



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

September 21, 2014

WORSHIP THAT IS NOT IN VAIN

(Matthew 15:9) *“And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.”* There are Scriptures that tells us that all worship is not acceptable to God. In the passage above we see one way to make vain worship is to teach something other than what God taught. A congregation or its elders shouldn't accept manmade doctrine. If you read **Galatians 1:7-9**, you will see that Paul said a person is cursed for accepting a perverted gospel or man-made message.

False doctrine isn't the only thing that will ruin one's worship or make it vain. Attitude and one's way of living can negate worship. **(Isaiah 1:11-15)** *“To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me? Says the LORD, “I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed cattle. I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs or goats. When you come to appear before Me, who has required this from your hand, to trample My courts? Bring no more futile sacrifices; incense is an abomination to Me. The New Moons, the Sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies – I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting. Your New Moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; They are a trouble to Me, I am weary of bearing them. When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; Even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood.”* The people were living sinfully and had the wrong attitude about it. God said He wasn't happy with it and wasn't even listening to their prayers.

John 4:24 tells us we must worship in spirit and in truth. We must have the right doctrine and right attitude. Take away one and you have invalid worship. God doesn't accept that which He has not commanded. Go back and study Cain and Abel! Cain didn't please God when he sacrificed, whether it was attitude or offering, it wasn't right.

Let us all look at our actions and attitudes before worshipping God. Let us approach God with clean hands and a clean heart. If we do that, God will accept us and our offerings.

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Sunday

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

Wednesday

Bible Study 7:30 pm

Monday

Ladies Class 10 am

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WHAT HAPPENS WHEN PEOPLE STOP REPENTING?

When Jesus commissioned His disciples to preach the gospel to the world, He explained the Old Testament theme of His coming death, burial and resurrection (**Luke 24:44-46**). He then continued with this intended purpose – *"And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem"* (**Luke 24:47**). Later, Paul explained, *"Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent"* (**Acts 17:30**).

Repentance is a God-given command which is necessary for salvation (**Acts 2:38**). It is not a one time act, as some suppose and display, but rather an on-going change of mind and heart that results in being shaped and transformed by the will of God (**Romans 12:1-2**). If Christians desire to receive remission of sins on a regular basis, the Bible teaches they must daily live for God – a relationship that involves a constant state of repentance and confession of sins (**Luke 9:23; I John 1:9**).

What happens then when people stop repenting?

- ❖ People stop having a sense of sorrow for their sins.
- ❖ People start feeling a false sense of eternal safety.
- ❖ People justify sinful actions.
- ❖ People crucify Jesus all over again.
- ❖ People let their faith grow weak, their dedication diminish, and their relationships fail.
- ❖ People harden their heart and become nearly untouchable when it comes to spiritual and eternal truths.

Nobody is immune to the reality of this problem. When Jonah preached to Nineveh, the whole country repented. But God allowed them to be destroyed a few years later – why? They stopped repenting! Strong Christian marriages fall apart after years of success – why? Because spouses stop being sorry for poor behavior and they stop forgiving each other. Aging, mature Christians leave the church – why? Because they cease to call upon their indebtedness to Christ. And YOU – well, YOU struggle in some areas of your faith – why? Because there are some things, even in this moment, for which you need to repent, but you have allowed Satan to talk you out of it.

It is important to consider what Paul says in **II Corinthians 7:10** (*"For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of..."*) In other words, don't repent of your repenting! Don't be sorry you were sorry! Don't change your changing! Allow God's love through Christ to continually shape your mind and heart and empower your life – and you will be saved!

Only bad things will happen when people stop repenting. The opportunity to repent is a great blessing from God! It is cleansing! It is transforming! It is eternal life!

Acts 11:18, *"When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, 'Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life.'"*

By **Jeremiah Tatum**