

Things to Remember When in Worship

1. Remember the purpose of worship is not to entertain or amuse one another, but it is to pay homage, love and honor to God.
2. Remember the people in worship; they are not perfect, neither are you. Those with imperfections are worshipping Him who is perfect. He who realizes his own imperfections most is better qualified to worship Him who is perfect.
3. Come to the worship period thinking how great God is and how insignificant you are.
4. Give due attention to the thoughts contained in the spiritual songs as well as in the harmony and melody of the singing of them.
5. Remember that a sermon depends as much on the hearing of it as the presenting of it.
6. Keep in mind that a critical, intolerant attitude is foreign to the spirit of Him whom you purpose to praise and to them that are gathered with you. One is to be encouraging to those who are worshipping with him. Never be critical of those who are leading the worship services.

- by Jim Sasser

On Listening to Sermons

How about a suggestion on how better to deal with sermons? As a veteran fidgety pew wiggler myself I have some experience in these matters. Immense help and immense focus come when we always follow along in the Scriptures and take notes on the sermon. The importance of these two cannot be overstated. You will be surprised how much more involved you will become. You will listen better. You will follow along better. You will pay attention better. Put down a title, main points, passages used, and any observations (even things like, "Is he right about that?"). When I do this I am putting something into the lesson in order to get more out of it. It does not matter if I have heard the topic before, or if it is the simplest of lessons, or what the topic is. It helps me to pay attention, and admittedly, yes, maybe helps the time move along better when paying attention is difficult.

- by Robert Hines

Reverence in Worship

The reverence that is necessary for proper worship is not based on externals such as dimmed lights, etc. The proper reverent attitude that is to characterize every worshiper of God comes from within the individual. While this attitude must come from the heart of each person there are a few things that would aid worship and help develop the reverence needed. Here are a few suggestions to help us improve in our worship:

- First, prepare your mind mentally for worship. Know what you are doing and why you are doing it. Read a passage from the Bible, look over some of the songs that are to be sung or pray a silent prayer for strength and focus.
- Second, keep the use of the rest rooms by you and your children to a minimum during the worship period.
- Third, be aware of toddlers to teens. They are never too young or too old to worship. Remember, attitudes learned while one is a youth are carried into adulthood.
- Fourth, be as well-rested as possible. You will then be physically and mentally alert.
- Fifth, concentrate on what is going on. Put all other things out of your mind.

Many other things could be suggested but if we use these guidelines and determine in our heart to offer worship that is well-pleasing to God, it will reap great benefits for us in this life and the life to come. Let us all learn to truly serve our merciful Father in spirit and in truth.

- by Gene Taylor

Some Words of Caution about Dealing with Brethren

The New Testament urges Christians to show love, patience, and humility in their dealings with

one another. "Let all your things be done with charity" (1 Corinthians 16:14). "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another" (Romans 12:10). Sadly, we sometimes fail in this because suspicion, pride, or impatience clouds our judgment. Here are a few common pitfalls to avoid.

1. Don't Jump to Conclusions.

Proverbs 18:13 warns, "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him." Too often, misunderstandings are made worse because we assume the worst before knowing the facts. Quick words and hasty judgments have divided many congregations. James wrote, "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath" (James 1:19). Listening carefully before forming opinions can prevent unnecessary strife.

2. Don't Impugn Motives.

It's easy to assume bad motives when someone disagrees with us - to think they're dishonest or self-serving. But only God knows the heart (1 Samuel 16:7). Instead of presuming evil, we should extend the benefit of the doubt and be willing to "believe all things" (1 Corinthians 13:7).

3. Don't Assume the Other Person Hasn't Studied.

When disagreements arise, we may think, *"If he had studied more carefully, he'd see it my way."* Such thinking is arrogant and unfair. Many faithful brethren have spent years in study and prayer - sincerely striving to understand God's Word. We should respect that diligence and continue to "reason together" (Isaiah 1:18) with humility and patience.

4. Don't Think Others Haven't Experienced What You Have.

We sometimes dismiss another's perspective because we think he hasn't "been there." However, very often he has experienced even worse things than we have. But, nevertheless, understanding doesn't depend on shared experiences alone. God's Word equips us for "every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17), and a wise brother may offer valuable counsel even if his experiences have differed from ours (Romans 15:14).

Let's "endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3). Truth must never be compromised, but love must never be absent. Exercising care, patience, and humility in our dealings with one another will strengthen our relationships and honor the Lord we serve.

- by Greg Gwin