

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

Some Things to Consider Regarding Worship

By Glendol McClure

John 4:23-24, *“But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”*

We are commanded to worship according to the divine will of the Lord (Col. 3:17; Acts 17:16-31). Worship that is displeasing to God includes: 1) *“vain worship”* (Matt. 15:7-9); 2) *“ignorant worship”* (Acts 17:22-23; Rom. 10:1-4); and 3) *“will worship”* (Col. 2:20-23; Matt. 7:21-23). God demands that we worship *“in spirit and truth”* (Jno. 4:23-24). But what are some things we should consider in order to benefit most from our worship to God? Please consider these points:

PREPARE YOUR MIND THROUGH PRAYER BEFORE COMING TO WORSHIP! Christians are commanded to *“pray without ceasing”* (1 Thess. 5:17). Pray for the preacher, teachers, song leaders, and all who lead us in worship. We should pray that all saints be edified, that sinners be smitten in heart resulting in obedience to the gospel of Christ. Paul asked for the prayers of the brethren. *“Continue stedfastly in prayer, watching therein with thanksgiving; withal praying for us also, that God may open unto us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds; that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak”* (Col. 4:2-4; cf. Eph. 6:18-20). Paul prayed for the lost. *“Brethren, my heart’s desire and my supplication to God is for them, that they may be saved”* (Rom. 10:1). We should pray that erring brethren repent; that the truth be boldly spoken and received by those with an *“honest and good heart”* (Luke 8:15). Pray at home **BEFORE** the assembly!

PREPARE BIBLE LESSONS BEFOREHAND! Christians are commanded to study (2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Tim. 4:13-16). This means doing some homework regarding Bible study! We don’t think it strange to do homework for school, college classes, or other interests. Why do some think it strange when asked to do extra study to teach a Bible class, prepare a lesson, or to fill in when the preacher is sick or out of town? Why would it be a strange thing for the Bible class teacher to expect the students to be prepared to participate in the study?

BE PRESENT AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO STUDY THE BIBLE! We are commanded to not forsake the assembling of the saints (Heb. 10:25). Saints of the first century were involved in daily study of the scriptures (Acts 2:41-47; 17:11; 20:5-7). We should be present for gospel meetings, regularly scheduled worship services, Bible Study classes, and meetings of the congregation we are joined to.

BE ON TIME FOR THE BIBLE STUDY AND WORSHIP ASSEMBLY! Promptness is expected and practiced in worldly matters, why not for worship? We need to be on time so that we can greet visitors and other members. Being on time shows respect for the occasion, whereas tardiness indicates lack of proper preparation and disrespect (Matt. 25:1-13). How can we rush, rush, rush and enter the building late, take a deep breath and think we are prepared to worship the Almighty God? We cannot afford to lose sight of the solemnity of the occasion of gathering with the saints to worship our Creator and our Redeemer.

ASSEMBLE TO BE EDIFIED AND TO ENCOURAGE OTHERS IN THE “MOST HOLY FAITH” (Eph. 4:1-16; Heb. 10:24)! We must take an active role in worship. Open your Bible and open your heart and ears. Sing, pray, and study to make proper application of the things we learn (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Jas. 1:21; 2 Cor. 13:5-6).

WEAR APPROPRIATE ATTIRE FOR WORSHIP! Remember, we are worshipping God, our all-powerful Creator! Our outward adornment should always reflect a meek, humble, respectful, and pure heart (1 Pet 3:3-6; 1 Tim. 2:9-10; Titus 2:1-8). Dress respectfully for the occasion! At the marriage feast, “... *the king came in to behold the guests, he saw there a man who had not on a wedding-garment: and he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding-garment? And he was speechless*” (Matt. 22:11-12). Let our attire reflect the serious nature of worshipping God!

CONCLUSION: Never forget that we worship the Creator of all things we see; the Father of all and the giver of “*every good gift and every perfect gift*” (Jas. 1:17). Never take lightly the serious nature of the occasion when making preparation to worship the true and living God. I encourage you to strive to make proper preparation, to be present at the appointed time and place to worship, and thereby “*serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear*” (Heb. 12:28, KJV). Let us always be mindful that “*God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth*” (Jno. 4:24 KJV). Let us bring the best we have in attitude, dignity, respect, and character as we worship God. ■

Jesus’ Preaching vs. Modern Preachers

By Sewell Hall

Generally speaking, our generation has an aversion to authority, yet those who heard the Lord’s great sermon observed that “*He taught them as one having authority.*”

We prefer sermons that deal in generalities; Jesus dealt with specifics.

We prefer preachers who praise rather than condemn; Jesus condemned not only wrong conduct but wrong motives as well.

We object to “name calling”; Jesus unabashedly named unfavorably the leading religious party of His day.

We favor motivation by promise of rewards but Jesus, while offering rewards, did not hesitate to threaten “*hell fire.*”

Our society seeks instant gratification while the promises of Jesus are primarily for life hereafter.

We tend to think of everything as relative, but Jesus spoke in absolutes.

We criticize as simplistic any preaching that “makes everything black and white,” yet Jesus repeatedly divided His subjects into just two categories: right and wrong.

We applaud broad-mindedness and seek the easy way, but Jesus warned that His way is narrow, and the gate is difficult.

Jesus knew that in every generation those who would follow the heavenly way would be few compared to the many who would reject it. His concern was not with quantity but with quality. Consequently, He compromised His standards not one iota to accommodate the weaknesses of men or the peculiarities of His generation. Had He made any compromise at all the resulting kingdom would not have been “*the kingdom of Heaven.*” ■

“I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (2 Tim. 4:1-4 KJV).

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

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