

In Search of Spirituality and Meaningful Worship

1 Cor. 3:1-2; Matt. 15:8, 9

Introduction:

- A. There has always been a danger of a lack of spirituality and meaningful worship among Christians.
 - 1. Jesus warned his disciples of vain (purposeless, meaningless) worship. (Matt. 15:8, 9).
 - 2. Paul rebuked early Christians for their lack of spirituality (1 Cor. 3:1-2).
 - 3. There can be no doubt that Christians today face this danger.
- B. There is also a danger of trying to fill that void in the wrong ways (cf. Col. 2:23)
 - 1. If we do not understand what real spirituality is all about.
 - 2. If we do not understand the real nature of worship to God.
 - 3. If we become bored with the sameness and repetitive nature of New Testament worship.
- C. We want to contrast superficial spirituality and worship with scriptural spirituality and worship.

Discussion:

I. Superficial Spirituality and Worship.

- A. Pharisees were great practitioners of superficial spirituality and worship.
 - 1. Their phylacteries and enlarged borders (Matt. 23:5-6)
 - 2. Their street corner praying (Matt. 6:5-6)
 - 3. Their fasting faces (Matt. 6:16-18)
- B. American “Christians” are great practitioners of superficial religion.
 - 1. Bumper stickers, tee shirts, placards and ten commandment plaques are good examples.
 - 2. All of this is supposed to convince people that we take the Bible and our religion seriously.
 - 3. It is a lot easier to rally people around a slogan or a visual symbol than to really change hearts.
 - 4. The more animated or emotional a “worshiper” becomes the more spiritual he is supposed to be.
- C. “New Testament Christians” are sometime caught up in the frenzy.
 - 1. Look for ways to appear more spiritual.
 - 2. Look for some outward display of piety to “make our worship more meaningful.”

II. Scriptural Spirituality and Worship.

- A. Scriptural spirituality is growing in grace and knowledge (1 Cor. 3:1-2; 2 Pet. 3:18).
- B. Scriptural spirituality is displayed by our obedience to Christ.
 - 1. Doing good works (of obedience) (Matt. 5:16) – Says “let light shine” not “shine your light”
 - 2. A godly life in the midst of a crooked generation (Phil. 2:15)
 - 3. Our spirituality should speak for itself without our extra-ordinary efforts to call attention to it.
- C. Scriptural worship is made meaningful by understanding its meaning and significance.

- 1. First, we need to understand that worship is God-centered and not me-centered.
 - a. It is what God wants and not what I want in worship. (Cf. Lev. 10:1-2)
 - b. It is more concerned with being meaningful to God than being meaningful to me.
 - c. It only becomes meaningful to me when I surrender every thought to God (2 Cor. 10:5).
 - d. Once our thoughts are surrendered to Him, Scriptural worship cannot become meaningless.
- 2. Next, we need study the Bible to learn and understand all we can about our worship.
 - a. Prayer is speaking to God – not to impress men (Matt. 6:5-6)
 - b. Singing is “unto God” and to teach one another – not entertainment (Eph. 5:18, 19).
 - c. Preaching is relaying God’s word (cf. 2 Tim. 4:2) – not mere performance/presentation.
 - d. Giving is an expression of love and fellowship – not merely to raise money.
 - e. The Lord’s Supper is a simple memorial supper with thanksgiving (Matt. 26:26-28) – hard to improve

on the simplicity of the way the Lord did it.

- D. Scriptural worship is not improved by “touchy-feely” exercises – but by a mind centered on God.

Conclusion:

- A. Let us all become more spiritual by improving our knowledge of and obedience of God’s word.
- B. Let us spend more time bringing our thoughts into obedience to God, worship will truly be meaningful.