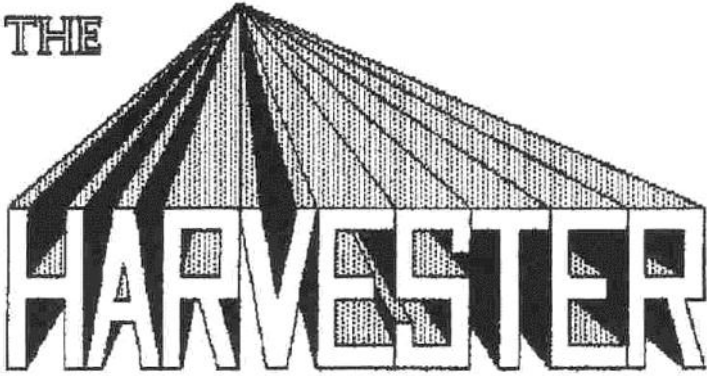


THE



"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest" (Luke 10:2)

December 2012

No. 324

BEING DISRESPECTFUL TO GOD

First Peter 2:17 tells us to "Fear God." This means to respect him, like respecting fire. We know that He loves us, but we also know He can destroy those who do not respect Him (Matt. 10:28).

There are many ways we can show disrespect to God. For instance, we can have no regard for His commandments, like Uzzah, who touched the ark (2 Sam. 6:3-7). We can also disrespect God by showing disregard in the

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worship service. Israel was guilty of this, as Malachi writes:

A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name? Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the LORD is contemptible. And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts. (Mal. 1:6-8. See also Mal. 1:13-14, 3:8-9, 13-14)

Today we can be just as guilty as the examples above: offering polluted (not our best) sacrifices, calling it wearisome, robbing tithes (contributions), saying what profit, honoring with just our lips and teaching man's doctrines. Let's look at some of the ways we can show disrespect to God through our worship service.

First, we can disrespect God by "*forsaking the assembling of ourselves together*" (Heb. 10:25). Forsake means to abandon, to desert. We must not willfully, purposely miss the services. It's okay to miss when one is physically unable to come. Forsaking the assembling refers to times when we make excuses about coming; we have to desire to be with God's children, our brethren in Christ. Some make the excuse that the church is filled with hypocrites. There may be hypocrites in the assembly, but we can't let them stop us from worshipping God. If we hide behind a hypocrite, then we must be smaller than one.

Some are simply not willing to acknowledge that God is our Creator and therefore, deserving of our time.

We can also show disrespect to God by coming to the worship service for the wrong reason. "*True worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth*" (John 4:23,24). Some do not come to worship, honor and praise His Son's name by giving thanks, breaking bread, and fellowshiping like the early disciples did. Some come to build their image in the community. Some come to find out the latest news or to gossip. Some come to show off new clothes or jewelry. And some show up because of what others will think if they don't!

This doesn't mean we should quit coming if this describes us, but we need to realize the importance of being in the assembly. It's good to surround ourselves with fellow Christians. That's why early disciples met every day.

And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. (Acts 2:46-47)

Another way to disrespect God is to habitually come in late to the worship service. Why wait until the last minute? It is disrespectful to other members as well as to God! Is it to sleep late because we stayed up too late the night before? Do we start getting ready too late? Start earlier. Do we try to avoid the first part of the service because it's "boring"? Consider the parable of ten virgins (Matt. 25:1-3). Tardiness cost them dearly! It's unwise and disrespectful! It's an unnecessary distraction to all when we hear doors open late and everyone looks back.

Mostly, it shows a lack of respect for the One to whom we have assembled here to worship!

We can show disrespect to God by having unscriptural music. This goes along with other man-made innovations like Bible classes, church-sponsored bake sales and softball games. There is no example in the New Testament for using mechanical instruments of music. But even without using instruments we can disrespect God concerning music. We are told to sing (Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:16), but some do not even sing at all! We should concentrate on singing with the spirit and with the understanding (1 Cor. 14:15). I have heard some song leaders rightly remind us by saying, "Pay attention to the words." Some members actually put too much emphasis on getting all the right notes. We are not singing notes; we are singing a message!

By not praying correctly, we can show disrespect to God. We are not to make a big show out of it (Matt. 6:5-7). Pray with a humble attitude as the publican did: *"And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner"* (Luke 18:13). When prayer is being led, we should listen to the one praying, not let our mind wander on worldly things. Prayer is a serious matter. It is communicating with God! It must be sincere and not disrespectful.

The speaker in the worship service can disrespect God in his preaching. He must preach the Truth (Gal. 1:8-9) and declare the whole Truth (Acts 20:27). He isn't to preach to spare feelings or to tickle itching ears (2 Tim. 4:1-4), to cause strife, or to avenge someone. Likewise the audience must also show respect for God's Word. They should listen attentively because the Gospel is our salvation (Rom. 1:16). The speaker's delivery may bore you, but the Word from

which he speaks is essential. Those in the audience do not need to make distractions for others – rustling papers, clipping nails, or playing games. It is disrespectful to God and his Word!

One of the most disrespectful things we can do to God is to not properly observe the Lord's Supper. All members must take it every first day of the week. *"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them"* (Acts 20:7a). Note that this verse says "disciples", not good-standing members only. Of course, we are required only to take it when physically able; God will not ask something impossible for us to do. We must especially remember Christ's death as we partake:

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. (1 Cor. 11:26-29)

The word *unworthily* in this passage means *irreverently* according to Strong's Concordance. Partaking of the Lord's Supper irreverently, without regard to the Lord, is certainly disrespectful!

We can finally show disrespect to God in the worship service by not contributing according to the Bible pattern. We must give of our means (1 Cor. 16:1,2). We must purpose in our hearts what to give.

But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountiful-

ly. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. (2 Cor. 9:6-7)

Do we pay bills first and then God gets the leftovers? *Purpose* means to decide beforehand. To fumble in our pocketbooks for a last minute decision is disrespectful to God!

All these items discussed might suggest that we become rigid robots, have a set routine and certain motions. But that is far from the truth. Remember that love is the key. We go to the service because WE LOVE GOD. Love is what motivates us and guides us through each part of the worship service. Therefore we will be considerate of God and others, and this will show that we do respect God.

Adapted from a sermon by RAY McMANUS
(Deceased)

APOLOGIA

QUESTION: Is it God's will that we work six days and have a day of rest?

ANSWER: This was the provision for Israel during the era of God's law given through Moses.

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

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Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidervant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it. (Exo. 20:8-11)

There is no mention in Scripture of the Sabbath ever being observed by God's people for 2500 years until the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage. You will note in Genesis 2:2 that "*HE [God] rested on the seventh day.*" There is no mention of man likewise resting until the era of Moses.

There is no doubt that rest and absence from pressure is good for the fleshly, human mind and body, but no Scripture requires it for God's people in this day and era.

HARRY COBB
(Wedowee, AL)

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. Why did Moses ask God to commission a new leader over the Israelites in Numbers 27?
2. When David fled from Saul, he went to a place called Gath, where David was very much afraid of the king there. What did David do to avoid trouble?
3. In the book of Isaiah, when God spoke against Assyria, He said that their king saw himself gathering the earth like what?

Gospel Meetings

DATES	PLACE	SPEAKER
December 28 - 30	Verona Congregation Verona, KY	Joe Hill (Hager Hill, KY)

4. In his letter to the Romans, Paul said that we should owe no one anything except what?

5. In Paul's second letter to Timothy, what three things did Paul instruct Timothy to bring when Timothy came to visit Paul?

and remember last month's questions?

1. On which day of creation did God bring about humans? THE SIXTH DAY (Genesis 1:27-31)

2. Joshua sent out two spies to investigate Jericho, and they stayed with a woman named Rahab, whose occupation was what? A PROSTITUTE (Joshua 2:1)

3. According to Jeremiah's final prophecy, which nation was "a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunk?" BABYLON (Jeremiah 51:7)

4. In the letter to the Romans, where did Paul say he planned to go before he could visit Rome? JERUSALEM (Romans 15:25)

5. According to 1st John, what three elements bear witness on Earth? THE BLOOD, THE SPIRIT, AND THE WATER (1 John 5:8)

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. (2 Cor. 13:14)