

Words of Truth



Being Prepared To Worship God

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Many years ago I went through a period of time when my faith was weak and I failed our Lord. There were many things in my life at that time that I was not doing right. Had I died at that time or had the Lord returned, any one (James 2:10-12) of those sins would have brought damnation to my soul (Ezekiel 18:4, Romans 6:23, and Revelation 21:8). Among the many things wrong in my life was my lack of focus on worshipping God properly.

I would spend every moment prior to assembling to worship God thinking about and doing things that certainly were not centered upon our Lord. **A Christian is expected to have his or her mind focused on spiritual things at all times.** This is plainly recorded, through inspiration (II Timothy 3:16-17), by the Apostle Paul: *“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God... Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ”* (Romans 12:1-2 and II Corinthians 10:5). Very often, I failed to have my mind on the things of God in that dark time of my life. While that certainly affected every part of my life, it really crippled me when I came to worship God. This is true for many reasons. Let’s examine some of those reasons.

When Our Minds Aren’t Prepared We Are Not Examining Ourselves

Prior to worshipping the Lord, we are supposed to examine ourselves and make sure we are right in His sight. Notice: *“For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world”* (I Corinthians 11:23-32).

When We Are Not Examining Ourselves We Are Bringing Our Sins With Us To Worship God

When we come before God to worship Him we are supposed to be clean (I Timothy 2:8). Think

about this next point carefully. When we come before God with sin in our lives, He rejects our worship (Proverbs 15:8, Proverbs 15:29, Proverbs 28:9, Isaiah 59:1-3, John 9:31, and I Peter 3:12). Consider the following Scriptures: *“Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah. 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... Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not; And come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations... As for you, O house of Israel, thus saith the Lord GOD; Go ye, serve ye every one his idols, and hereafter also, if ye will not hearken unto me: but pollute ye my holy name no more with your gifts, and with your idols... Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded”* (Isaiah 1:10-16, Jeremiah 7:9-10, Ezekiel 20:39, and James 4:8). True repentance includes the changing of one’s actions (Ezekiel 14:6, Matthew 3:8, and Acts 26:20) as well as one’s heart (I Samuel 7:3, I Samuel 7:3, Luke 1:13-17, and Acts 8:22). Our heart is key in coming before God to worship.

Our Changes Must Be True Changes Of Heart

Notice these Scriptures: *“O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee... Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men”* (Jeremiah 4:14 and Matthew 15:7-9). As you just read, when we come before God with our hearts unchanged our worship is vain [empty]. This goes back to our mental preparation!

It All Comes Back To Our Mindset

Ezra prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD and to do it (Ezra 7:10). This must be our mindset as well. We have to be a people who prepare our hearts and our minds to properly serve and worship God (Joshua 22:5). Rather than being caught up with all the worldly things, let’s make sure our minds are on spiritual things (Colossians 3:1-4). In doing so, we’ll be properly prepared to worship God.

Conclusion

As you think about the lessons in this article consider pondering how much you prepare to worship God. Do not just make those thoughts about the first day of the week. Also, consider how you do or do not clear your mind before you pray to God **even in your daily living**. When you pray to God is your heart and mind in the right place (Ephesians 4:17-24)? Have you really prepared to come before the throne of the Almighty? When you are focused on praying and coming before God with the right heart and mind, you’ll find that there is no room for sinful thoughts to enter into your mind. In that, you’ll not only purge sin from your life, but you’ll find yourself always ready to come before God (Psalms 18:20-23).