

THE RIGHT ATTITUDE FOR TRUE/PROPER WORSHIP

Psalm 96:7-9

Introduction: Sadly, most Christians think that "going to church" is the same thing as worship, but it is not. True it is that "in Church" one should worship, but most do not. True worship includes an attitude of thanksgiving for the goodness of God and then there is a sense of spiritual need and then the sense of indebtedness to Jesus Christ for all He has done. However, there is one more attitude that is essential for worship and without it one will attend a worship service and go away no better than when he/she came. This attitude is most often ignored but it is necessary for true worship.

I. THE ATTITUDE OF SELF-DENIAL IS ESSENTIAL FOR TRUE WORSHIP

1. Self-denial is essential in what one gives financially.

- Nobody worships "empty-handed" for giving is a part of one being devoted to the Lord.
- Christians should give in gratitude and thanks for what God has given and the Lord Jesus has done.
- God's people have always given of what they had.
 - Jesus spoke of the widow who could only give "mite: and complimented her on the little she gave because there was self-denying in her giving.
 - Zacchaeus, when coming face to face with the Lord Jesus said, "*...Lord, I give half my goods to feed the poor...*"
 - Under the eyes of Jesus, Zacchaeus felt that he just couldn't give enough.
- Christian giving is to reach into self-denial and no Christian gives in the spirit of Jesus until he/she gives out of self-denial.
- Christian! Have YOU been giving out of self-denial, to the point of SACRIFICE?
 - Only when one gives out of self-denial does his/her giving bring one nearer to the Lord.

2. Giving one's heart to the Lord Jesus is an act of self-denial.

- The truest thing one can give to the Lord Jesus is his/her heart.
 - It is the gradual deepening of self-sacrifice that creates the attitude of self-denial.
- The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit - a broken and contrite heart.
- To be an acceptable worshipper of God, one must give him/herself, denying his/her lusts, laying aside his/her pride and being repentant.
 - To not do so is but mockery and worship will be empty and nothing.
- True worship means self-denial and there will be no blessing in the sanctuary/worship until one's heart is penitent and humble.

3. Jesus taught how to worship properly.

- "*...Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way. First be reconciled to thy brother and then come and offer thy gift...*"
- Jesus insists that at the back of every gift there needs to be the self-denial of the heart.
 - If worship is to be acceptable to God, then one must lay aside his/her pride and humble him/herself as a little child.
 - It is not easy for a person to deny self and his/her pride.
- To be an acceptable worshipper, one must deny him/herself.

- True worship is not easy, it is very hard.
 - Worship is not a comfortable hour on Sunday with beautiful music and a good speaker.
 - Worship is an attitude of the heart and soul that is IMPOSSIBLE without self-denial.
 - Pure worship does not demand much from the intellect, but there is a great demand on one's soul, a call to sacrifice, to deny self.

4. Church attendance requires self-denial.

- For many Christians, attending Sunday services is a battle.
 - Sunday is a day of rest.
 - Not feeling too well.
 - Looks like it might rain.
 - Some things that need to be done around the house.
- Self-denial is needed for one to be in worship services every Sunday.
- Christians forget that self-denial is good for them and pleasing to God.
- What was Jesus' attitude toward worship?
 - *"...Then Jesus as His custom was, went into the synagogue..."*
 - The Son of God, Heaven was His home, YET, it was Jesus' custom to go to Church regularly.
 - He never said, "I don't need to go, I can fellowship with My heavenly Father anywhere..."

5. Church attendance is worship and also fellowship.

- Public worship is an assembly of CHRISTIAN people.
- Public worship is a fellowship of people bound together by their common faith and loving one another in the Lord Jesus Christ - a FAMILY.
- In every fellowship/family there is always an element of self-denial/sacrifice.
 - Everyone must practice self-denial, giving a little here and there as in a home, so it must be in the fellowship of worship.
 - Mutual consideration, a willingness to put up with/forgo a little for the sake of others for whom Jesus also died.
 - The music/hymns and the preached message may not appeal to some, but does to others, so true worship calls for a little self-denial on everyone's part.
- Caring about others sitting around with an attitude of self-denial is a necessary part of worship.

6. Coming to the Lord requires self-denial.

- Quite often many Christians attend worship and never experience true worship.
 - Thoughts are a thousand miles away.
 - Pews are too uncomfortable.
- One must quietly reject intruding thoughts, making one's self concentrate on prayer and praise and often it is very hard to do so, but it is essential if one wants to experience the Lord's presence.
- Each person must make the needed effort to shut the doors in one's mind to outside thoughts and withdraw into the Lord's presence.
- Only when one shuts out the outside and can focus on worshipping the Lord will public worship become a blessing, thus exercising self-denial.

CONCLUSION:

1. Christians go to Church but not every Christian experiences true worship.
2. True worship demands that one exercise SELF-DENIAL.
 - Self-denial in what one gives financially.
 - Self-denial in becoming more spiritual, a deepening of self-sacrifice.
 - Self-denial in making one's heart clean and pure.
 - Self-denial in being faithful in Church attendance.
 - Self-denial during worship services.
 - Self-denial in approaching the Lord.
3. CHRISTIAN! How much do YOU deny of yourself to be the kind of Christian, brother/sister Jesus wants you to be?