

## ***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 imagines himself '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. You should be seeking to encourage those who are worshipping with you.

**- by Jim Sasser**

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## ***The Prescription for Growth***

We are all fully aware that as Christians we are to grow spiritually. There are several passages that clearly teach that God not only expects but also requires such development. "As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby" (1 Peter 2:2). "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food" (Hebrews 5:12).

Let me suggest to you a few things that are needed in our lives if we are to grow and develop as God commands:

1) There has to be a desire on our part. Look once again at 1 Peter 2:2. The writer says that you must desire the pure milk of the word. In the sermon on the mount, the Lord said, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6). We have to want to grow! It is not going to happen unless there is that hunger and thirst within us for the things that will help us to progress. One thing that has happened to far too many Christians, they have lost their spiritual appetite. They have become choked with the cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and as the Lord said, "bring no fruit to maturity" (Luke 8:14).

2) It also takes time. When the Psalmist spoke of the man blessed, in Psalms 1:1-2, notice how he spent his time. "But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night." We usually make time for the things that we enjoy doing, whether it is fishing, golf or shopping, etc. If we really have the desire to grow, we will find time to study, pray and practice the truth in our daily lives. It may mean that we've got to turn off the TV, not read the Newspaper as thoroughly, or take some time from a hobby that we enjoy. But we will find time and use it to the glory of God. Listen to the words of the apostle Paul, "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:16).

3) Effort has to be put forth. Certainly the word of God is that which will build us up and make us stronger. Paul in speaking with the elders from Ephesus, said, "So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified" (Acts 20:32). Not only does it take time to know and understand the word of God; it takes effort as well. This same apostle told Timothy, "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15). The word "diligent" (KJ says study), is defined as "to hasten to do a thing, to exert oneself, endeavour, give diligence" (Vine's Expository Dictionary Of New testament Words). Those who are growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord, take the time and exert the effort and energy to ascertain the meaning of the Scriptures. Practice is the next logical step. Only by doing can we please God (James 1:22,23,25).

It will require using some of our money. To be a good fisherman one will buy a good rod and reel, tackle, and maybe a boat along with all the accessories. Don't mind spending the money for these kinds of things. To be knowledgeable of the word of God, we will need a good study Bible, a concordance, a good Bible dictionary, maybe some reliable commentaries, etc. Are we willing to spend money on these type books to help us in our studies? If you really have the desire, will take the time and put forth the effort, you won't mind spending the small amount it would take to buy these study helps.

Want to grow as the Lord commands? Follow this prescription!

- by **Jim Mickells**

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## ***What David Didn't Say***

One of the most famous episodes in the Bible is that of David's sin with Bathsheba and Nathan's subsequent confrontation with the king. It has often been pointed out that David's confession stands as a model of what confession ought to be. We are awed by his simple, humble acknowledgment, "I have sinned against the Lord" (2 Sam. 12:13). The level of his remorse, so beautifully expressed in Psalms 51, is amazing.

In this current "me" centered, "it's not my fault" age, there are some important lessons to learn. While many folks today would have tried hard to prove themselves the "victim" in this sad situation, observe David. He did NOT say . . .

1) "It's HER fault!" After all, Bathsheba was bathing in an open place (2 Sam. 11:2). Surely she knew that someone might see her. Why didn't she take more precautions? Or, maybe she wanted to be seen! Perhaps she hoped to entice the king. Whatever the case, she definitely carries a degree of responsibility in this matter. But, David made no effort to shift the blame. "I have sinned. . ."

2) "These are hard times. I have a very difficult job. You can't imagine the stress I'm under." All of these things would have been true. Yet none of them served as a reasonable justification for what he did, and he knew it. "I have sinned . . ."

3) "Other people let me down. Why didn't they do more to help me? If they had been there for me, this wouldn't have happened." Yes, others could have stepped in to prevent the king's wicked deed. The messengers who were sent to fetch Bathsheba could have refused the king's command (probably at the risk of losing their own heads!). Joab, David's army captain, definitely could have objected to the murder of Bathsheba's husband. But David knew 'the bottom line.' "I have sinned . . ."

4) "I admit that I used poor judgment. It was an 'inappropriate relationship.'" It is common for people to try to 'rename' their sins. They think that they can minimize their evil deeds by using 'lesser' terms to describe them. This never succeeds, and David did not try it. "I have sinned . . ."

Christian, are you always trying to make excuses for your sins? Do you blame others or point to 'extenuating circumstances?' Do you use other terms to avoid admitting the reality of your wrongs? These things never work. Try true confession!

- by **Greg Gwin**