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Learning To Please God - Lesson #10

WORSHIP THAT PLEASES GOD

By Charles Box

Those who became Christians in the first century assembled and worshipped God steadfastly. They understood their own spiritual need and the spiritual need of others for worship. They also understood the commandments of God. Those who fail to worship scripturally will die spiritually. Worship is of such importance that God will punish with vengeance those who willfully neglect worship. "For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Hebrews 10:30-31)

God is our loving Father; He seeks our worship, just as we want to be with our children. "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:23-24) Jesus expressed His desire for worship with His disciples in the words of Luke 22:15. "And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." It is the desire of Jesus that we worship God through Him. Is that your desire? Those who come to see God as the great creator will worship Him or give Him "worth." "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." (Psalms 46:10) Worship grows out of thankfulness and appreciation to God. The unthankful will not worship. "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." (Romans 1:21) Thankfulness within me is expressed in my outward worship.

Not all worship is acceptable to God; it is possible for one's worship to be in vain. Cain is an example of one who worshipped the true God, but his worship was in an unacceptable manner. "But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell." (Genesis 4:5) Jesus said men's commands and traditions make worship vain or useless. "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matthew 15:9) A careful study of the Bible must be made so as to distinguish between truth and tradition in worship. Both in living and worship our aim must be to do the will of God. (John 6:38)

True worship must be in spirit and in truth. "Spirit and truth" are the two elements which distinguish true worship from worship which is unacceptable. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24) Communion every Sunday is part of true worship. Jesus gave His body and blood on the cross to provide remission of our sins. In the weekly observance of the Lord's Supper we remember His sacrifice. (Matthew 26:26-28) Christians pray together. These prayers are to be lead by godly men. (1 Timothy 2:8) Singing is also a part of worship "in spirit and in truth." The only instrument to be used is the "Heart." God desires that we sing, not that we sing and play! The Hebrew writer wrote, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." (Hebrews 2:12) Original, steadfast worship also involved giving. "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." (1 Corinthians 16:2) You will never out give God. In New Testament worship Christians also heard gospel preaching. "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." (Acts 20:7) Christian worship must be regular or steadfast. (Acts 2:42)

Become a Christian and worship God faithfully. (Mark 16:16, Acts 2:42) Let us worship for our own spiritual strength and growth. Let us worship to encourage others. Let us worship steadfastly because we owe it to God.

True or False:

1. _____ True worshippers must worship in spirit and in truth. (John 4:24)
2. _____ It is impossible for worship to be in vain. (Matthew 15:9)
3. _____ Christians should commune every Sunday. (Acts 20:7)
4. _____ God is pleased if we sing and play in worship. (Hebrews 2:12)
5. _____ Both men and women can lead public prayers. (1 Timothy 2:8)