

Bible Correspondence Course

Lesson 6

ACCEPTABLE WORSHIP

Through the years since creation, man has had the inward desire to worship a supreme being. If you were to visit the most backward and uncivilized people in all the world you would immediately observe them worshipping some being they believe to be greater than themselves. This desire comes from the inward hunger of pleasing our God; it comes from the physical surroundings of nature as David said, *“The Heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork”* (Psalms 19:1). The Jamaican can look to the Caribbean Sea, or to the towering heights of the lovely Blue Mountains and say “yes” with David. For God truly is in this place. Even though people from the very beginning have worshipped a God of some description, they have not always been acceptable by God. The children of Israel worshipped the golden calf and said they were worshipping “God” who brought them up out of the of Egypt (Nehemiah 9:18). The Bible teaches this worship was enthusiastic, yet it was still an abomination in the eyes of the Lord (Exodus 32:8-10).

In Spirit and in Truth

Jesus was walking with the woman of Samaria and said that the time would come when people would “worship the father in spirit and in truth...” (John 4:23). This teaches that man must worship in sincerity and according to the pattern God has set. Jesus made it very clear what truth is, for he said, *“Sanctify them through the truth; Thy Word is Truth”* (John 17:17). To worship “in Truth” is to worship as God has stated in the New Testament.

Many in years past have worshipped sincerely, but not in truth, and the arguments have been that this is all right. Yet, when God shows that sincerity and truth are expected, we understand one without the other is disobedience.

Sincerity Alone?

What part does sincerity play in worship? Have not the followers of Baal, the Golden Calf, Mohammedanism, Buddhism and Hinduism been sincere? Even though these religions deny Jesus, are they still acceptable because of their sincerity?

Paul was sincere when he persecuted the Christians, yet later he realized this was a most grievous sin (Acts 22:3-8; 23:1). Pleasing God then must not be according to what we think, but rather according to what God wants. Our pattern of divine worship will be taken from the way God has directed and not from what we think to be appropriate. God

has reminded us saying, “*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways*” (Isaiah 55:8). We might think an act of worship to be beautiful and wonderful, which in God’s eyes is very displeasing. The real test for whether or not we worship acceptably is whether our worship follows the divine authority—the New Testament. After all the Apostles died, changes began to be added to the worship which God never taught. Jesus said to worship as man wanted and not as God had dictated made worship vain, “*But in Vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*” (Matthew 15:9).

Men are always thinking they will “improve” upon God’s plan—but, of course this has always been condemned. King Saul attempted to improve on God’s plan by not destroying the Amalekites. He thought it would be a wonderful aid to the worship if they brought the best of the flock back to use for sacrifices. God had not authorized him to do this, and he was condemned. (**Passage**)

In Leviticus 10, another case similar to this is seen. Nadab and Abihu, two Old Testament priests attempted to improve on the God’s worship by bringing into worship “*strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not*” (Leviticus 10:1-3). Because of their disobedience, they were destroyed. They might defend themselves by saying “it’s all right—He did not say not to worship in this way, therefore, it is all right.” He does not tell us all things we cannot do, but rather when he gives us a positive command he automatically excludes everything else.

Returning to the New Testament

The worship of the New Testament is simple and beautiful. Inspired by God and taught by the apostles, it remains the only real pattern we can accept today. Men have added to it down through the years and there is always the temptation of accepting man’s changes as God’s, but to remain with the new testament pattern is the only way.

The plan laid down by Jesus and the apostles was simple. It consisted of five items: 1. Prayer 2. Preaching 3. Giving 4. The Lord’s Supper 5. Singing.

Prayer

Prayer is man speaking to God. Throughout the Bible we read of men and women who prayed to God and spoke to him through this media. Some of these references are: Acts 2:42; 12:5; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; 1 Timothy 2:1-3; Romans 8:26. And yet, on such a subject as prayer man has made his changes, modifying and arranging it so as to suit him better. The Bible teaches that man prays to God through Christ for Christ is our mediator: “*...one mediator between God and Men, the man Christ Jesus*” (1 Timothy 2:5). But man takes this and says, “it’s all right if you want to pray to Mary or even to one of the saints.” Mary is nowhere in the Bible exalted to such a position as this, and there is no teaching to make one believe she was of special authority. Even praying to one of the “saints” is purely human imagination for when you take God’s pattern and change it, you are following man’s way rather than God’s, and this is vain worship (Matthew 15:9).

Preaching

Like prayer, the importance of preaching the gospel is so widely accepted as to need little comment. Some scriptures for you to examine are: Acts 20:7; Galatians 1:8,9; 1 Corinthians 1:21; and Acts 2:42. Even though this seems to be a rather simple matter to understand, some in Jamaica like to add their way by having women preach publicly, taking authority over the man. Paul said, “*Let your women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience as also with the law*” (1 Corinthians 14:34). Again we read, “*But I suffer not a woman to teach nor usurp authority over a man, but to be in silence*” (1 Timothy 2:12). This does not keep a woman from teaching other women or children (Titus 2:3-4).

Giving

Giving as described in the New Testament is on a free will basis and not by high pressure methods. The Bible teaches that the contribution was taken “upon the first day of the week.” In Jamaica many think money can be raised for churches by begging outsiders for donations, bingo games, and sales of all descriptions. Yet 11 Corinthians 9:7 condemns these and any other way outside of free will offering.

Lord's Supper

One of the greatest privileges to the Christian is that of partaking of the Lord's Supper. It is described as showing the Lord's death till he comes. But the meaning of this remembrance has not been lost to many and should be restored to its right position. Notice the following:

1. Jesus said in referring to the bread and the cup, “*This do in remembrance of me.*” (1 Corinthians 11-24-35, Luke 22:19,20).
2. It was taken each Sunday and not once a month or once a quarter. “*And upon the first of the week when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them...*” (Acts 20:7).
3. Sunday, or the first day of the week, was regular assembly day for preaching, communing and contributing (1 Corinthians 11:20; 16:1,2).

Singing

The study of the New Testament reveals that the music of the early church was totally vocal. There is not one single case in the New Testament of a mechanical instrument of music ever being used in the church by either the apostles or any faithful disciple. This would sound rather strange in Jamaica, for here instruments of music of all kind are heard in worship services. A short list of these would include guitars, drums, pianos, organs, tambourines, and others. From an examination of the following you will see how man has brought all this about.

1. Instrumental music in worship first appeared in 666 A.D., several hundred years after the apostles died. It was a command of men.
2. The New Testament clearly commands men to sing(Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16).
3. In Genesis 6:14 God commanded Noah to build the ark of Gopher wood. Would it have been wrong to add any other kind of wood to it? He made a positive command and this kept him from using anything else. The same is true in music. God wants us to sing, has given us the command o sing and any addition will be wrong.
4. Many things which may seem wonderful to us may be disgusting to God (Isaiah 55:8).
5. Had instrumental music been of such an “aid” as needed by the church, do you not think the apostles would have added it, if it was all right with the Lord?

Conclusion

Are you concerned about your worship? The true worship of the New Testament is concerned with the following of the Lord’s pattern. This pattern is one involving your submission to his will. Remember this worship is in Spirit and in Truth with Sincerity. If your worship is not after the above mentioned examples, then a return to the New Testament pattern is necessary. The plan laid down by Jesus and the apostles is simple: prayer, preaching, giving, the Lord’s Supper, and singing.

Questions

Instructions

This course of Bible Study has been written and printed in Jamaica especially for you living in this Country. It is designed to help you learn about the Bible and what to do to be saved in eight simple lessons. Before beginning, please make sure you understand what to do.

1. Read each paragraph carefully making sure you understand the information given before proceeding to new material.
2. As you come across Bible references be sure and use your Bible to read each scripture mentioned.
3. When you have completed a study of the given material, try to answer all the questions from memory without looking back to the information.
4. When you have answered the questions, please check them with the given material so as to have the correct answer.
5. When the test has been completed, be sure to include Name Address and Date in The space provided below

Name _____

Address

Date _____/_____/_____

How Much Have You Learned?

Instructions

In order to get the most from this lesson, the student should answer all the questions in this section. Complete the test and mail it to the sponsor of the Correspondence Course. It will be graded and returned to you along with the next lesson.

True or False

Circle "T" if statement is true, and circle "F" if any part is not true

- (T F) As often as we take the Lord's supper, we show forth Christ's death (1 Corinthians 11:26).
- (T F) The Bible describes five items of New Testament worship.
- (T F) The scriptures say we should pray to "Mary" and to the "Saints."
- (T F) Acceptable worship must be both in spirit and truth (John 4:23).
- (T F) The Bible says that the early church used instrumental music.
- (T F) Pleasing God must be according to what we think is right, and not according to what God thinks.
- (T F) The New Testament clearly commands men to sing (Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16).
- (T F) Jesus stated vain worship was when man worshipped as he wanted to, and not what god dictated (Matthew 15:9).
- (T F) The New Testament teaches that the woman is not to teach or usurp authority over the man (I Timothy 2:12).
- (T F) Giving in the New Testament is described as raising money by any high pressure method or promotional scheme followed by man (11 Corinthians 9:7).

Locate The scripture

The disciples came together upon the first day of the week to break bread.

- a) Revelation 22:18
- b) Acts 20:7
- c) Matthew 7:22

We are to sing and make melody in our hearts unto the Lord.

- a) Ephesians 5:19
- b) Colossians 3:16
- c) Matthew 26:30

“Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered you...”

- a) 1 Corinthians 16: 1,2
- b) 11 Corinthians 9:7
- c) Matthew 19:29

“For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men...”

- a) Matthew 12:46-50
- b) Ephesians 1:1
- c) 1 Timothy 2:5

“Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.

- a) Acts 22:16
- b) John 17:17
- c) Revelation 21:8

Name the Man: Put the correct name in the blank

- _____ 1. He sinned by bringing back sacrifices from the Amalekites to offer to the lord without God’s authority.
- _____ 2. The Apostles who said “let your women keep silence in the Church...”
- _____ 3. Who said, “My Thoughts are not your thoughts neither are your ways my ways.”
- _____ 4. He and his brother Abihu were condemned for bringing into the worship which God had not commanded.

_____ 5. Who said, “in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men.”

Please Notice

1. Friends may be enrolled in this Bible Correspondence Course upon request without cost or obligation.
2. A beautiful certificate of competition will be presented to those who successfully complete all eight lessons.
3. Bible questions are welcomed. Write them in the space provided below on this page.
4. Contact the address sending the Bible correspondence Course for any assistance in spiritual needs or problems.

Questions

Bible Answers to Above Questions

Sponsoring Congregation

This Correspondence Course is being sent to you by:

Patrick Gardens Church of Christ
6 Waterhouse Drive
(Off Washington Blvd.)
Kingston 20
Tel. 876 933-5550

Join us for worship

Sunday	9:45 am	Bible School (for adults and children)
	10:30 am	Morning Worship
	5:00 pm	Youth Meeting
	7:00 pm	Evening Worship
Wednesday	7:30	Bible Study and Prayer Meeting (In this session you are permitted to ask questions and make comments.)

You are also invited to listen to **“Preparing for Eternity”** Wednesdays at 4:45am on
RJR

Write to Us at: P.O. Box 369 Kingston 8