

Concepts in Worship

5

C. Participation in Worship: Understanding the Leading of the Spirit

*(Review: We have repeatedly stressed that worship is not an automatic or mechanical thing...not a conditioned response nor an academic science. It is the heart reaching out to tell the Lord of one's love and to praise His Person. As such it is voluntary and, while governed by the teaching of the Word, is Spontaneous with the individual. There is but one priestly class in this age...that is: all believers. They all worship freely in and out of the depth of heart and in public meetings in accord with the Word of God and, where there is no specific command, in principles of common sense and respect for the company of God's people. The priesthood of believers is a commonly understood Biblical position which, in an assembly of believers, we seek to give function through the public participation in worship meetings with the freedom of expression accorded to each priest in agreement with the qualifications of the Scripture. The thrust is that where there is much freedom there must be much exercise or the point may well be lost.)*

5.1

1. Some general principles:

a. The meeting "mechanics". The precise form of meeting ("liturgy" in many churches) is not given to us in the Scripture. It is another of those items which the Lord has entrusted to our care and development as we seek to honor Him. Therefore, in considering participation in the meeting, there are a few things about the local meeting and its "mechanics" that we need to keep in mind:

- (1) the guidelines in meeting order (when it stops and begins...etc.,) are under the care of the local company. Unless one is part of a liturgically based unit, each local company must discern these things for itself.
- (2) each participant in the gathering must have enough confidence in the local brethren to trust their guidance in these things.
- (3) for most of us, the particular mechanics are learned either by observing or asking!

5.2

b. The parts of the meeting (gleaned from general observations from the Last Supper, the meetings in Acts, and the discussions in 1 Corinthians 14).

- (1) Prayer, praise and worship...in discussion we will note some slight differences in these.
- (2) Hymns, (Psalms) and Scripture...read for public edification.

(There is, however, no prescribed arrangement for these save that those leading in open worship