

How to Put the Most into Worship

Lesson Two - Considering One Another in Order to Stir Up Love and Good Works
Surrendering myself to encouraging and edifying others in worship.

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction: A Sermon Never Forgotten

Throughout the years I have heard many wonderful sermons which I have forgotten, but one sermon have I seen, and it has remained in my heart until this day. It happened on a Sunday morning when I was on my way to the small congregation in Munich, Germany, on a cold day in November.

After I got out of bed, I looked through the window which was covered with ice ferns. New deep snow had fallen during the night covering the streets of the city. I tried to decide whether I should go to worship or just stay home and read my Bible.

I realized the congregation would miss me, for I was the only song leader they had. On the other hand I would have to walk a half block to catch the bus to the building. Finally I decided to go, but only because I must lead the singing.

While I was riding the bus, I noticed two people trying hard to make their path through the snow. I recognized the people and knew where they were going. They were Brother and Sister Trollman, a faithful couple who attended every service. Brother Trollman was a man in his eighties who had lost his eyesight. His only guidance was his seventy-eight year old wife, who was lame in one foot. They lived in a little two room apartment, and received a little support from the government. Because they could not afford to ride the bus to the services, which were about three miles away, they walked the distance every Lord's Day.

Here I was sitting in a warm bus, unwilling to go to worship, forced by my duty as a song leader, and there, outside in the cold weather, were two old people driven to worship by their love for the Lord and for their brethren.

I was not able to do anything but blush, ashamed of myself and the weak faith and love I had proved to my Lord and His children. I felt like an evildoer in court being judged by his own conscience. This old couple without their knowledge and without one word had taught me a greater lesson than could ever be said in words. (An American G.I. "The Power Of An Example," The Lehman Avenue Weekly Communicator, Feb. 4, 1987)

A. Worship is not about me

1. We come to worship services to adore and glorify God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
2. We come to worship to encourage and edify others in order to "stir up love and good works"
3. And when we delight in doing these two things, our own needs in worship will be fulfilled and satisfied

B. Faithfully assembling for worship is not about me. (Consumer Christianity)

I. WORSHIP IS DESIGNED TO BE JOYFUL

A. Psalm 100 - Christians should already be joyful, even before beginning to worship. How much more should we rejoice when in worship? Christians have every reason to rejoice!

- B. Phil. 4:4; Luke 2:10, 10:20; 3John 4
- C. Singing is a joyful activity - James 5:13; Acts 16:25; Heb. 13:15
- D. Bible study is a joyful activity - Matt. 5:6; Psalm 1:1-2, 119:148; Jer. 15:16
- E. Giving is to be a joyful activity; it gives us the means whereby we can express our similarity to the Father - 2Cor. 9:7; Acts 20:35
- F. Praying is joyful - 1Sam. 2:1; Psalm 68:3; Luke 1:46-47
- G. Partaking of the Lord's Supper, while solemn, has overtones of joy
 - 1. 1Cor. 11:26; 1Peter 1:8; John 16:22
- H. After leading a soul to salvation, is there any greater and more blessed service to render to them than to lead them to the joy of worshiping the Lord Who saved them?

II. WE MUST ENCOURAGE AND EDIFY OTHERS IN WORSHIP

- A. Encouragement comes often through joint participation in Christ
 - 1. Being with one another, speaking with one another
 - 2. Getting to know one another and know what each other thinks, feels, believes, needs
 - 3. Working together, suffering together, going to battle together, carrying a load together form and build relationships and increases affection for the other
 - a. "A foxhole shared makes a brother for life."
- B. This is done often in the assembly - Heb. 10:24-25; Acts 14:21-22
 - 1. Regular times of assembly give us many opportunities to be with one another
 - 2. Joint participation in the Lord's Supper, edification, singing, and praying
 - a. 1Cor. 10:16-17, 14:16-17; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16
 - 3. If one is not assembling, he is abandoning his obligation to encourage and edify others, hindering them from receiving encouragement gained from his presence and participation.

III. WE MUST ASSEMBLE SO THE CHURCH CAN FUNCTION PROPERLY

- A. The mission of the church is accomplished through meeting and working together. The church cannot function without assemblies.
 - 1. If we are not present to voice our convictions, we have failed in our duty as Christians in guarding against apostasy.
 - 2. We must involve ourselves in meeting the needs of the local church.
 - 3. C.R. Nichol many years ago went into a gospel meeting and after seeing the very poor attendance on the first night, stayed away the second night. When they asked him where he was, he replied, "If some can stay home, I can stay home." After this was spread around in the community, the attendance was great for the rest of the meeting.
- C. If I don't become actively involved in the functioning unit that God ordained, I'm failing in my responsibility to God.
- D. Collective actions of the church:
 - 1. Chooses elders and deacons - Acts 6:2-3; 1Tim. 3:10; Rom. 16:1-2
 - 2. Receives messengers - 2Cor. 8:23

3. Pays wages to workers - 2Cor. 11:8
4. Relieves and enrolls impoverished disciples - 1Tim. 5:9-10, 16
5. Listens and speaks regarding erring disciples - Matt. 18:17
6. Practices local church discipline - 1Cor. 5:4-5
7. Greets and encourages other Christians - 1Cor. 16:19
8. Sends out preachers - Acts 11:22
9. Is reported to by preachers - Acts 14:27
10. Has worship - 1Cor. 11:20, 34
11. Makes offerings and maintains treasury - 1Cor. 16:1-4; 2Cor. 11:8-9
12. Receives teachers - 3John 10

IV. WE MUST ASSEMBLE FOR WORSHIP TO SET A GOOD EXAMPLE

- A. Christians are to set good examples for other Christians.
 1. 1Tim. 4:12; Titus 2:7-8
 2. Christians are to set good examples for those outside of Christ.
 - a. Matt. 5:14-16; Phil. 2:15
- B. Faithful attendance is essential for good influence.
 1. It sets a good example before babes in Christ and to the weak.
 2. It influences our friends, relatives, and neighbors, all outside the Way.
 - a. 1Peter 2:12
- C. It is a great encouragement to the preacher and all others who lead in worship
 1. Let no one say, "There's nothing I can do," or "I'm not much help to the church." Your faithful attendance is a great encouragement to all.

V. WE MUST ASSEMBLE FOR WORSHIP TO FULFILL OUR DUTIES TO OTHERS

- A. It helps parents to fulfill their duties to their children.
 1. Eph. 6:4
- B. It brings us more knowledge so that we can always give the right answers.
 1. 1Peter 3:15
- C. It helps fulfill the commands of exhorting our brethren.
 1. Heb. 3:13, 10:24 - In all assemblies, we can fulfill these commands.

Conclusion: Buddha's House

Hideyoshi, a Japanese warlord who ruled over the Nippon Empire in the late 1500's, commissioned a colossal statue of Buddha for a shrine in Kyoto, Japan. It took 50,000 workers five years to build, but the task had barely been completed when the great earthquake of 1596 brought the roof of the shrine crashing down and destroyed the statue. In a rage, Hideyoshi shot an arrow at the fallen colossus, and shouted: "I put you here at great expense, and you can't even look after your own temple!" (From Bible Illustrator)

"What profit is the image, that its maker should carve it, the molded image, a teacher of lies, that the maker of its mold should trust in it, to make mute idols? Woe to him who says to wood, 'Awake!' To silent stone, 'Arise! It shall teach!' Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver, yet in it there is no breath at all. But the LORD is in His holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before Him." (Hab. 2:18-20).

Christians don't have a problem with idolatry today, do they? Don't believe that for one moment! What keeps you from assembling to worship God on the first day of the week? That's your idol. What keeps you from assembling with fellow Christians to worship God and edify one another at the rest of the services each week? That's your idol. What keeps you from giving to the Lord and instead spending on yourself? That's your idol. What leisure activity takes the place of your Bible study time at home? That's your idol. Don't tell me that Christians don't have idols. The dwindling attendance here and around the country testifies that they do have idols. "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness..." (Matt. 6:33)

Over the years, I have collected and written down the weak excuses Christians offer for not coming to church assemblies. I now have a list of 161 excuses, some of which make me laugh at how silly they are, and all of which make me very sad knowing that those excuses will be rejected by God when they face Him in Judgment.

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