

# “THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

## Reverence in Worship

By R.J. Evans

**“God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, And to be held in reverence by all those who are around Him”** (Psa. 89:7). One of the most vitally important lessons to be learned in the church today is that of reverence. **“Reverence”** means “profound respect, affection, veneration” (Webster). Worship is not an accidental, hit or miss exercise. It is a holy privilege involving preparation, concentration, consecration, and meditation. God required reverence during Old Testament times (Ex. 3:5). Likewise, He requires fear and reverence of New Testament Christians today. **“Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear, For our God is a consuming fire”** (Heb. 13:28-29). How can we **“serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear”** in our worship services?

**1. By entering into the worship with joy and gladness.** **“I was glad when they said to me, ‘Let us go into the house of the Lord’”** (Psa. 122:1). We, too, should come to the worship services with joy and gladness of heart! The song leader is ready and prepared to sing, the preacher is ready and prepared to preach, and all the worshipers are ready and prepared to worship. Let all worship God joyfully together with reverence and Godly fear.

**2. By being silent.** **“But the Lord is in His holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before Him”** (Hab. 2:20). Silence is an excellent way of showing respect. Most of us have been in a stadium when, out of respect for people who had lost their lives, “a moment of silence” was observed in their memory as a means of showing respect. Silence in the presence of the dead at a funeral indicates respect for the occasion and for the deceased person and his family. It seems to help by having a few moments of silence just before our worship begins. It is good to form the habit of being seated a few moments before it is time to start the service, being silent and preparing our minds and hearts to be ready for reverent worship. It is important for parents to teach their children so that they learn to be silent during worship.

**3. By being orderly.** Christians are commanded to **“Let all things be done decently and in order”** (1 Cor. 14:40). This applies to worship. While worship should not be so ritualized as to destroy the very simplicity and spirit of our worship (Jn. 4:24), there should be enough orderliness to maintain reverence. That is why we have assignments given ahead of time to eliminate any confusion as to what men are taking part in leading the worship. Our overall demeanor in worship should manifest respect. Why do we stand when a bride walks down the aisle or when a judge enters the courtroom? To show respect! Truly, it is to be a special, serious, reflective, respectful, reverent period when we come to worship God Almighty. There are other ways that indicate respect for God and the occasion when we come to worship—our dress, our behavior, our demeanor, our attitude, etc. May this brief article encourage us to worship the Lord **“in spirit and truth”** (Jn. 4:24). And in so doing, may we always have reverence for Him. ■

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## WHY SEND FOR PETER?

By Robert F. Turner

An angel appeared unto a man named Cornelius. This devout, God-fearing, alms-giving man was praying to God – as was his custom – when an angel of God appeared to him in a vision. (You can read it for yourself – Acts 10).

According to popular conceptions this could mean hallucinations, latter-day revelations, or special divine appointment. An even greater number would say this proved that Cornelius was saved from his sins – had experi-

enced a “work of grace.” I have heard of people “voted into the church” on far less evidence. But the angel was none of these things to Cornelius.

The angel told Cornelius to send for Peter, who shall **“tell thee what thou oughtest to do;”** or **“tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved”** (See Acts 11:13ff). Prayers, alms, and devoutness notwithstanding, this man still needed to be saved. Christianity is far more than good citizenship, moral uprightness, or even respect for God. A Christian has all of this, and more; but these things are found among many who have not yet become followers of Jesus Christ and hence have neither salvation from past sins nor hope for Heaven. This lesson is especially needed by those who have placed their hope for Heaven in the “Great Architect” and welfare work of a lodge.

But why send for Peter? Could not the angel tell Cornelius all he needed to know? Or the Holy Spirit – did not this miraculous out-pouring do all that should be done for him? When Peter began to speak (11:15) the Holy Spirit was indeed poured out upon these Gentiles – a marvelous thing for Peter and those Jews with him to behold. Until recently they had thought the gospel was for Jews only (See Acts 10:9-16, 25-29; 11:1-4). It took this demonstration of divine acceptance (as subjects of the gospel) to convince the Jews that the gospel was for all nations (Acts 10:44ff ;11:15ff).

But now that they were proven proper subjects of the gospel, there remained the task of preaching to them, and urging those who would, to obey. People must be taught of God; so they may hear, learn and come (Jn. 6:45). We draw nigh to God through the word of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:17ff).

What the angel or Holy Spirit could do was hedged about by divine regulations. God had placed His truth in **“earthen vessels”** (2 Cor. 4:7) that its divine origin might be the more apparent. It was not His will then or now that heavenly messengers deliver the story of salvation to the world. It was **“once for all”** delivered to inspired men, and through them to the written form in which we now find it (Jude 3; Eph. 3:1ff; 2 Pet. 1:14ff). Peter did exactly what God intended he should do; he then preached the good news of Christ to Cornelius and his household, and baptized those who gladly received the word. Note, He commanded them to be **“baptized in the name of the Lord”** (Acts 10:48).

Cornelius was not saved – was not a Christian – until he heard, believed and obeyed the gospel of Christ. ■

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## Words By Which You Will Be Saved

By Joe R. Price

**“And he told us how he had seen an angel standing in his house, who said to him, ‘Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon whose surname is Peter, 14 who will tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved’”** (Acts 11:13–14, NKJV).

Many well-meaning people have been deceived to believe their salvation depends on a supernatural experience – perhaps it’s speaking in tongues, perhaps it’s a vision, perhaps it’s a warm burning inside they interpret as the Holy Spirit confirming the truth of their conversion – none of which are taught in the New Testament as the means or the basis of one’s salvation. Peter’s rehearsal of the events at the house of Cornelius helps us understand the way God saves the lost. Cornelius was a moral, religious, charitable man of good reputation, yet lost (Acts 10:10:1-2, 22; 11:14). An angel visited him, instructing him to send for Peter to hear words from him, which he did (Acts 10:3-6, 22, 32-33). While doing so, the Holy Spirit miraculously confirmed that Gentiles can be saved just like Jews (Acts 10:34-43, 44-47; 11:15-17). With that, Peter **“commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord”** (Acts 10:48). This convinced the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem that **“God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life”** (Acts 11:18; 15:7-11). It ought to convince us, too. God’s way to salvation is hearing and believing the gospel, confessing faith, repenting of sins, and being baptized to be saved (Mk. 16:15-16; Acts 2:37-38, 41). – **Sword Tips**, June 9, 2019. ■

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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