

*In
search
of*

Truth and Right

Tim Henderson, Editor

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"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things." Phil. 4:8 (NASB-U)

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Christ**

Surely You Have Things Turned Around

By Stan Cox, via: Watchman Magazine

There are several things necessary for worship to be "true worship." **First**, God must be the object. By this we mean the one true God; the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The God referred to by Paul when he told the Athenians, *"Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands..."* (Acts 17: 22-24). The God to which Paul refers here is the one true God. He is the Creator of the universe. He is the omnipotent, omniscient, self-existent One. *"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,"* says the Lord, *"who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty"* (Revelation 1:8). All other gods are figments of man's imagination.

Second, in order for worship to be true it must be appropriate. That is, it must be worship that is accepted by the one, true God. If God has established parameters to acceptable worship, these must be recognized and heeded. John records the words of Jesus on this matter, *"...True worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him"* (John 4:23).

We are living in a time where the value or worth of an act of worship is



TIMES OF SERVICES

SUNDAY

Bible Classes* 10:00 AM

AM Worship 10:45 AM

PM Worship 6:30 PM

WEDNESDAY

Bible Classes* 7:00 PM

(* Bible Classes for All Ages)

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determined *experientially*. That is, if the worshipper has a positive **experience** in the worship, it is determined to be valid. Such a standard is by nature subjective, and leads to widely divergent types of worship. Where one might be most comfortable in a traditional, reverent, quiet service, another may thrive in a more contemporary, casual, even chaotic setting.

This experiential approach to worship has led many denominations to advertise their style of worship aggressively, to entice the curious. A perusal of the yellow pages in Ft. Worth, TX turned up the following phrases describing the worship services of local denominations. "Casual & Energetic Atmosphere", "A Contemporary Experience", "Contemporary Praise & Worship", "Tridentine Latin Mass Only & Always", "A Non-denominational church of Love, Light & Laughter", "Anglican Worship in Downtown Ft. Worth Using the 1928 Book of Common Prayer" and "Traditional Anglo-Catholic Church". One Methodist church went so far as to advertise a "traditional" service at 11:00 AM on Sunday, and a "contemporary" service earlier at 8:45 AM.

However, the focus of worship as revealed in the Bible is not if the worship pleased man; rather, did it please God?! In Matthew 15, Jesus quoted Isaiah in condemning the Pharisees for their lawlessness. Because they had substituted their own traditions for God's will He said, *"These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men"* (vs. 8-9). The quotation is from Isaiah 29. In that same context, the passage includes the following statement from God, *"Surely you have things turned around! Shall the potter be esteemed as the clay; For shall the thing made say of him who made it, 'He did not make me'? Or shall the thing formed say of him who formed it, 'He has no understanding'?"* (vs. 16).

Surely we have things turned around when we seek to worship God in ways that please us! As the creature, we have no right to choose how we will worship the Creator. It is the place of the Creator to make those determinations. We should rather seek to determine what God expects of us, and glory in submitting our will to His. It is a matter of faith. It is not our place to question the Master, only to serve him.

Jesus established this clearly in teaching his disciples. He noted that a master, when he has instructed a servant, does not thank the servant for doing what was required. He said, *"Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do'"* (Luke 17:9-10).

The Greek word from which we get the term worship is *proskuneo*. It has an interesting origin, derived from a word, *pros*, indicating direction, "forward or toward", and *kuon*, "a dog." The term in its literal sense would be rendered, *"to kiss, like a dog licking his master's hand; to fawn, or crouch to"* (Strong). Strong defines the term, as it is used in John 4, *"prostrate oneself in homage (do reverence to, adore): --worship."*

Another appropriate term in this context is *obeisance*. The term comes from a French word meaning "to obey", and means "deference or homage." Intrinsic in the concept of worship is deference to the one who is the object of the worship. In giving homage to God, it must be understood that we defer to His will for us in our worship.

There is much revealed in the New Testament regarding what God expects in Christian worship. Instructions are given regarding both the elements of Christian worship, and the manner in which these elements are to be accomplished. God has clearly stated what he requires of us. It is required of us to study those instructions, and conform our practice to His will. Otherwise, our worship is not true! *"And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."* (Matthew

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Clarity

By Gary Henry,
via: Diligently Seeking God

"Then they said to Moses, 'You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.' " Ex. 20:19

As long as we can avoid being "told" what God requires of us, we think we can postpone doing anything about our responsibilities. If somehow we can say that we're not sure what God's will is, we can substitute ambiguity for action. But when God speaks, the issue is suddenly clarified. The focus then shifts from the doubtful issue of whether God's will is this or that to the rather simple issue of whether we're going to comply or not. God having spoken and we having heard His will, there is nowhere to hide. The time for obedience has come.

Suppose that I have incurred an expense from a business in a city far away, an expense that in my opinion is at least unwelcome, and maybe even unreasonable. The first thing I can tell myself is that I don't have to pay the debt until the bill actually arrives. But beyond that, until the bill arrives I can tell myself that there's a possibility the debt will not even be assessed against me—if the company has not actually "spoken," there's a chance it really has no desire to collect the debt after all. Safely hidden behind this barrier of uncertainty, I will probably procrastinate going to the mailbox. I know that the moment I find the bill in my hands, the issue will be clarified. Immediately, the focus will shift from the question of what the will of the creditor might be to the question of whether I'm going to pay the bill or not.

Is there a clue here as to why we study the Bible so little? And perhaps a clue also as to why, having studied the Bible, we spend so much time in textual controversy and doctrinal debate? Surely God's word is not as hard to comprehend as the vast number of our disputes would seem to indicate. Sometimes the more likely possibility is that we are just putting off "going to the mailbox." The complexity of our talk about what God's will "might" be is a substitute for action in regard to what our conscience already knows. God has not only spoken, He has spoken clearly. What is needed from us is a little less talk and a lot more action.

Why are we so terrified for God to speak to us? Is it because we know that when God speaks we must either do what He asks or tell Him we will not obey
Oswald Chambers

News N Notes

Sick:

- Continue to remember Ed Roberts' father; Marie Roberts will have eye surgery next week; Cindy North as she faces further surgeries; Joy Isinghood continues to be sick

Nursing Home:

- Hazel Carroll, Ethel Mahan, Pauline Sellers

Shut-ins:

- Josephine Clow, Mabel Fleming, Rhea Henthorn, Pauline Midcap
- A card, phone call or a visit can really brighten their days.

Meetings in the area:

- There are still several meetings going on in the area, check the bulletin board for dates and times.

Something Missing:

- Don't let me miss anything, if you see someone or something is missing, feel free to call me at one of the numbers below: 304-914-2262—304-914-2263