

## JUST AS WE ARE?

**Malachi 1:7-14**

(Not entirely original with me)

**Introduction:** It has been preached, taught and witnessed that God accepts the sinner just as he/she is when he/she comes to Him for salvation, that there is nothing one can do to better him/herself in the eyes of God to make God like/love him/her any more. All this is true because anybody who will come to God's Son, Jesus for salvation is unconditionally accepted, no matter their lifestyle. However, there is a line drawn after one's salvation about his/her "lifestyle."

### I. GOD ACCEPTS ANY PERSON WHO COMES TO JESUS FOR SALVATION

1. *"...All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me, I will by no means cast out..." (John 6:37-38)*
  - *"...For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast..." (Ephesians 2:7-10)*
  - *1 Corinthians 3:14-15*
2. God accepts people just as they are because He offers complete grace, mercy, love and forgiveness to all who believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord.
  - It is indeed true that "once saved, always saved."
  - All kinds of people with all kinds of lifestyles have come to the Lord Jesus to be saved and none have been turned away.

### II. GOD DOES NOT ACCEPT JUST ANY KIND OF LIFESTYLE OF THE CHRISTIAN

1. *"...What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?..." (Romans 6:1-3)*
2. God does not save people just to keep them out of hell.
  - *2 Corinthians 9:8*
  - God saves people so that they may do good works for Him and when the people who say they are "Christians" don't do things pleasing to God, He is very displeased.
3. *Malachi 1:7-14 (text)* - God tells those who say they are "worshipping" Him that He is not pleased with the "way," manner of their acts of "worship."
4. Churches of today are doing the same thing that Israel was doing - they are gathering for "worship" as a church "family" but the proper spirit is not there.
  - People are coming to "worship" in inappropriate, immodest dress, attention elsewhere, attitudes not aimed at worship.
  - It is one thing for God to accept us "just as we are" when coming to Him for salvation, but it is an entirely different matter when we are coming to Him, as His Children, to "worship."
  - Congregations are wanting entertainment, "feel good" services and not to be bothered with anything that might cause them to stop and have to think about their souls.
  - *James 4:8-10*
  - Have today's "Christians," Churches become so spiritually advanced that they don't need to listen to two hours of preaching as in the forefather's days, so demand 20 to 30 minutes at the most?

- Why is it that today's Churches don't even need a sermon, a study of God's Word, so have replaced the sermon with "praise" songs, dramas, etc?

- *2 Timothy 4:3-4*

4. How have the Churches of today come to this point? Just as Israel did when Malachi wrote his words.
  - Israel lost their reverence for God.
  - Claims of belief, love and commitment mean nothing when there is no deep heart-felt reverence.
  - Making claims about true worship and even showing energy and excitement yet having no reverence for God is not worship, for even the priests of Baal did those things.

*(1 Kings 18:25-29)*

### **III. A SPIRIT OF REVERENCE, RESPECT, AWE AND FEAR ARE IMPORTANT TO GOD**

1. *Hebrews 12:28-29; 1 Timothy 2:1-3; 1 Timothy 3:4-5*
2. The Christian is to be reverent with Godly fear, reverent with Godliness, reverent with sober-mindedness.
  - *1 Thessalonians 5:6; 1 Peter 1:13; 1 Peter 5:8-9*
3. Shallow Christians and their lifestyles do not show reverence and actually mocks those who do try to be reverent and live respectful lives, honoring God.
4. Israel had turned from God and looked for their own style of "entertainment."
  - Sadly, so have many Christians/Churches of today for they have turned their eyes away from God and replaced TRUE worship with their own brand of "spiritual" entertainment.
5. After one becomes a Christian, God expects that person to ACT like a Christian, to live like the Lord Jesus Christ who is the model, the pattern, the example for the Christian.

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. God is willing to accept us as we are in relation to salvation but it is a different thing when it comes to worship.
2. God will turn His back on shallow worship which so many are "offering" today.
3. God's standards for the Christian's life and for worship are high.
4. God is NOT pleased and will not accept "worship" that lacks reverence, respect, awe and fear toward Him.
5. God is NOT honored when the preaching of His Word is minimized or replaced with something else.
6. *"...Be still.....and know that I am God....." (Psalm 46:10)*