

## ***Worship or Entertainment?***

In our entertainment-oriented culture, many churches find themselves trying to 'out do' themselves with more and more elaborate additions to worship. What began as special music by a choir becomes a full orchestra with professional soloists. A dramatic reading necessitates a full Broadway stage production. And as long as those who come to worship enjoy what is offered, anything goes. The expectation is that sermons will be shorter, wittier, and more uplifting. Anything in worship that cannot be 'jazzed up' must be abandoned as boring - and there is nothing worse than being boring, we are led to believe.

The problem with this entertainment orientation is that the very object of worship is forgotten. God is the 'audience' in worship. Jesus told the Samaritan woman that ignorant worship was unacceptable to God, even though it may have been sincere or enjoyable. 'God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth' (John 4:24). To worship God in spirit and truth means that worship must be from the heart, not just outward acts, and that it must be done in exact obedience to God's commands. The worship must be directed to Him, not to the whims of the worshipers.

God's regulations for worship as set out in the New Testament are neither boring nor out of date. They are God-centered, while entertainment is man-centered.

There is nothing wrong with the worshiper enjoying worship. God intended worship to bless His children. But when worship is merely window dressing for an entertainment performance, it cannot please God. The apostle warned, 'Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God' (2 John 1:9). Paul condemned things that 'have indeed a show of wisdom in will worship' (Colossians 2:23). 'Will worship' is that worship fashioned after man's desires.

**- by Bob Prichard**

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## ***There is Nothing for Me to Do***

I am amazed at the number of people in the church who complain that there is nothing for them to do. By this they generally mean that the elders have not given them a specific assignment. Does this excuse them from not being active in the greatest cause on earth? No!

Every member must realize that the Lord has already assigned them specific duties like helping to restore brothers who have been caught in any trespass (Gal. 6:1) and bearing one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2).

Each one of us is under the commission we call great (Mk. 16:15, 16) and hence we need to be sharing the Gospel with one and all. Why should anyone have to give this to us as a specific assignment? The Lord has already done it.

Take a look at the judgment scene in Matthew 25:3 1-36 and note that we are to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, visit the sick and imprisoned. Do we need an assignment from the elders to do these things? I think not since our judgment is to be based upon our doing them.

What about taking the time to offer an encouraging word to that person or persons you know who needs an encouraging word? There are those in the hospital, rest homes, or who are confined at home who would be helped if you would visit them. Why would any Christian need a specific assignment to be a genuine helper in such cases?

"But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Heb. 13: 16).

**- by Don Deffenbaugh**

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## ***What's Wrong With 'Situation Ethics'?***

Joseph Fletcher (1905-1991), an Episcopal priest, was the most famous proponent of "situation ethics." In a book entitled "Situation Ethics: The New Morality" he formalized a view that is commonly accepted by many individuals.

Here are some quotes from Fletcher's book:

*"For the situationist there are no rules - none at all." p. 55*

*"And therefore what is sometimes good may at other times be evil, and what is sometimes wrong may sometimes be right when it serves a good enough end - depending on the situation." p. 123*

*"Any act - even lying, premarital sex, abortion, adultery, and murder - could be right, depending on the circumstances."*

*"The new morality, situation ethics, declares that anything and everything is right or wrong, according to the situation." p. 55*

The concept of "situation ethics" has been widely accepted in our culture.

### **So, what's wrong with Situation Ethics?**

#### **1. It assumes that man is able to know what to do any given situation without God's guidance.**

*"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Proverbs 14:12)*

*"O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jeremiah 10:23)*

*"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:8,9)*

#### **2. It ignores the many absolute prohibitions in the Bible.**

*"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Corinthians 6:9,10)*

#### **3. It ignores the many Bible examples which show that "the end DOES NOT justify the means".**

- King Saul (1 Sam. 15)
- Uzzah (2 Sam. 6:3-7)

#### **4. It insults God and His Word**

*"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:" (2 Peter 1:3)*

#### **5. It obscures right and wrong.**

*"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!" (Isaiah 5:20,21)*

**- by Greg Gwin**