

THEY THAT WORSHIP GOD (I)

Jhn 4:19-24

INTRODUCTION:

- A. In 2005 AL newspapers had articles about First Assembly of God engaging in "Fear Factor" ministry, based on TV show requiring people to do disgusting things. As a part of "Fear Factor" ministry young people were swallowing live goldfish!
- B. "People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals" (PETA) put pressure and soon headline in paper read: "Church agrees to stop practice of swallowing live goldfish."
- C. Such foolishness attempts to tickle senses and "tickle ears" of members and prospects. One wonders if concept of worship today is that worship is directed toward and for men, rather than toward and for God.
- D. Many churches magnify man (men & women) performing and dazzle the audience. I wonder if God feels left out.
- E. Churches having a "Contemporary Worship" alternative?
 - 1. Deviating from solemn honoring of God, and attempting to make ones present feel good about being there.
 - 2. Tell people "come as you are", "put some excitement in your worship", and "we will accept anybody."
 - 3. Emphasis placed on "Praise Team", swaying in rhythm with songs, clapping hands, & cheering preacher when he says something humorous or when they agree.
- F. Magnifying man & minimizing God. What God wants takes a back seat to what men want in their worship to God.
- G. Commanded to worship God and him alone Matt 4:10
- H. In some faithful churches worship seems cold, "matter of fact" - just a "form". What, or is anything wrong?
- I. In others, worship service is treated in a light-hearted flippant sort of way, with seemingly no seriousness
- J. Parents, at times, not conveying to children the sense of reverence we should exhibit in our worship services.
- K. Must understand what constitutes worship. When do we and when do we not worship, does conduct determine whether I worship or not?

DISCUSSION:

I. WHAT CONSTITUTES WORSHIP

- A. W.E. Vine's Expository Dictionary gives following terms about worship used in the New Testament.
 - 1. **Proskuneo**- (pros- toward + kuneo- to kiss) most frequent word rendered worship, an act of homage or reverence toward God. Matt 2:2, 8, 11; 4:10; 8:2; 9:18; 14:33; 15:25; 20:20; 28:9, 17.
 - 2. **Sebomai**- To revere, the feeling of awe or devotion of worship Matt 15:9
 - 3. **Sebazomai**- To honor religiously. Rom 1:25
 - 4. **Latreuo**- To serve or render religious service Phil 3:3
 - 5. **Eusebeo**- To act piously (deeply religious) towards... Acts 17:23

- B. Vine: "A consideration of the above verbs shows it is not confined to praise; broadly it may be regarded as direct acknowledgement to God, of His nature, attributes, ways and claims, whether by outgoing of the heart in praise and thanksgiving or by deed done in acknowledgement."
- C. **Thayer's**: definition: To kiss the hand to (towards) one, in token of reverence -- by kneeling or prostration to do homage (to one) or make obeisance
- D. **Webster**: Extravagant respect or admiration for or devotion to an object of esteem.
- E. Definition of terms: **Reverence**: profound adoring - awed respect - a gesture of respect; **Homage**: ceremony in which one acknowledges himself the vassal (a person under the protection of another) of a Lord; **Obeisance**: movement of the body made in token of respect or submission - to bow (Acts 10:25,26)
- F. Worship: a feeling of respect or reverence Lk 14:10, a frame of heart or mind, an attitude that is expressed in acts or movements of body. An act proceeding from or the result of the condition of a person's heart!.

II. ACTS ENGAGED IN WHILE ASSEMBLED ARE IN AND OF THEMSELVES NOT NECESSARILY WORSHIP!

- A. The acts engaged in are only expressions of worship
 - 1. Eating unleavened bread and drinking grape juice is not worship, in and of itself. But done in response and according to instructions of our Lord it is
 - 2. Singing songs is not worship of itself. But done as a show of reverence and respect for God, it is
 - 3. Giving to a cause not of itself worship, it becomes such when done in response to God's will
- B. All overt or observable worship has some form
 - 1. The feeling of awe, reverence, thanksgiving, or praise is expressed in some way
 - 2. Form of expression will necessarily take some pattern - orderly or haphazard
- C. Paul taught: "decently and in order" 1Cor 14:40 All overt worship must take some form or order
- D. However, our form may simply become ritualistic.
 - 1. May be without heart Prov 4:23; 23:7; Jhn 4:23,24
 - 2. May be without real sacrifice - yet Jesus demands sacrifice Rom 12:1,2; Matt 16:24-26
 - 3. May not respect God's authority Mk 7:9; Matt 23:3,4
 - 4. May be following form out of habit Isa 1:10-15
- E. Follow form - heart must be in acts we perform: singing; Praying 1Cor 14:15,16; ("spirit" = the sentient element in man, by which he perceives, reflects, feels, desires Vines); Giving 2Cor 9:6-8 - Lord's Supper 1Cor 11:23-26

CONCLUSION:

- A. Next study looks at various kinds of worship, our attitudes toward worship and some efforts to improve our worship
- B. Think about our attempts to worship God. Are we truly worshipping or are we just going through the motions.