

Giving Our Best to God

Some people seem to be content to give God their leftovers. They give Him their leftover time, their leftover money, their leftover talents. When their own wants and wishes have been fully and completely gratified, anything left (if it is convenient), is presented to our heavenly Father.

How would you like it if you never had anything served on the table but leftovers? How would you like it if your boss paid you only if he had any profits left after taking all he wanted from the company? How would you like it if your children gave you what little affection they had left over from their friends, pursuits, etc.?

David refused to offer in sacrifice to God "that which cost me nothing." And this should be our attitude. We should give to God a service that is meaningful and sacrificial. Romans 12:1 states it in clear terms: "Present your bodies as a living sacrifice..."

In our singing, giving, praying, study, all worship and living, we should give to God the best we can offer. Nothing but the best should be offered. Remember, the nature of the gift reflects the attitude you have toward the one given the gift. Does your service to God reflect that you love and appreciate Him?

-by Tom Roberts

Respect for God's Authority

The standard of what is acceptable in religion for many is whether it satisfies the individual. Many "shop" for a religion that meets their personal preferences, treating the Scriptures as a salad bar-- picking things they like and passing over others. Many declare satisfaction with the course they have chosen in religion without ever considering the question, "Is God satisfied with my religion?" The whole conclusion is not, serve God as you please, but "Fear God and keep His commandments" (Eccl. 12:13). Our purpose in daily activities and in worship should be to strive to please God. Those who truly seek to serve God will not be satisfied until they do this. We must be willing to test our practices and beliefs to see if they agree with the Scriptures. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves" (2Cor. 13:5).

The only way to please God in all that we do is to follow His revealed will-- to simply read and study the Scriptures and follow them in all we do, not adding to them or taking away (2Jn. 9; Deut. 4:2). Those who fail to do this lack respect for the authority of God as Lord and Master. The inspired apostle declared, "And whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord" (Col.3:17). To "do all in the name of the Lord" means to respect the authority of the Lord in everything. We must have God's authority for all that we do and that authority must be established from the Scriptures; for it is there that God has revealed His will for us.

So, our personal morality, conduct, religious beliefs, and things practiced in worship must be based on book, chapter, and verse. One may be satisfied with the manner in which they live and worship, while God may not be, making life and worship worthless before the Lord. As Jesus warned,

This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoureth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me. But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men (Matt. 15:8,9).

Therefore, let us search the Scriptures to establish authority for all that we believe and practice showing respect God's authority.

- by Paul Smithson

Who's Flying the Plane?

A photographer from a well known national magazine was assigned to cover the fires at Yellowstone National Park. The magazine wanted to show some of the heroic work of the fire fighters as they battled the blaze.

When the photographer arrived, he realized that the smoke was so thick that it would seriously impede or make it impossible for him to photograph anything from ground level. He requested permission to rent a plane and take photos from the air. His request was approved and arrangements were made. He was told to report to a nearby airport where a plane would be waiting for him.

He arrived at the airport and saw a plane warming up near the gate. He jumped in with his bag and shouted, "Let's go!" The pilot swung the little plane into the wind, and within minutes they were in the air.

The photographer said, "Fly over the park and make two or three low passes so I can take some pictures."

"Why?" asked the pilot.

"Because I am a photographer," he responded, "and photographers take photographs."

The pilot was silent for a moment. Finally he stammered, "You mean you're not the flight instructor?"

When it comes to our spiritual lives, we better be certain that someone competent is in control. If we assume (as did the two men above) that someone else has the ability to guide us safely, we may well be headed for disaster (unless that someone else is Christ).

"And He spoke a parable to them: 'Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch? A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.'" (Luke 6:39-40)

Take a moment to check the cockpit. Who's in control of your life?

- by Alan Smith