

LENEXA EDIFIER

And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; Eph. 4:11,12

November 29, 2020

Worshiping or “Going to Church”?

Jim Stauffer

“I was glad when they said to me, “Let us go to the house of the LORD.”” (Psalm 122:1)

The question before us has never changed from the beginning of our relationship with God. Do we honor Him when we worship or are we simply gathering with friends and going through the motions of worship. The reason it needs an answer is because my obedience to God is personal and individual despite all demands for congregational activity.

If, indeed, my responsibility is personal, there is a demand for me to come to the house of the Lord for the purpose of worshiping Him. That would require me to focus my attention on Him which demands I remove the cares of this life to eliminate distraction from the purpose of my visit.

Now we all know and understand this. Just as we know and understand the demands of obedience to all the commands of God and Christ (**John 14:15; Heb. 5:8,9**).

The problem we face is the actual time we spend under the influence of worldly thought compared to the time we spend with Him by way of His word and the avenue of prayer.

This demands an active plan on our part to overcome the worldly influence so prevalent in society today. We hear the majority of the citizens in our communities often subscribe to things we know contradict God’s word. Immorality such as adultery, homosexuality, abortion, dishonesty for purposes of furthering one’s own agenda are commonly accepted by many in our society. Furthermore, those who resist such things are castigated as bigots and hateful individuals by the community in which they reside.

Much of this is so diametrically opposed to biblical teaching, we take our stand at the expense of any rejection that may come from friends, family or neighbors.

It is the incremental desensitization of society first and then the church second that is of primary concern in this brief article.

I now will focus my attention on our worship to God. Every word we see in Scripture translated as worship carries with it a sincerity and devotion to the object of worship that demands we leave behind anything that would interfere with that devotion. When we are indeed bowing down before Him reverently in demonstration of our piety and devotion toward the Divine Being Who created us, we can allow nothing to come between us and Him.

As I observe brethren all over the land dealing with the distraction of what we call a pandemic I fear we are constantly reminded of its presence by the masks on our faces when we assemble. The fear is that we immediately and consistently have before us this virus while we worship due to the physical appearances that remind us.

Obviously I cannot read the hearts and minds of others. I can only speak of the difficulty experienced on my part. But when brethren discuss all aspects of this virus before and after services, positing whether it is a valid concern or not. Whether we should assemble with or without restrictions. What other brethren in other areas are doing to deal with the issue, I am convinced it is weighing too heavily on the hearts and minds of far too many of us.

Some are fearful of their health. Some are fearful of trusting more on health officials than on the Lord for solutions. Many are fully cognizant of both authorities and are keeping them in proper perspective. But because the daily input is so constant it is a difficult task.

I submit the proper perspective has always been to trust in the Lord and obey Him first. It is imperative the worship of God by the Body of Christ remain undisturbed or distracted by any illnesses. Those who are ill have always remained home to recuperate. Nothing different should be the case now. *“But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land*

you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.” (Joshua 24:15)

Now, you ask, are you equating a cessation of congregational worship is equal to paying homage to the idol gods of the ancestors of Israel? The answer is yes. I submit to you when brethren cease to congregate to worship God during a pandemic they are worshipping at the altar of the words of men of science rather than trusting in the promises of God.

If anyone contracts this virus during worship to God he has been blessed to worship the Lord rather than being cursed for a lack of caution ordered by a world with little to no regard for the commands of the Savior of mankind.

So the question as put before us is, are you worshipping by offering your reverence, piety and devotion to the Creator without consideration of the opinion of men or just “going to church”?

The following article was in this bulletin a little over a year ago. It is so appropriate to the subject of this bulletin, I have chosen to post it again.

Editor.

ABOUT WORSHIP

Edward O. Bragwell Sr.

In our more used English translations, “worship,” in its various forms, is found over 100 times in the Old Testament and over 70 times in the New Testament. It is used of one directing a special act (word or deed) to express adoration to another considered to be of higher rank or power than himself. As such, it is an act forbidden by God toward any being or thing in the universe but himself. This forbids our worshipping

1. *Any of God’s creation. “Who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. (Romans 1:25 NKJV)*
2. *Any man. “As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. But Peter lifted him up, saying, ‘Stand up; I myself am also a man.’” (Acts 10:25-26 NKJV)*
3. *Angels. “Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,” (Colossians 2:18 NKJV). “And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, ‘See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the*

testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”
(Revelation 19:10 NKJV)

Worship Different from Other Obedience.

Worship is a separate activity from other acts of obedience to God. Abraham was obeying God when he took Isaac and headed out toward the place God told him to sacrifice, but as he neared the mountain he told his servants, *“Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you.”* (Genesis 22:5 NKJV) Worship was a special act he was to do “yonder” and after which he would return. Every act of the whole episode was an act of obedience, but only what he did “yonder” was called worship.

Abraham’s servant said, *“And I bowed my head and worshiped the LORD”* (Genesis 24:48 NKJV), showing that worship was different for other acts of obedience. It is said of Elkanah and Hannah as they left Eli, *“Then they rose early in the morning and worshiped before the LORD ...”* (1 Samuel 1:19 NKJV). This shows that worship was a special act they directed to the Lord.

The conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman also shows that “worship” is used as activity other than all life *“Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.”* Jesus said to her, *“Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. “You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. “But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”* (John 4:20-24 NKJV)

Worship, Service, and Obey Are Not Synonyms

All worship is service and obedience, but not all obedience or service is worship. “Worship” and “serve” are used as separate acts in many passages *“And take heed, lest you lift your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, you feel driven to worship them and serve them, which the LORD your God has given to all the peoples under the whole heaven as a heritage. (Deuteronomy 4:19 NKJV) “Then it shall be, if you by any means forget the LORD your God, and follow other gods, and serve them and worship them, I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish. (Deuteronomy 8:19 NKJV) “Take heed to yourselves, lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them,*

(Deuteronomy 11:16 NKJV) *“But if your heart turns away so that you do not hear, and are drawn away, and **worship other gods and serve them,***
(Deuteronomy 30:17 NKJV) *“But if you or your sons at all turn from following Me, and do not keep My commandments and My statutes which I have set before you, but go and **serve other gods and worship them,*** **(1 Kings 9:6 NKJV)** *“But if you turn away and forsake My statutes and My commandments which I have set before you, and go and **serve other gods, and worship them,*** **(2 Chronicles 7:19 NKJV)** *‘This evil people, who refuse to hear My words, who follow the dictates of their hearts, and walk after other gods to **serve them and worship them,** shall be just like this sash which is profitable for nothing.*

(Jeremiah 13:10 NKJV) *‘Do not go after other gods to **serve them and worship them,** and do not provoke Me to anger with the works of your hands; and I will not harm you.’* **(Jeremiah 25:6 NKJV)**

Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying, *“Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent His Angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king’s word, and yielded their bodies, that they **should not serve nor worship any god except their own God!*** **(Daniel 3:28 NKJV)**

Then Jesus said to him, *“Away with you, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall **worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.**’”* **(Matthew 4:10 NKJV)**
And Jesus answered and said to him, *“Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall **worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.**’”* **(Luke 4:8 NKJV)**

Children should obey parents, wives should obey husbands, citizens should obey governments, servants (employees) should serve masters (employers) as service to God – but must not worship anyone but God.

The Absurdity of “All Life Is Worship”

The act of presenting the body to God as act of (service/worship) is a far cry from saying every act of the body in service to God is an act of worship. The results of this error is to equate all acts of service of a faithful Christian with worship – thus minimizing the priority of public worship. So, if I want to volunteer at a soup kitchen on Sunday rather than attend “worship” then that is ok. Helping the needy is indeed an act of service to both God and the needy and by this theory an act of worship that is at least equivalent to that done in the assembly of the saints. So, he is worshiping God just as much at those at the assembly. It is just that each has chosen a different act of worship on this day. If one prefers to go to the mall

and hand out tracts at the time the church assembles, then that is ok. After all, handing out tracts is a great act of service to God. He is worshiping just as much as those who are worshiping in the assembly. So, the church has no right to question one who forsakes the assembling to do any act that he considers doing God service. Not to be crude, but to impress us with the absurdity of this kind of thinking, a couple could stay home, after a busy week at work, and obey **1 Corinthians 7:3**, which is unquestionably a command of God. They would be just as pleasing to God as those assembled for worship because, after all, “all life is worship.”

Be Ye Thankful!

As I write this article it is the Wednesday morning before Thanksgiving. As you read this article it will be the Wednesday after Thanksgiving, and that is as I planned this. You see, Thanksgiving is a day of SPECIAL remembrance of the blessings we have received and acknowledgement to God for those blessings. Being genuinely grateful however is a daily discipline that we as Believers ought to be cultivating in our hearts. Never underestimate the value of gratitude in our hearts.

Notice what Paul says in Romans 1:20f “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.” In the remaining part of the chapter he lists the sins and shortcomings of the Gentile world, some of the vilest and corrupt behaviors of men. But notice what he puts at the beginning, and this is no mistake. Though the evidence for God is literally ‘EVERYWHERE AND IN YOUR FACE’ so to speak they turned their back on the evidence and denied God and then, as a direct result of denying God they were unable to express the necessary gratitude for the blessings received at His loving hand (see Acts 13:16-18).

These two acts, denying God and the inability to be thankful, laid the groundwork for all of the sins we see in the rest of the first chapter of Romans. I fear for my country when I recognize the same problems rearing their ugly head here! Let us acknowledge God with thankfulness EVERY DAY!

Cleveland Reddinger

THE EXAMPLE OF COMMITMENT

We read of Jesus's death among those of the martyrs for the cause of Christ, even though His death was planned and foreordained by God as the central figure in the scheme of redemption.

The story of His suffering and crucifixion is so well told in the Holy Scriptures that we have no need to document it here. It's enough to say that His subsequent resurrection defeated the intent of the Jews and gave fresh courage and new direction to the hearts of His disciples. And after they received the power of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, they were further filled with the confidence and boldness they needed to proclaim His name. This new confidence and boldness completely confused the Jewish rulers and astonished all who heard them.

Foxe's Book of Martyrs

"Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor's crown." (Revelation 2:10)

NEWS AND NOTES

Sick in need of prayers:

JAN PATRICK, ALMA BAUMGARTNER, TRUDY MULLEN, RENE RATLIFFE, DENESE GORING, RODNEY BLOUNT, DAISY DARNALL, BROOKLYN BOYER, JESSIE GIBSON, PAT GAINES IS AWAITING BACK SURGERY AND THE SISTER OF DAISY DARNALL HAS COVID-19, THE FORD FAMILY (RELATIVES OF BRO. BILL MILLER ARE BATTLING COVID -19.

TRACY RICHARDSON HAD SURGERY 11/19/20. THERE WILL BE AN ADDITIONAL SURGERY SCHEDULED TO COMPLETE THE REMOVAL OF TUMOROUS TISSUE.

SUNDAY BIBLE CLASS - EVIDENCES - BILL MILLER

WEDNESDAY BIBLE CLASS - THE PARABLES - BY MULTIPLE TEACHERS (BOTH CLASSES OFFERED ON ZOOM)

SUNDAY SERMON: A LESSON FROM JOSEPH'S BONES

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - **Rom. 10:17**

Believe in Jesus Christ - **Heb. 11:6**

Repent of sins - **Acts 17:30**

Confess Christ as Lord - **Rom. 10:9,10**

Baptism for remission of sins - **Acts 2:38**

"Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life." (Revelation 2:10)

Psa. 1:1 *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.*

ADDRESS AND HOURS OF WORSHIP

7845 Cottonwood Dr. Lenexa, Kansas, 66216

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study

Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study/ Worship

Visitors welcome

We conduct in home Bible Studies

We offer Correspondence Courses

Check out the following websites:

facebook.com/LenexaChurchofChrist

lenexachurchofchrist.org

Evangelist and Editor Jim Stauffer

Elders:

Ron Peck and Jim Stauffer

Deacons:

Bill Miller, Brandon Jimison, Joe Hurd

"Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons:"

(Philippians 1:1)