



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

March 4, 2018

FIRST, NOT SECOND

God and Christ must be first in our lives, and not second. Jesus says *“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”* **(Matthew 6:33)**. Our number one priority in this short life must be to go to Heaven or otherwise we most likely will not go there. Jesus says, *“No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God”* **(Luke 9:62)**. If one doesn't go to Heaven, there is only one other place and that is the eternal torments of Hell. *“For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul”* **(Mark 8:36)**.

We cannot put others people and other things ahead of our service and worship to God and Christ and still be pleasing to Them. They will not accept second best. Jesus says, *“He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me”* **(Matthew 10:37-38)**. Jesus says the only way we can be worthy of God and Him is, *“And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength”* **(Mark 12:30)**. We are to *“Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth”* **(Colossians 3:2)**. God is only a *“rewarder of those who diligently seek Him”* **(Hebrews 11:6)**, by putting Him first. Are we really putting God and Christ first in our lives? Judgment Day will be too late to find out if we haven't.

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Service Times:

Sunday

Bible Study 10 am
Worship Service 10:45 am
Worship Service 6 pm

Wednesday

Bible Study 7:30 pm

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LEST WE THINK GOD DOESN'T CARE ABOUT HOW WE WORSHIP

Worship is vital to the church. Reading the New Testament, we find the church coming together for worship each Lord's day (**Acts 20:7**) and Christians being encouraged not to fall into a habit of being absent (**Hebrews 10:25**). We find that worship was regulated and that God, through the inspired writers, gave five avenues of worship; singing, prayer, Bible reading/study, giving and the Lord's Supper.

But we are living in times when we are told that Christianity is not about what you do on Sundays, but what you do during the week. In fact, we are living in times when many people claim that God does not really care how we worship, so long as we are sincere and living out our faith during the week.

Is that the case, though?

Many of us remember reading about King Jeroboam and how he chose to change worship. **I Kings 12** teaches us that he changed the object of worship (from Jehovah to golden calves), the location of worship (from the temple in Jerusalem to Dan and Beersheba), the leaders of worship (not requiring priests to be from the tribe of Levi), and the time of worship (moving feast days to times God had not authorized).

I doubt any of us would excuse his actions, to say the least.

Interestingly, though, throughout much of the remainder of the books of Kings, Jeroboam becomes the acid test for how other kings were more or less faithful to the Lord. Some 23 times, a phrase will be repeated throughout those two books: "*the sin of Jeroboam.*"

But what is most fascinating is that this "sin" has nothing to do with social justice or political reform. It does not deal with tax issues, immigration policy, or how the poor were cared for. In each and every case, it has to do with worship!

Does God care for the poor? Of course! Does he care how we deal with social justice or racial tension or other issues that we face in our work-a-day world? Absolutely.

But does that, then, give us the right to worship in any way we choose and cover it under the guise of sincerity? Absolutely not!

Even small things that slowly erode the primary place of God and His Word in our worship practices need to be not only avoided but destroyed from our lives. When we seek to put "what makes me feel good" or "what will draw a crowd" or "what is popular" over the teachings of God, we have, in effect, removed God from the throne and put ourselves there.

And that is the sin of Jeroboam: idolatry of self.

Does God care how we live our lives from Monday through Saturday? We need to never forget that He does.

But does God also care about how we worship on Sunday? He would not have told us how to do so in His Word if He didn't. So, may we never think we have a better plan than the One we are paying allegiance to each Lord's Day.

"God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth"
(John 4:24).

Adam Faughn