴ Charles A. Trentham, "Worship in the Bible," *The Broadman Bible Commentary*, Vol. 12 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1972), p. 367.

What did Jesus say about worship in His encounter with the Samaritan woman in John 4?

(Compare your answer with the text.)

The New Testament Church

Early Christians continue to attend and teach regularly in the synagogues, supplementing this Jewish worship pattern by having their own common meal. The apostle Paul uses the synagogues as principal points of contact with the Jews while on his missionary journeys. However, the Christian message empowered by the coming of the Holy Spirit becomes too offensive to their fellow Jews. The disciples were eventually forced to abandon the synagogues and establish their own places of assembly. For the disciples, the result is positive in that they discover the sufficiency of their faith in the resurrected Lord and, therefore, find new freedom in worship under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The New Testament Church was founded by Christ to be a close fellowship of the Spirit, commissioned by the Lord Jesus to be an instrument of God's redemptive purpose in the world. The baptized believers initially meet in homes and other places for deepening the sense of fellowship (*koinonia*), instruction and simple worship. A sense of real community develops as the Jerusalem Christians devoted "themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer" (Acts 2:42).

J. Donald Butler says that this "fellowship of the Spirit" as the *koinonia* was called, is a concept that easily loses its meaning in translation through cultural application. The word *koinonia* refers to a deeper, more intimate and genuine communal bond than the English word "fellowship" implies. According to Butler, the word *koinonia* is used in four different ways among the early churches:

(1) A more concrete use of the word in some contexts means "a contribution" (2 Cor. 9:5; 9:13; Ro. 15:26). The early churches often contributed to help needy Christians in other churches. The collection of money sent was sometimes called a *koinonia*.

(2) The word also refers to "a sharing," or in the verb form "to share." The author of Hebrews encouraged church members to share their material possessions (13:16). Christians were not only admonished to share their worldly goods but, as Paul admonished the Philippian church, to share the sufferings of Christ (4:10). In addition, the Christians were to share their faith (Philemon 4).

(3) In two instances the meaning given *koinonia* is "participation in the spirit" (Phil. 2:1). On another occasion Paul asks the rhetorical question, "The cup of blessing

Name one benefit the Christians received when they began to establish their own places of worship.

(Compare your answer with the text.)

The early believers met in homes and other places for deepening the sense of _____, _____, and simple _____.

(fellowship, instruction, worship)

What is the Greek word we translate "fellowship"?

(*koinonia*)

What four ways was *koinonia* used in the early churches?

which we bless (referring to the Lord's Supper), is this not a participation in the blood of Christ?" (1 Cor. 10:16).

(4) In addition, one other word is used as an English equivalent; this is the instance in which *koinonia* is made to mean "partnership in the gospel" (Phil. 1:5)⁵

What a beautiful example of corporate worship lived out in life! Perhaps the overwhelming opposition and persecution encountered by Christians at this time heightens their love for one another. But the concern for the physical needs of other Christians certainly must have brought a spirit of unity in worship and must have been one of the reasons for the rapid growth of the Church.

The early Christians carried over into their churches some parts of the cultic forms used in synagogue worship; however, the New Testament Church becomes an institution in its own right, which springs out of the inherent nature of the believer's personal faith in Christ. Thus the worship practices of the Church differed from those of the Jewish synagogue in a number of ways as Kenneth Phifer indicates:

(1) The Christians used the writings of their own leaders, such as the Epistles of Paul and the Gospel accounts of the life of Jesus, and perhaps verbal recollections concerning them.

(2) Although the psalms were used to express praise in Christian worship, new hymns were added by Christian writers, such as those found in the Epistles of Paul.

(3) Baptism and the Lord's Supper are distinctive additions to Christian worship. There is a distinction between the love feasts or fellowship meals and the Lord's Supper as a memorial. The celebration of the Lord's Supper was a principal motive for the church's assembling together.

(4) There was a spirit of zeal in Christian worship produced by the consciousness that the Holy Spirit had come to make Christ regent in their midst. The emphasis was on the risen Christ.

(5) Christian worship also differed from Jewish worship as to times and places. The Lord's Day, the first day of the week, became the Christian day of worship in memory of the resurrection of Christ. But Christians were not limited to certain places or assembly, for they had the promise of the presence of Christ (Mt. 18:20). Early Chris-

(Compare your answers with the text.)

As a result of the split with Judaism, The New Testament Church becomes an _____ in its own _____

(institution, right)

Give five ways in which the practices of the New Testament Church differed from those of the Jewish synagogue.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

⁵ J. Donald Butler, *Religious Education* (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1962), p. 11.

tians had no central meeting place for it was not until about the third century that Christian houses of worship were built.⁶

Obviously, the early Christian liturgy is more diverse than uniform.

The development of worship in the New Testament Church beyond the synagogue patterns which it assimilated is seen most clearly in the establishment of two ordinances by Jesus. It is appropriate that Baptism and the Lord's Supper should be singled out for a closer look as this part of our New Testament journey draws to a close.

Baptism

Baptism becomes the Christian rite of initiation into the New Testament Church. The use of water in ceremonial cleansing is a carry-over from Old Testament practices. Ritual washing is included in the ceremony which a person practises in approaching God (e.g. the high priest in Exod. 40:12-15; Lev. 8; Num. 8). Water was also used for moral cleansing (Isa. 1:16; Ezek. 36:25; Zech. 13:1 and Ps. 51:7).

The Jews practised proselyte baptism. Gentiles could become acceptable to Judaism by pledging their faith to keep the Law of Moses, being circumcised (if they were males) and by being baptized in the presence of witnesses as a prelude to the offering of sacrifice. The fulfilment of these requirements made it possible for the converts to be regarded as Israelites.

John, the Baptist, came preaching the baptism of repentance. He receives and baptizes Jesus, not because of Jesus' need for repentance but to fulfil all righteousness (Matt. 3:15; cf. 21:32; Luke 7:29). In so doing, Jesus furnishes Christians of all time with a starting point in regard to the full meaning of Baptism. Jesus also gives His disciples the mandate of the Great Commission:

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age (Matt. 28:19,20).

_____ and the Lord's _____ help us recognize the development of Christian worship beyond the _____ pattern.

(Baptism, Supper, synagogue)

The use of _____ in Christian baptism is a carry-over from _____ practices.

(water, Old Testament)

The Jews practised _____ baptism.

(proselyte)

The baptism of repentance was preached by _____ the _____.

(John, Baptist)

⁶ Kenneth G. Phifer, *A Protestant Case for Liturgical Renewal* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1965), p. 23. Quoted in Franklin M. Segler, *Christian Worship: Its Theology and Practice* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1967), pp. 27,28.

In this way Jesus places His stamp of approval on Baptism as one of the two ordinances of the New Testament Church.

Regarding Jesus' reference to Baptism in the Great Commission, R.E.O. White says:

The passage adds one totally new note, perhaps unique in the New Testament: that the "practice" of baptism by the church (as distinct from its "acceptance" by the baptized) is an act of obedience to divine command. The unique circumstances of this great utterance, the association with the world-wide commission, the link with the requirement of absolute obedience, and the attachment of the unforgettable promise of the Master's presence to the end of the age, all lend a solemnity and power to the saying which reflect on to the baptismal reference a significance even greater than the simple command itself.⁷

The risen Lord, possessing all authority, commands Christians to carry out this commission.

Converts in the early Church are required to undergo a period of catechumenal instruction in preparation for Baptism. What is called "catechetical" instruction today is referred to as "catechumenal" instruction in the early Church. Becoming a Christian in the first two centuries is comparable to taking sides in warfare and accepting the discipline required of military life. To become members of the early Church the probationers, during their instructional period and prior to being baptized, are admitted to only part of the worship service. They were excused at a certain point in the service, and the remaining part is limited to baptized believers.

Christian baptism, although similar to that of John the Baptist, is filled with new meaning. It pictures symbolically not only the washing away of sin through repentance but gives testimony that the new convert has received the Holy Spirit which also descended upon Jesus at the time of His baptism (Acts 2:38). Being baptized is a means of publicly proclaiming Jesus as the Messiah and confessing Him as Lord. It is the embodiment of the gospel.

⁷ R.E.O. White, "Baptism in the Synoptic Gospels," *Christian Baptism* (London: Ed. A. Gilmore, 1959), p. 112. Quoted by Ralph P. Martin in *Worship in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), p. 95.

Once believers are baptized and fully received by the Church, their Christian education continues. The intent of this teaching is to assist the newly baptized converts to know how to think, act and worship as Christians in the midst of a non-Christian society.

Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper becomes the continuing memorial feast by which the New Testament Church revitalizes its relationship to its living Lord. As stated earlier, the early Christian liturgy is more diverse than uniform. The New Testament gives reasonable evidence to assume that the principal acts of worship are observed informally and spontaneously during the weekly Sunday evening gathering for the Lord's Supper. While the Supper is a celebration of joyous thanksgiving (*eucharistia* - Greek for "thanksgiving") (1 Cor. 11:24; Luke 22:19), it is often accompanied by a "love feast" (*Agapē*). Paul describes the perversion of the feast as practised by the church at Corinth (1 Cor. 11:17-22).

Gaines S. Dobbins describes the confusion which results from the abuse of the "love feast" as follows:

Observance of baptism and the Lord's Supper early became a point of departure from the simplicity of worship and life as indicated in the New Testament writings. Especially was there confusion concerning the Supper. Apparently, there were those who identified it with the *kiddush*, a Jewish religious ceremonial meal to be eaten by the family in preparation for the observance of the sabbath. Others thought of it as a repetition of the Passover meal. In either case, the meal symbolized the fellowship of a household of faith united in bonds of loyalty. The "love feast" may have been eaten as a memorial Supper, or the ceremony of the Supper may have followed the common meal. Such practices lent themselves to the perversions of which Paul wrote when he told the Corinthians that it was not the Lord's Supper that they ate when "each one goes ahead with his own meal, and one is hungry and another is drunk" (1 Cor. 11:21). An over emphasis on the social feature likewise led to the conception of the Supper as a "communion" not so much with Christ as with one another.⁸

⁸ Gaines S. Dobbins, *The Church at Worship* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1962), pp. 15,16.

The Lord's Supper becomes the continuing _____ feast. The New Testament Church revitalizes its relationship to its living Lord through the _____.

(*memorial, Lord's, Supper*)

Is the following statement true or false?

At least one church in the New Testament perverted the "love feast" and had to be corrected by St. Paul.

(*true*)

The early Church has much to learn concerning the solemn and devotional observance of the Lord's Supper as a memorial of Christ's death.

In the early Christian cultus the period of instruction precedes the observance of the Lord's Supper. During this part of the service all persons interested are invited to participate. The familiar psalms are sung, along with hymns and spiritual songs (Eph. 5:18-21; Col. 3:16; 1 Cor. 14:15). Lyric compositions now included in the New Testament were also sung.⁹ Pliny, the Roman governor, wrote Emperor Trajan in A.D. 112 saying that the Christians in Bithynia were engaging in antiphonal singing. It was customary for early Christian worship to include the reading of letters written by the apostles along with selections from the Old Testament during the service. By the time of St. Justin the Martyr (ca. A.D. 150) the apostles' writings and presumably the Gospels, were read regularly also. Requests for prayers along with prayers of thanksgiving were made. These prayers were followed by loud amens which are more than mere "so be it" but also expressions of the fervent hope that the Lord would take heed of their requests. Offerings of money were taken as believers shared their material blessings with other Christians who were in physical need. The cultus was made complete by the spontaneous preaching of the gospel as they understood it and by exhortations concerning the Christian life.

The Lord's Supper seems to have been a cultus or ceremony separate from the instructional service. The Supper was reserved for believers only. Reflecting on this division of the cultus, Isidore of Seville comments that the word "Mass," which is a possible derivation of the Latin term *missa*, refers to the time of sacrifice during worship when the *catachumens* (learners in the faith) are dismissed, the formula being *ite missa est* ("Depart, the congregation is dismissed.").

Luke records Jesus' purpose in instituting the Lord's Supper as that of a memorial in order that present and future disciples would never forget His atoning death, resurrection and promised return:

And having taken some bread, when He had given thanks, He broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood" (Luke 22:19,20).

⁹ Cf. Revelation 5:9, 12,13; 12:10-12; 19:1,2, 6.

In the early Christian Church the _____ service precedes the _____

(instruction, Lord's, Supper)

The Lord's Supper was reserved for _____

(believers, only)

Luke records Jesus' purpose in originating the _____

(Lord's, Supper)

Alton McEachern says that the Gospel writers do not tell us the words of thanksgiving or blessing which Jesus pronounced over the bread and cup. One such blessing common in Jesus' day was:

Praise be thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe Who brings forth bread from the earth. Praise be thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.¹⁰

As can be seen from the observance of the Supper, the baptized disciples no longer need the sacrificial system of Temple worship because Jesus is the sacrificial Lamb who died once for all believers for all time. New Testament sacrifice becomes a matter of dying to self and living unto the Lord. The presentation of holy lives dedicated unto the Lord becomes the Christians' "offering" and "spiritual worship" (Rom. 12:1).

Summary

I know that you must feel a sense of relief now that our journey has brought us into familiar territory. Yet the New Testament Church did not begin in a vacuum and its worship life emerges out of the previous Jewish patterns. While this part of our trip has introduced you to the new element of ordinances, a review will serve as a reminder that these uniquely Christian observances are part of a much larger Hebrew tapestry to which we are still indebted.

Synagogue worship is important to the early Christian Church. Many of the elements in worship, such as Scripture reading, praise, prayer and preaching, are carry-overs from synagogue worship. Early Christian leaders adapt and add elements of their own in addition to the observances commanded by Jesus.

Jesus is the Master Teacher. He teaches as one having authority. Although Jesus, the Teacher, did not specifically command that His disciples should worship, He taught by His own example. Jesus' counsel to the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well indicates this quality of worship within His own life.

The New Testament Church is a close fellowship. The Christians devote themselves to the apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer. This fellowship includes sharing of material possessions and participation in the sufferings of Christ as well as "participation in the spirit" as "partners in the gospel."

¹⁰ Alton H. McEachern, *Here at Thy Table, Lord* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1977), pp. 15,16.

Name three things the Lord's Supper has changed for Christians.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Jesus inaugurates the worship practice of observing two ordinances, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The New Testament Church provides the context for the continuing observance of these two ordinances.

Baptism is a pictorial symbol of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. New believers testify that they have already accepted Jesus as Saviour and Lord and upon baptism portray their death and burial to sin and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ. Because of cultural differences and former beliefs, new converts are required to undergo a period of instruction regarding the meaning of their conversion prior to Baptism and participation in the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a picture of Christ's death. Churches are to observe this ordinance as a practice of worship in remembrance of Christ. Since this ordinance is given to the disciples of Christ, only baptized believers are admitted to this part of the worship service of the early Church.

Just as our view of worship in the Old Testament was enriched by our survey of musical developments during that period, the same precedent will be followed in relation to the New Testament. The same inseparableness between music and worship in our previous lessons will be reaffirmed as we continue our New Testament journey.

Home Study Exercise

Basic activity (*Levels 1, 2, and 3*). After reading the study guide text, answer the following questions.

1. Outline the procedure used in a synagogue worship service about the time of Christ.

2. In what ways was synagogue worship different from worship in the Temple?

3. How did Jesus teach differently than scribes and Pharisees?

4. What did Jesus teach about worship?

5. What positive benefit came to Christianity as a result of the split from Judaism?

6. Name four ways the word *koinonia* was used among early Christian churches.

7. List five ways the worship practices of the New Testament Church differed from those of the Jewish synagogue.

8. Summarize the biblical background upon which Christian baptism is based.

9. What new meaning was contained in Christian baptism as commanded by Jesus?

10. Why does the author state that the early Church had much to learn about observing the Lord's Supper?

11. What does the author give as the purpose of the Lord's Supper?

12. What are three things the Lord's Supper has changed for Christians?

Supplementary activity (*Levels 2 and 3*). Read pages 24-32 in *Christian Worship: Its Theology and Practice* and answer the following questions.

1. What building had the most influence upon early Christian worship?
2. How did worship in the synagogue differ from that in the Temple?
3. What were the main elements in synagogue worship?
4. Name five New Testament distinctives in worship.
5. List elements included in New Testament worship services.

Advanced activity (*Level 3*).

1. Write a paper to show that Christian worship in the New Testament did not simply carry over from Temple and synagogue worship.
2. What worship practices have carried over from the New Testament to modern times? Compare your own worship practices with those practised by the early Christians. What can you do to improve your worship services?

Seminar Discussion

1. Discuss the synagogue's influence upon early Christian worship.
2. Discuss Jesus' teachings about worship.
3. How was the worship of New Testament churches different from what was practised in synagogues?