

Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth” (Jn 4:23–24). I wonder if Jesus lifted up His hands when he sang with the disciples (cf. Matt 26:30).

Extremes in our worship do not truly edify. To be too rigid and emotionless betrays that we’re not involved; but to go to the extreme of contrived physical actions (like raising my hands and swaying them back and forth) betrays that we’re more involved with *ourselves* than *God*.



“Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray.”

(James 5:13)

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Gospel Meetings

March 22–27 ✦ Robby McPeak of Mobile, Ala. ✦ Lakeview congregation in Lake City ✦ 7:30 PM Monday through Friday.

This Week’s Birthdays

Kim Watson (*Wednesday*) and Margaret Maltzman (*Thursday*).

Chiefland Church of Christ

Meeting at 211 NE 2nd Street in *beautiful* Chiefland, Florida
PO Box 2539 ✦ Chiefland, FL 32644 ✦ (352) 493–1242

THINGS ABOVE

“Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth”

—[Colossians 3:1–2]—

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What’s Wrong With It?

By Jamey Hinds

Too often people do a thing before considering whether or not God allows it. I’d presume part of the difficulty is that most people don’t want anyone looking over their shoulder. But the Lord said, “Everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God” (Jn 3:20–21).

In another place, the apostle John wrote, “Sin is lawlessness” (1 Jn 3:4). This means, quite literally, that sin is acting without the permission or allowance of the law. And “there

is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy” (Jas 4:12).

Things done in worship to God are either right or wrong — i.e., either allowed and desired by God, or not. He has not left us to guess at what He wants. But when someone does something questionable and they defend themselves by asking — “What wrong with it?” — they’re not asking the right question.

And what *is* the correct question? “What makes this particular action the *right* thing to do?” I recently heard a man tell me that he was in a worship service in which worshipers were encouraged to come forward and sing a song as the service was closing; some lifted up their hands and some swayed as they sang. Initially, I thought, “That’s different; but is it necessarily wrong because it’s different?” And then I thought — “What makes this the right thing to do?”

Sometimes we desire to find something fresh in our worship; we want to *feel* that we have worshiped. Indeed, worship can become stale — but not because of the object of worship (God), but because us as stale worshipers.

To get to the point, lifting up hands is enjoined by the apostle Paul of male worshipers; furthermore, it is to be done in prayer — “I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting” (1 Tim 2:8).

Must worship be authorized to be recognized? Yes. The simplest example to offer is Nadab and Abihu’s debacle of offering “profane fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them” (Lev 10:1). ***What was wrong with it?*** God didn’t say ***not*** to do it, did He? But that’s not a good question. Much more imperatively we should honestly ask: Did God say ***to*** do it? No, He did not.

“By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; and before all the people I must be glorified” (Lev 10:3).

The question, again, is this: “Is it lawful to sing and lift hands?” God does not command it to be so; we have no apostolic example in the New Testament of it happening; and the reference we have in 1 Timothy 2:8 shows that if it’s done it’s to be done while *praying*.

When someone lifts up their hands while singing a song in worship to God a question comes to my mind — Who is the audience? Why do this? God hasn’t commanded it; Paul didn’t do it, Peter didn’t do it; we find no necessary inference in doing it either. So why do it? Is it more genuine to hold up my hands while I sing? Is it more spiritual? Is it truer?

Jesus said, “The hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the

