

Words of Truth



“At Least They’re Here”

By: Brian A. Yeager

There have been many occasions wherein I have preached about people wasting time being pew warmers. Vain worship is simply a waste of time because it is not pleasing to God (Matthew 6:7 and Mark 7:7-9). When I have made such statements there are often odd looks on people’s faces. From time to time someone will tell me that such was a harsh statement. More than once, someone has said, “well, at least they’re here.”

Folks, when people come before God to worship without a contrite spirit their worship is likened unto murder, offering unclean blood, and even idolatry (Isaiah 66:2-4). How does that jive with the “at least they’re here” mindset? Do you think God just wants people showing up to a building to hear some preacher speak (Ezekiel 33:30-33)? Do you think that God just loves to have people pay Him lip service (Isaiah 29:13-14)? God calls this vain worship (Matthew 15:7-9).

Over the years congregations of God’s people have focused on “inviting visitors”. Many times people rejoice when an alien sinner sits in the midst of the assembly. How often has the consideration been about God’s feelings on the matter? Sure, it is permissible to have alien sinners come into the assembly to learn (I Corinthians 14:23), but should they be treated like God is happy with their worship? What about those “visitors” that show up week after week and think they’re “on the way to Christ”? Is there such language in God’s word? Do we do them a service or disservice by allowing them to think God is pleased with their presence among His people? Folks, a hard lesson is about to be taught. It will be offensive to some. However, truth must be presented and the resolution will follow. Let’s see what God thinks about people in sin worshipping Him.

Just Read God’s View On The Matter

“The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight... The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination: how much more, when he bringeth it with a wicked mind... He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination... To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil... Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not

hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it. To what purpose cometh there to me incense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto me... I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream... Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation... I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting" (Proverbs 15:8, Proverbs 21:27, Proverbs 28:9, Isaiah 1:11-16, Jeremiah 6:19-20, Amos 5:21-24, Matthew 23:14, and I Timothy 2:8).

There Is More To Consider

When it comes to the assembly for worship, there are some things we should see clearly. For example, who does God want partaking of the Lord's Supper? Not once do we find an alien sinner, in God's word, remembering the death of Christ on the first day of the week. Each time we read about the Lord's Supper it was disciples [those who follow Christ – John 8:31 and I John 2:3-6] partaking of this memorial (Matthew 26:17-30, Mark 14:12-25, Luke 22:7-20, and Acts 20:7). When Paul wrote about the Lord's Supper he established that it is a communion (I Corinthians 10:16-17). We know we cannot have fellowship with the ungodly (Ephesians 5:11 and II John 9-11). When someone who is not in a right relationship with the Lord partakes of the Lord's Supper they eat and drink damnation to their souls (I Corinthians 11:23-32). Think about that the next time someone in sin sits next to you and partakes of the Lord's Supper. Is God pleased? NO! God does not want sinners worshipping Him (Psalms 5:4-5).

We know that God does not hear sinners (Isaiah 59:1-2 and John 9:31). Worship is to be done in spirit and truth (John 4:23-24). Yet, these individuals sit as children of the devil in a pew while raising their voices to God in praise (Matthew 12:30 and I John 3:8-10). Brethren, how can we sit idly and let such occur? How can we let someone put money in the collection tray when God hates what he or she is doing? The collection on the first day of the week is of the saints (I Corinthians 16:1-2). God is not pleased when someone who is not in a right relationship with Him partakes in these acts of service and worship to Him. How could we then say something like "at least they're here" (Proverbs 28:4)? Instead of rejoicing that someone is angering God with their worship, we should be seeking the solution.

The Solution To This Problem

When we have someone in the assembly that is lost, we cannot encourage them by allowing them to think their worship is good with God. We need to help that individual be converted to Christ (Psalms 51:13 and Acts 3:19), so that their worship is not in vain (II Chronicles 7:14 and I Peter 3:12). The solution is not silence. Action must be taken so that a false sense of security does not reside with those who are lost (cf. Ezekiel 13:10).

Conclusion

Some people will read this article and respond like Cain did to Abel (Genesis 4:1-8 and I John 3:12). Listen, we all need to make sure our lives are right. We need to help others do the same. It is not just okay to show up to worship. We must have more than a bodily presence (Philippians 3:3).