



Seek The Old Paths

“Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths. . . and walk therein”
(Jeremiah 6:16)

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WHAT IS WORSHIP?

James E. Rogers

We live in an entertainment culture where everything is supposed to be fun and effortless. Many come to church and expect the same environment. Proper worship will eliminate the desire to be entertained and also will eliminate judging the preacher by how high of an emotional pitch he can create in the assembly.

The sign found in the foyer of some church buildings which admonishes, “Enter to worship, leave to serve,” gives the correct picture of Christianity. The Christian’s life is characterized by worship and service to God. The Christian must give diligence to make sure his worship and service bespeak the things authorized by God. He must not allow additions, subtractions or substitutions to take the place of authorized worship and service. Jared Moore was correct when he wrote, “Religion is a direct personal relationship between man and God; and unless the emotions which accompany it are based on true conceptions, it degenerates into a contemptible sentimentalism.”¹

We would do well to contemplate what worship and service are and consider whether our worship and service is pleasing to God.

WHAT IS WORSHIP?

Moore observed, “Worship is based on belief in a personal Deity who is the source of all goodness, who loves mankind, and who rejoices in the love of his people.”² Brewer wrote that “Worship is the calm, serene,

purposeful, meditative emotions of the soul joyfully expressed in song, in prayer, and other scriptural acts.”³ In a broad sense, the worship of God “may be regarded as the direct acknowledgement to God, of His nature, attributes, ways and claims whether by the outgoing of the heart in praise and thanksgiving or by deed done in such acknowledgment.”⁴

Worship is bowing oneself in respect. The first time “worship” is found in our English Bibles, it comes from a word meaning “to depress, that is, *prostrate* (especially reflexively in homage to royalty or God).”⁵ One is to bow himself down to God (Gen. 22:5). Nebuchadnezzar wanted Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah to bow down before his image (Daniel 3:5,10,12,14,15,18,28). We learn further that “worship” is from an Aramaic word which means “to do homage (by prostration).”⁶ The Greek word *proskuneo* (the most frequent word rendered worship) means “to make obeisance, do reverence to (from *pros*, towards, and *kuneo*, to kiss).”⁷

Worship is adoring one. The Greek word *sebomai* means “to revere, that is, adore” (Rom. 1:25).

“Worship is not an elective. It is an imperative, for without it our conception of the eternal Being will be distorted and untrue.”⁸

Worship is an individual action. “You must worship God yourself. No one else can do it in your place. . . . It is correct that worship is also corporate. We do it with others, and it is from the entire people of God, but each one must worship God personally.”⁹ This indicates that one cannot please God and refuse to engage in the acts of worship authorized by God. The beauty of the congregational worship service is the blending of each Christian’s participation as he pours out his worship to God.

CHRISTIANS MUST OFFER PROPER WORSHIP TO GOD (John 4:20,24)

“Ought” (20) and “Must” (24) are from *dei* which means “to bind.” Thayer observes that it references “A necessity of law and command, of duty, equity.”¹⁰ This shows we have a moral obligation to offer proper worship to God.

“The ones (*tous*) worshipping

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What is Worship?...



Editorial...

WHERE IS GOD IN OUR TROUBLES?

Garland M. Robinson

The day began very early. Two hundred miles would be driven to a lonely hospital room where a dying man would, in just a few hours, breathe his last. A smile and a tear came across the faces of both father and son as their eyes met. As the tragic event of death was nearing, I sat and held my father's hand for hours as I saw the life slipping from his tired and worn out frame. I would be holding that same hand the next day as he breathed his last sigh and as the warmth gently left his body. How many of you have endured such pain, such trouble, such loss? Is there anyone who hasn't?

Where is God in our troubles?

Where is God when a husband and wife pull from each other in what is often called "irreconcilable differences?"

Where is God when there is pain and suffering?

Where is God when little children are caught in the cross-fire of reckless, senseless and wicked deeds?

Where is God when millions of innocent babies are ripped from their mother's wombs every year in that horrifying despair called "a woman's right to choose?"

Where is God when brethren set themselves on a course of destruction to their own souls and faithful brethren can't stop it?

Where is God when brethren divide in spite of all the prayers and pleas of peacemakers?

Where is God when congregations fall apart and split?

Where is God when faithful preachers proclaim the whole counsel of God and evil men and seducers wax worse and worse?

God is where he's always been. He hasn't moved. He knows, He cares. He is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9).

The story is told of the old farmer and his wife driving down a country road when his wife speaks up and says, "You know, when we were young, we used to sit together as we traveled. Now, you sit on your side and I sit on mine. Why is that?" The old farmer lovingly looks over at her and says, "I haven't moved. I'm still behind the wheel where I've always been."

It's easy to grow apart isn't it? It can happen without us ever realizing it.

Where is God in our troubles?

GOD IS IN HEAVEN

God has not moved. He is where he has always been. He watches. He knows. He cares. We are the ones who have moved away.

In Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple, he ask God's blessing upon them and ask that God hear from his dwelling place in heaven (1 Kings 8:30,39,43,49; 2 Chron. 6:21,30,33,39; 2 Chron. 30:27). The Psalmist declared: "*The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven...*" (Psa. 11:4; Isa. 66:1; Acts 7:49)? Habakkuk 2:20 declares, "*the LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him.*" From heaven, He looks upon men to see if there are any that understand and seek him (Psa. 53:2).

Jesus tells us that God the Father is in heaven. It is the place of his throne (Matt. 5:34; 23:22). Jesus said, "*When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven...*" (Luke 11:2).

God cares, Oh, how he cares!

GOD IS IN THE WORLD

"*The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all*" (Psa. 103:19).

God has his finger on the pulse of the world. God rules over all the kingdoms of men. This very pointed

and grave lesson was taught to king Nebuchadnezzar because of his pride and arrogance. God would send him to the very depths of despair and teach him a lesson. He would learn that God rules over all. In the book of Daniel, three verses show us that "*the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will*" (Dan. 4:17,25,32). Oh, how this lesson needs to be learned in the world today!

God cares about what goes on. He is there and knows about our troubles. However, He will not help unless we turn to him in obedience according to his will.

GOD IS IN THE CHURCH

God's eternal plan was fulfilled in the church of Christ. "*And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: ¹⁰To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, ¹¹According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord*" (Eph. 3:9-11).

Since God has taken such great care through the ages in watching over his word to perform it (cf. Jer. 1:12), shall he not care about it now? Has God lost his interest in us? Does he not care what happens to his saints? Of course God cares!

Paul writes by inspiration, "*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. ³⁷Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. ³⁸For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, ³⁹Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*" (Rom. 8:35-39).

GOD IS IN OUR HEARTS

"*...If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfect-*

ed in us” (1 John 4:12). *“And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him”* (1 John 4:16). Jesus said, *“If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him”* (John 14:23).

Though God lives within us, we often feel alone in times of trouble. But, we must always keep in mind that *“if God be for us, who can be against us”* (Rom. 8:31)? Even then, our heart is many times heavy with burdens. But in such times, we must also remember that *“...if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things”* (1 John 3:20). If we continue faithful, God will provide.

GOD KNOWS, GOD CARES

Where was God when Job was suffering such horrendous afflictions? The loss of all that he had did not turn Job’s heart away from God. He lost his worldly possessions and his children (Job 1:13-22). Even when he lost his good health (2:7-8), Job still would not turn away from the Lord. His wife even suggested that he curse God and die. But Job would not (Job 2:9-10). He maintained his integrity.

One of the things that made Job’s suffering so frustrating was that he did not understand why all these things were happening to him. He was completely at a loss. He was in misery and grief. His friends turned against him. His wife did not help. He was all alone. He questioned God and cried out in despair. He just did not understand. But, he still trusted God! He understood that though he did not see the “big picture” of it all, he knew that God did. God rules. God knows. God cares. He didn’t understand, but he trusted that God would handle it. He could not give up on God.

Perhaps Job thought he would understand in the “by and by” but even if he did not, he still trusted God. He is supreme. He is loving. He is perfect. Job lived by the principle, *“though he slay me, yet will I trust in him”* (Job 13:15).

How would we fare under similar conditions? The point is certain that most people would crash long before

they ever reached the brink of Job’s suffering. That was so in Job’s day just as it is so today.

People often ask in the midst of tragedy, “why is this happening to me?” Both good things and bad things happen to all people alike. God maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust (Matt. 5:45). None are exempt.

Immense suffering came to Job in spite of the fact that he was a good man. He feared God and hated evil. He was pure in thought and conduct. Yet such calamity came upon him that none could say they’ve had it worse. Those who were once his friends became *“miserable comforters”* (Job 16:2). Job cried out in despair asking, why was I ever born? Even when I was born, why didn’t I die at birth? Since I did not die at birth, why can’t I die even now?

Job was full of questions for which he cried out for answers. God eventually responded with a barrage of questions that left Job speechless. Where were you, Job, when the foundations of the earth were laid (Job 38:4)? What do you know about the springs of the sea (38:16)? What about the gates of death (38:17) or the breadth of the earth (38:18)? Where is the dwelling place of light and dark (38:19)? God knows these things. God made these things. God controls these things (cf. Heb. 1:3) and millions more. Therefore...

God knows about our suffering, our hardships, our troubles. He cares about us. He does not respond as we might have him to, but he is there just the same. We don’t see the larger scheme of things. We’re not able to see the whole picture. Our job always remains the same, to bear up under the most trying of circumstances. Through our suffering, whether mental, emotional or physical, God will provide.

God provided a lamb for Abraham to sacrifice (Gen. 22:8).

God provided ravens to bring food to Elijah on the banks of the brook Cherith (1 Kings 17:3-6) and when the brook dried up, he was sustained by a widow at Zarephath with a handful of meal and a little oil that never ran out (1 Kings 17:9-16).

God provided a place for Joseph in Egypt when his brothers sold him to a band of Ishmeelites (Gen. 37:28).

Can you imagine his despair in a strange land so far from home? Yet it worked out to sparing of the lives of all in his father’s house when the seven years of famine came.

God took care of Daniel when he was thrown into the den of lions (Daniel 6:16-22).

God took care of Hananiah (Shadrach), Mishael (Meshach) and Azariah (Abed-nego) when they were thrown into the burning fiery furnace (Dan. 1:7; 3:8-30).

The Lord cared for Stephen when he was being stoned to death. He saw Jesus standing on the right hand of God observing this despicable deed (Acts 7:55-56). This is the only time you read of Jesus standing in heaven. Every time it’s mentioned, he’s always sitting (Mark 16:19; Acts 2:34; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2).

God cared for the apostle Paul throughout his many travels. He did not always protect him from being harmed (he suffered many things, Acts 9:16; 2 Cor. 11:23-27), but he was with him through it all. Nearing the end of his life, Paul would write, *“For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing”* (2 Tim. 4:6-8).

Though so many of these events were miraculous does not lessen the fact that God knows and cares for his people. Though the days of miracles are over, God still knows and he still cares. God is there. God will provide. Our undergirding hope must be, God’s will be done! That’s what Jesus prayed (Luke 22:42).

So, don’t despair. Things may not turn out as we would like, but don’t blame God or think he has abandoned us. Praise God. Give him thanks for his tender care, mercy and forgiveness. Be like Paul who said, *“I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things [which happened] unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel”* (Phil. 1:12). *“If [any man suffer] as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf”* (1 Peter 4:16).

What is Worship?...

(Continued from page 49)

(*proskunountas*)” God must (*dei*) worship (*proskunein*) in spirit.

The word “spirit” addresses our inner attitude. The Psalmist described the proper attitude of those who would worship Jehovah when he invited the people to “*come, let us worship and bow down; Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker*” (Psa. 95:6¹¹). Joshua captured the importance of having the proper attitude before Jehovah when he exhorted Israel to “fear Jehovah and serve him in sincerity and in truth” (Joshua 24:14). Worship offered with the proper attitude will be free of pretense, hypocrisy, pride and false piety. It will eliminate the desire to be entertained and also will eliminate judging the preacher by how high of an emotional pitch he can create in the assembly.

Boice observed that “We live in an entertainment culture where everything is supposed to be fun and effortless, so Christians who come to church on Sunday expect the same environment.”¹² Frank J. Dunn wrote, “Practices that appeal to the physical senses rather than our spiritual understanding are of no value in Christian worship and are displeasing to God. Some examples are tongue-speaking, musical concerts, choirs, singing with instruments, hand clapping, foot stomping, songs that are not spiritual, devotionals in the dark, hand holding, soul talks, personal witnessing, story telling, responsive readings, preachers who entertain, song leaders who put on a show, weekend retreats and other additions to the divine pattern.” Dunn is emphasizing that if our worship has to be stimulated with physical things, something is missing on the inside.

Worship according to the Biblical pattern should encourage and excite us to greater service to God. Brewer correctly observed, “The *primary purpose* of worship is not how it makes one feel; not what one *gets out of it*, but what one *gives into it*... One *should and will* receive grace from God in *true worship*. This is one of those strange paradoxes where we *get* by *giving*. If we do not put our souls into the worship, remembering that ‘*worship is an act, not a passive state,*’

we will get nothing out of the worship. ... Worship is a *soul* act. Spiritual energy must be expended.”¹³

“The ones (*tous*) worshipping (*proskunountas*)” God must (*dei*) worship (*proskunein*) in truth.

The word “truth” (*aletheia*) shows that we have an objective standard by which we may determine what is to be offered to God in worship. Arndt and Gingrich point out that *aletheia* is used “of the content of Christianity as the absolute truth...”¹⁴ This will provide us with a “Thus saith the Lord” for all we do and teach in worship.

WHAT IS PROPER WORSHIP?

Proper worship is directed toward the proper object.

We must “worship God.” The first use of the word “worship” in our English Bibles points our worship toward God (Gen. 22:5). John was instructed to “worship God” (Rev. 19:10; 22:9). We must “*worship the Father in spirit and truth*” (John 4:23). When the ark of the Covenant was brought to Jerusalem, David proclaimed that the people should “*Give unto the LORD the glory [due] unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness*” (1 Chron. 16:29). We must “*Exalt...the LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; [for] he [is] holy*” (Psa. 99:5).

We must worship God and “have no other gods.” The first four of the ten commandments directed the Israelites to worship God and to “have no other gods” (Exod. 20:1-11). Jehovah’s covenant with Israel involved their habitation of the land of Canaan. Instructions were given concerning the destruction of the idolatrous worship system of the Canaanites. Following the details concerning idolatry in Canaan, Jehovah stated, “*For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name [is] Jealous, [is] a jealous God*” (Exod. 34:10-14). In a statement concerning Jehovah’s power and dominion, the Psalmist admonishes, “*Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all [ye] gods*” (Psa. 97:7). Zephaniah told of the time when Jehovah “*will famish all the gods of the earth; and [men] shall worship him, every one from his place, [even] all the isles of the heathen*” (Zeph. 2:11). Isaiah pointed to

the time when people “*shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem*” (Isa. 27:13). Paul admonished the Corinthians to “*flee from idolatry*” (1 Cor. 10:14-22) and John wrote, “*Little children, keep yourselves from idols.*” (1 John 5:21).

Brewer observed, “If God is a personal Being who is related to us as a Father and who loves us and blesses us, we should seek to know him and to express our gratitude and love to him...the oftener we can commune with him, the better it will please us. Hence, there will never be the complaint from a true, intelligent worshiper that every Sunday is too often. ... Therefore, when men do not feel inclined to worship God and to want him in their lives, the cause is — call it what you will — *atheism*. They do not believe in God as a loving Father. They do not believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him.’ If they did, of course, they would diligently seek after him.”¹⁵

Proper worship involves the proper actions. These actions must be authorized by God (Col. 3:17). There are five authorized acts to be used in worship to God. While some do not like the terminology “acts,” it is the case that each item of worship calls for action on the part of the worshiper.

Singing of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs is authorized in worship to God (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19). Instrumental music is not authorized nor is the imitating of the sounds of an instrument. Corporate worship involves congregational singing. Choirs, quartets, praise teams and solos are not authorized. No amount of wishing to please and appease people who are not interested in pleasing God will ever authorize those things which God has not authorized. The actions of “Jeroboam the son of Nebat” (1 Kings 12:25-33) and Jehovah’s response (1 Kings 13) to those actions should remind all of us of the importance of worshipping according to Jehovah’s authority.

Praying to God by the authority of Jesus is authorized (Acts 2:42; 1 Tim. 2:8-15). Praying to or through Mary or the use of candles, and the like, is not authorized. All who pray to God should be aware of the awesome privilege of being invited to the very throne of God through our

covenant relationship with him. We should never take this privilege for granted nor misuse it by being flip-pant in our approach to him. The principle of approach is still to be governed by the knowledge and respect of his hallowed name (Matt. 6:9). Those who lead public prayers should take special care to pray in a way that all who follow may make the prayer personal and be able to say the “Amen.”

Teaching/Preaching the truth is authorized (Acts 2:42; 20:7). Being able to learn more of God’s will is a privilege which is not equaled by anything earthly. When the word of God is taught, our hearts should be open to instruction and appreciative of revelation which made this wonderful word possible (2 Tim. 3:16,17). The spirit of reverence exemplified by the people of God when “*Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people*” (Neh. 8:5) should characterize us today when God’s word is studied. We still need to be reading “in the book, in the law of God, distinctly” and giving “the sense, so that” people may understand “the reading” (Neh. 8:8).

Giving on the first day of every week is authorized (1 Cor. 16:1,2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7). This giving is “according as a man hath” (2 Cor. 8:12) and “as he purposeth in his heart” (2 Cor. 9:7). It is to be based on one’s prosperity (1 Cor. 16:2) realizing that, as God causes us to “abound in everything” (2 Cor. 8:7), we should “abound in this grace also.” One’s prosperity each week may cause his amount to fluctuate from week to week. One should always remember he is not “giving back to God” because God never relinquished ownership. One should give realizing he is but a steward of what God has given him and that “*it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful*” (1 Cor. 4:2). Our giving is a using of that which God has loaned us in one of the ways God has authorized us to use it.

Observance of the Lord’s supper on the first day of every week is authorized (Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:17-34). The authorized elements of the Lord’s Supper are *unleavened bread and fruit of the vine* (Matt. 26:26-29). There is no authority from God to observe the Lord’s supper at any other time than the first day of the week. The Lord’s supper is to “proclaim the Lord’s death till he

come” (1 Cor. 11:26). The emphasis is on the Lord’s *death*, not our pleasure or emotion. As I grow in my Bible knowledge, I grow in my appreciation of the Lord’s supper and what that really means!

Proper worship takes the proper precautions. This will avoid *vain worship* by not allowing human tradition to make God’s will void (Matt. 15:1-9). This will avoid *false worship* by recognizing God will not accept substitutes (Zeph. 1:2-6). This will avoid *ignorant worship* by learning and obeying the truth revealed in the Bible (Acts 17:16-31). This will avoid *will worship* which causes men to seek a “holy wow” instead of a “well done.” When men want “their” way in worship instead of submitting to God’s way, they are guilty of *will worship* (cf. Col. 2:23).

CHRISTIANS MUST OFFER THE PROPER SERVICE TO GOD

Service is different from *worship*, but *worship* grows out of *service*. The Bible encourages people to serve God. Joshua encouraged the Israelites to “*fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth*” (Josh. 24:14). He recognized that in order for one to serve Jehovah properly, a choice would have to be made (Josh. 24:15). Solomon was encouraged by David to know “*the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind...*” (1 Chron. 28:9). Jesus told Satan that man is to “*worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*” (Matt. 4:10). Jesus knew this would require a choice because “*no man can serve two masters*” (Matt. 6:24). Jesus promised that those who served him would be honored by His father (John 12:26).

Paul described his work in Asia as “*servicing the Lord with all lowliness of mind, and with many tears, and temptations*” (Acts 20:19). Paul also told Felix that he served “*the God of our fathers*” (Acts 24:14). The one who has rendered proper service to God on the earth will have the opportunity to serve God “*day and night in his temple*” (Rev. 7:15).

Proper service to God will cause one to be a good soldier in the Lord’s army. Paul charged Timothy to “*war a good warfare*” (1 Tim. 1:18). Involved in this warfare would be the necessity to “*endure hardness* (suffer hardship) *as a good soldier of*

Jesus Christ” (2 Tim. 2:3). Good soldiers must use the proper armor which is described in Ephesians 6:10-20. Proper use of this armor will enable one to “*stand against the wiles of the devil*” and to “*withstand in the evil day*” (Eph. 6:11,13). The good soldier may conclude his life of service to God with the knowledge that he has “*fought a good fight*” (2 Tim. 4:7).

Proper service to God will cause one to be a good seeker of the lost. Andrew knew the importance of bringing people to hear Jesus. “*He findeth first his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, we have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus*” (John 1:41,42). “*Philip findeth Nathanael*” (John 1:45). The woman from Sychar “*...went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did*” (John 4:28-29). The result of this action was that “*many of the Samaritans...believed on him for the saying of the woman*” (v.39). Jesus commanded that his servants go “*into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature*” (Mark 16:15). The New Testament bears record to the work of first century Christians (Acts and Epistles). We must also take this commission seriously. When one is a good seeker of the lost, he imitates the example of Jesus who “*came to seek and to save that which was lost*” (Luke 19:10).

Proper service to God will cause one to be a good server of others. Paul concluded many of his epistles with lists of those who served God, Paul and others (Rom. 16; 1 Cor. 16; Col. 4). Phoebe is commended as a servant of the church that is at Cenchrea and is described as one who had been a helper of many as well as Paul (Rom. 16:1,2). Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna and others who are not named ministered unto Jesus of their substance (Luke 8:2,3).

Jesus gave a simple illustration of how all can be servants of God when we serve others (Matt. 25:34-40).

THERE IS TO BE A CORRELATION BETWEEN WORSHIP AND SERVICE

In the record of the first example of the correlation between worship and service, one is able to see the principles involved in such relation-

ship. “*The Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering*” (Gen. 4:4). Notice that before Jehovah respected Abel’s offering, He respected Abel. Abel’s offering provided evidence “that he was righteous” (Heb. 11:4). His worship reflected his daily walk. Abel was not something different in worship than he was in daily life. Abel filled his life with righteous works (1 John 3:12). Jesus provided testimony to the righteous lifestyle of Abel (Matt. 23:35). What a recommendation! Abel shows that what one is in his daily service to God will be reflected in his worship.

It is not by accident that one who ascends into Jehovah’s hill and stands in Jehovah’s holy place is one who has “clean hands and a pure heart” (Psa. 24:3,4). Isaiah recorded Jehovah’s rejection of Israel’s worship based on a rejection of Israel’s lifestyle (Isa. 1:10-17). This is the same principle behind the rejection of Cain and his offering (Gen. 4:5; 1 John 3:12; Jude 11).

Jesus stressed the importance of one’s lifestyle when it comes to worship. He instructed one who was not in the proper relationship with his brother to “*leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift*” (Matt. 5:23). The lifestyle of early Christians is seen to correlate with their worship (Acts 2:42-47; 20:7-12; 1 Cor. 11:17-34). Emphasis is placed on proper service in view of proper worship in Revelation 7:9-17, 22:3. God intended for His people to take their lives and worship seriously!

Worship and service serve as two good words to summarize the Christian life. May each Christian give the needed attention to these areas of his life.

If an accountable person has not obeyed the Gospel Plan of Salvation (Rom. 10:17; John 8:24; Acts 2:38; 8:37; 22:16), he should do so now. Those who are Christians should live faithfully (Rev. 2:10).

ENDNOTES

¹Jarred S. Moore, “Why I Go to Mass Every Sunday,” *The Living Church*, October 17, 1931, as quoted by G. C. Brewer, *Contending For The Faith*, (Nashville, TN: Gospel Advocate Company, 1941), p.337

²Moore in Brewer, p.337

³Brewer, p.340

⁴W. E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, Co., 1966), Volume 4, p.236

⁵Word definitions are from BibleSoft’s *New Exhaustive Strong’s Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary*. Copyright (c) 1994, BibleSoft and International Bible Translators, Inc., unless otherwise noted.

⁶Francis Brown, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 2003), p.1104

⁷Vine, Volume 4, p.235

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THE PIVOTAL PERSON OF HISTORY

Roderick L. Ross

Jesus of Nazareth was the pivotal person of history. Time, in the Western world, is calculated from His existence. He influenced history more than any other individual who has ever lived. Buddha, Confucius, Muhammad, and others influenced portions of the world; but, Jesus influenced the entire world. The story of His life has inspired books, plays, movies, poems, songs, symphonies, operas, and most importantly, the lives of countless millions. Although His teachings have been corrupted and twisted to do harm, the advancement of civilization, the progress of charity, the promotion of freedom and liberty, the uplifting of the standard of living, the propagation of peace, these all are the true heritage of His life for the world.

However, for the believer, the disciple, the Christian, there is a greater heritage: one of mercy, one of grace, one of hope, one of faith, one of forgiveness. For to the believer, Jesus was more than a great historical figure; He was the only-begotten Son of God, the Christ, the Messiah, the Savior of the world. He was the One who fulfilled Moses and the Prophets. It is He that became the sacrifice for sin. His death was more than that of a martyr for a cause; it was the gift of God that brought the reality of the forgiveness of sins for those who would truly believe.

Unlike other world religions, the reality and authenticity of Jesus, the historical facts of His life, are the foundation of what is believed. If His life were different, He could not and would not be Who He claimed. Therefore, nothing is more important than examining His life. It tells the story. It is the Gospel, the good news of salvation come to this world.

“*And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name*” (John 20:30-31). “*And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified*” (Acts 20:32).

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JUST PREACH ABOUT LOVE

Jerry Joseph

Some are confused about what Bible “love” really is and how it is to be demonstrated.

In response to hearing the Truth upheld and false doctrine and false teachers being renounced, some get upset. They will many times say, “Why don’t you just preach about love?”

Some have the notion, and it is false, that you cannot declare and defend the Truth and at the same time have and demonstrate love for others. The thinking of some is that love will never condemn anyone nor anything, let alone sin, and if one does so, he is unloving. Yet, they condemn themselves according to their own “reasoning” by saying such things.

Some are confused about what Bible “love” really is and how it is to be demonstrated. Preaching Bible “love” in no way precludes declaring of Truth, demonstrating the Truth and defending the Truth. If we are to preach “love,” and we must, what is involved?

To preach “love” is to preach the **Love Of God.** “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8). “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him” (1 John 4:9).

To preach “love” is to preach **Love For God.** “Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment” (Matt. 22:36-38). “We love him, because he first loved us” (1 John 4:19). It is not enough just to declare with our lips our love for God. Our love must also be demonstrated “by” and “in” our lives. Therefore, we will: 1) Spend time in prayer (Col.

4:2); 2) Search and study God’s Word (John 5:39; 2 Tim. 2:15); 3) Seek spiritual things first (Matt. 6:33); 4) Serve the Lord in obeying His Word (John 14:15) and 5) State and Show our love for others (1 John 4:21).

To preach “love” is to preach **Love For God’s Word.** “O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day” (Psa. 119:97). If we have a love for God’s Word, then that will be demonstrated in what we proclaim and practice. A love for God’s Word means we will: 1) “Preach the word” (2 Tim. 4:2); 2) “Speak the truth in love” (Eph. 4:15); 3) Not preach a perverted Gospel (Gal. 1:6-9); 4) “Rightly divide the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15) and 5) Not “wrest” the Scriptures (2 Peter 3:16).

To preach “love” is to preach **Love For Those Who Are Godly And Those Who Are Godless.** We are to love all mankind including our enemies (Matt. 22:39; 5:43-44). “If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also” (1 John 4:20-21). We are to “love one another with a pure heart fervently” (1 Peter 1:23).

Love for others means we will do what we can to help physically and spiritually (Gal. 6:1-2, 10; 1 John 3:17; James 5:19-20; Jude 23). Proclaiming the Truth to others, praying for others, persuading people to give up their sins and to promptly obey the Gospel is demonstrating the proper kind of love for others. We cannot say that we are preaching “love” and that we genuinely love others when we withhold the saving Gospel from them and refuse to “reprove, rebuke and exhort” (2 Tim. 4:2).

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