

Concepts in Worship

B. Participation in Worship: Taking Part in the Public Meeting

(In Review: be reminded of the three-fold warning to the effect that worship cannot be legislated (by us), mechanized, and should not be psychologically analyzed or put into an analytical system to make it "automatic." Worship is the heart's adoration of God, voluntarily expressed in appreciation for the Lord's Person and as the logical outgrowth of the new life He has given us. It is the most fulfilling part of the priestly life although it is not the only part and we have tried to emphasize this...the Christian does not live by worship alone....but worship is an often-neglected part and it is therefore a needed area for our study. The priest does the will and service of God and enjoys the privilege of worship and entertainment of the Divine Person.)

.1 1. The Nature of the Public Meeting...Today we have a great diversity of meetings, each special for some particular cause, and the "worship" meeting is one that has grown out of this. We note the following:

a. In Corinthians (1st), the meeting of the assembly is discussed in chapters 10-14. It seems clear that in that church (whether all followed the same pattern or not is less clear but this is the example we have and it surely agrees with the earlier picture from Acts 4-5) the "meeting" that was central to the company of believers involved these three elements:

- (1) the love feast...a communal meal in which persons brought their food and dined together...a practice that in 1 Cor. 10-11 fell into abuse.
- (2) the remembrance feast...1 Cor. 11...probably like an aftermath or a conclusion to the love feast. Not all scholars agree on this order...and we may honestly admit that some difference of opinion is allowable but we are presenting this view in these discussions.
- (3) the ministry meeting...1 Cor. 14, in particular. At this time there was the giving of hymns and ministry calculated to edify and give the body a teaching or instructional values.

In Corinth there seems to be no good reason for thinking these were not all done in the same meeting. It was a long one...but past ages have not been so subject to the clock. And, incidentally, if the meetings were divided, it would only mean that the particular instructions would be carried out in the individualized meetings.

b. But, as time has gone on, the factor of time and special interest became larger and the pattern of New Testament meeting was quickly specialized. So in the earliest centuries