BEHAVIOR IN WORSHIP

Psa. 89:7; Matt. 18:20

By Donald Townsley

INTRODUCTION

1. This is a very important subject because many people do not know HOW TO BEHAVE in worship!

2. We are discussing public worship; when the whole church comes together in ONE PLACE to worship -- I Cor. 14: 23 - 26; I Cor. 11:20; Acts 20:7

3. By Behavior, we mean: one's conduct or deportment in worship.

   (1) Paul said, "Let all things be done decently and in order" -- I Cor. 14:40

4. In this lesson, we first want to look at WHAT worship is, then look at WHAT OUR CONDUCT in worship should be.

I. WHAT IS WORSHIP?

1. When we worship God we adore and pay divine honor to Him with reverence and supreme respect by engaging in the acts of worship He has authorized in His word -- Heb. 12: 28 - 29; John 4:24; Matt. 15: 7 - 8; Acts 2:42; Eph. 5:19

2. Our worship to God must stem from respect for God -- Mal. 1:6

   (1) We respect God because of His great strength -- Jer. 32:17 -- "Ah Lord God! Behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee;"; Gen. 17:1

   (2) We respect God because He is omnipresent -- Psa. 139: 7 - 12

   (3) We respect God because He knows everything -- Psa. 139: 17 - 18; Heb. 4:13; John 2:25; Psa. 147:5

   (4) We respect God because He is LOVE -- I John 4:8; John 3:16; James 1:17

   (5) We respect God because He is HOLY -- I Pet. 1:16; Tit. 1:2; John 17:11

   (6) We respect God because He is CREATOR -- Gen. 1:1; Acts 17: 24, 26

   (7) We respect God because He is from "everlasting to everlasting" -- Psa. 90: 2

   (8) We respect God for His GRACE toward man -- Eph. 2: 4,5,8; Rom. 3:24; Rom. 5:1 - 2; Acts 20:24; 20:32; Tit. 2: 11 - 12

   (9) We respect God because He sustains our lives -- Matt. 6:33; Acts 17:28; I Tim. 6:17

3. To properly worship God one must have humility and feel dependence upon God -- I Pet. 5:5; I Tim. 6:17; James 1:17

4. In worship we need to remember WHO GOD IS!

   (1) God is our Father in Heaven -- Matt. 6:9; John 4:23

5. We need to remember WHO WE ARE:

   (1) We are His children -- Rom. 8: 16 - 17; Gal. 3:26

   (2) We are weak, needy creatures -- Acts 17: 28; Rom. 3:23
(3) We often sin and need His forgiveness -- I John 1:9
(4) In Him we live and move and have our being -- Acts 17:28

6. We must remember to be thankful -- Phil. 4:6
   (1) One cannot truly worship God unless his heart is filled with thankfulness -- Rom. 1:21

II. MANY TIMES WE ARE NOT PREPARED FOR WORSHIP

1. We assemble for worship and take our "regular" place.

2. The night before we were up later than usual, and because it is Sunday, we may have slept later than usual - and we get up feeling worse than usual.

3. We have NOT PREPARED ourselves for worship.

4. We put off getting ready until the last minute, and then build ourselves into a frantic frenzy to get to the building somewhere "near" on time!

5. Because of our way of doing on Saturday and Saturday night, we are not prepared for worship on the Lord’s Day morning and cannot be prepared until about the time of the last "Amen".

6. This is truly tragic when one remembers how marvelously GREAT and GOOD our Holy God is -- and how He DESIRES our worship -- John 4:23

7. Worshiping God is a high and great privilege for every child of God!

8. Let us pledge ourselves to make the most of every such occasion to worship God -- Psa. 122:1

9. Many are LATE for worship time after time.
   (1) They are not eager enough to get to worship ON TIME.

III. BEHAVIOR IN WORSHIP THAT CANNOT BE PLEASING TO GOD:

1. The NAP-TAKER
   (1) He settles down for a nice nap as the preacher starts his sermon.
   (2) This person is NOT worshipping God.

2. The GUM-CHEWER
   (1) He or she gets them a fresh stick just before worship begins.
   (2) Would you put a stick of gum in your mouth just before you went in to see the President of the United States?
   (3) We have entered into worship to our Creator -- ALMIGHTY GOD!

3. The person whose mind is NOT on the worship.
   (1) He STARES ahead with his mind many miles away.
   (2) Or, sits with his head down and never seems to be listening -- and is involved with something else.

4. The person who SITS AND WATCHES everyone else.
   (1) He knows all that is going on in the assembly, but he is NOT worshiping God!

5. The THIRSTY person who must have a drink of water 15 minutes into the sermon.
(1) He must have a drink -- he says, "God your worship will just have to wait because I must disturb this assembly to get a drink."

6. The BATHROOM-GOER --(I understand some may have a medical problem -- I am not talking about you).
   (1) He or she NEVER goes to the bathroom BEFORE worship begins!
   (2) They wait until the worship gets underway, then THEY MUST GO!

7. People who VISIT AND TALK during worship.
   (1) These people are NOT worshiping God!
   (2) Their minds are NOT on worship.
   (3) They disturb all the people around them who are trying to worship.

8. People who PLAY WITH SOMEONE'S CHILD during worship.

9. People who WRITE NOTES to someone in worship.

10. People who COME IN LATE and take a seat while an act of worship is being engaged in.

11. People who MISBEHAVE and LAUGH during worship.

IV. MANNERS IN WORSHIP

1. Come in, take your seat and sit quietly and prepare for worship a few minutes before worship begins.
2. Give someone a song book who does not have one.
3. Move toward the middle of the row when others come in.
4. Try NEVER to come in late.
5. Never wear extreme or distracting clothing to the worship service.
6. During worship, pass the Lord's Supper and the collection plate to others as quietly as possible.
7. Give close attention to what is being said, whoever is before the assembly.
8. Do not leave early unless it is absolutely necessary!

CONCLUSION:

1. Always remember -- WE ARE HERE TO WORSHIP GOD!
2. When we misbehave in worship we have not come together for the better, but for the worse -- 1 Cor. 11:17; Heb. 12: 28 - 29
3. It is sin to misbehave in worship to God!

Hebron Lane 1990; Campbellsville, KY 1990; River Bend 1996; Underwood Hts. 2003