

Seven Rules For Pleasing Worship

No. 182

Introduction.

I. This Lord's day I would like to invite your attention to several passages of scripture.

1CH 16:23 Sing to the Lord, all the earth; Proclaim good tidings of His salvation from day to day. 24 Tell of His glory among the nations, His wonderful deeds among all the peoples. 25 For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; He also is to be feared above all gods. 26 For all the gods of the peoples are idols, But the Lord made the heavens. 27 Splendor and majesty are before Him, Strength and joy are in His place. 28 Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples, Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

1CH 29:10 So David blessed the Lord in the sight of all the assembly; and David said, "Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of Israel our father, forever and ever. 11 "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Thine is the dominion, O Lord, and Thou dost exalt Thyself as head over all. 12 "Both riches and honor come from Thee, and Thou dost rule over all, and in Thy hand is power and might; and it lies in Thy hand to make great, and to strengthen everyone. 13 "Now therefore, our God, we thank Thee, and praise Thy glorious name.

A. **David** recognized there is one God and the great God is worthy of all our praise and adoration.

B. Some 400 years earlier God had said from Mount Sinai. (Exod. 20:2).

1. The word "before" means "besides."

2. Man is not to worship man or beast or angels or any other created thing. He must worship God alone.

C. **Jesus** said. (Matt. 4:10; Jn. 4:23, 24).

D. The **Hebrews writer** said. (Heb. 10:24, 25; 13:15).

E. **Peter** wrote. (1 Pet. 2:5).

II. These passages and hundreds of others in the Bible stress that God desires to be worshiped.

A Every man, woman, and child has the responsibility and the privilege to worship God, the Creator and Lord of the universe.

B. These passages also stress that God wants us to worship Him in an acceptable manner.

C.. **He will not accept just any kind of worship.** It is possible to assemble to worship Him and not

worship acceptably. It is possible for our worship even to be detestable to Him.

III. There are “Seven Rules For Pleasing Worship.”

I. **Desire To Worship** - The first is a desire to worship God.

A. There are many who have no desire to worship God. They simply worship God because they have been commanded to do so. They are not grateful to God. They do not love God. They do not worship God because they love Him, but they fear they will go to hell if they do not. This kind of worship is repulsive to God.

B. **Suppose a boy told a girl** he loved her simply because he had been commanded to do it. She would not be very pleased with him, would she? Neither is God pleased with our worship unless it comes from a fervent desire to worship Him.

II. **Thoughtful Preparation** - A second rule for pleasing worship is thoughtful preparation. Several things are involved in this rule.

A. It means we must take the time to **learn the significance of the various acts of worship**. We must take the time to learn the significance to the Lord’s supper. We should take the time to learn the meaning of the hymns we sing. Too often we engage in worship without really knowing what we are saying and doing.

B. Another thing involved in thoughtful preparation is being in the **proper mood to worship**.

1. It is the habit of many to get up late on Sunday morning and hurry through breakfast and then rush to the building. They get here just in time for the services begin or a few minutes after they have commenced. When this happens, seldom if ever, are they in the proper frame of mind to worship God. It takes several minutes at least to catch one’s breath.

2. It would be much better if we were here in plenty of time to get our minds on God.

C. Still another thing involved in thoughtful preparation is to **coordinate the singing and the sermon**.

1. When the sermon is announced to be on baptism it is not the best time to sing, “To The Work.” It would be more effective to sing, “Ye Must Be Born Again.”

2. A classic story along this line is of **the preacher who preached a fire and brimstone sermon on booze**. He exposed all the evils of drinking and concluded his sermon saying, “We are going to take every bottle in this town and throw it into the river.” The song leader then arose and began to sing, “Shall We Gather At The River.”

3. Needless to say a poorly chosen song can destroy the affect of a sermon. Our worship services will be more effective and be more pleasing if we will take the time to coordinate it when possible. I appreciate the efforts our song leaders have made to coordinate our services.

III. **Humility And Reverence** - A third rule for pleasing worship is humility and reverence.

A. When a person approaches God in worship it must be with a feeling of great humility. Our God despises pride. (Jas. 4:6)

1. The attitude we must have is found in **Exodus 3**. (Exod. 3:1-6).

- a. Moses was commanded to remove his sandals because he had come into the presence of the Almighty God of heaven. God wanted Moses to be filled with humility and reverence.
- b. **The church building is not holy ground**, but every time we assemble for worship we are coming into the presence of God and He expects us to remember that we are His creation and He is the Creator. He is the One from everlasting to everlasting. He is the One who is all-powerful and omniscient. He is the One who made us and to whom we are accountable.

2. **Isaiah**, the prophet, has left us with an outstanding example of how to worship God. (Isa. 6:3 ,5).

3. Another example is found in **Luke 18:9-14**.

B. If we to be justified by God (if we want to be saved) we must remove all of our pride and humble ourselves before the great and living God as these men did.

1. We must have a lofty respect for the Almighty God and His greatness.
2. We must be attentive to His every word and live to please Him.

IV. **Sincerity** - A fourth rule for pleasing worship is sincerity.

A. Our worship must come from the heart. Jesus condemned the Pharisee because they worshiped God only with their lips. (Matt. 15:7, 8).

B. Since our worship must be sincere, we should be very careful that we mean what we sing.

1. When we sing, **“We’ll Work Till Jesus Comes,”** we must make sure this comes from the heart. Many sing this song never lift a finger in the service of God. When we sing, **“All to Jesus I Surrender”** we must make sure that this is true with our lives. Many sing this song who have not even come close to surrendering all to Jesus.
2. If we are not careful, our song service can make us liars.

V. **As God Commanded** - A fifth rule for acceptable worship is to worship as God has commanded.

A. God does not accept worship that is not according to His directions.

1. **Cain** is an example of this. He was commanded to offer an animal sacrifice to God. Instead of doing this, he offered a sacrifice of the fruit of the ground. He probably thought, “One offering is as good as another.”
2. God did not reason that way and rejected his offering.

B. The Bible teaches we must worship God “in spirit and in truth.” (Jn. 4:24).

1. The word “spirit” refers to the inward man. Worship is an activity of the inward man. Worship must be sincere and it must come from the heart.
2. The word “truth” refers to God’s revelation. Our worship must not be according to our own wishes, but according to God’s truth. We must worship God according to His instructions.
3. God is not pleased with our worship if we change His instructions. (Matt. 15:9).

VI. **Praise** - Another rule for pleasing worship is praise.

- A. God is pleased when we praise Him, but He is provoked when our worship is void of praise.
- B. It is ok Christians to sing to one another and to encourage one another. It is ok if we do not let it dominate our services. We need to sing more to God. We need to fill our song service with praise to God. Such songs as “How Great Thou Art” and “Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah” need to be sung more often.
 - 1. I would like to read the words of the 148 psalm.

PSA 148:1 Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; Praise Him in the heights! 2 Praise Him, all His angels; Praise Him, all His hosts! 3 Praise Him, sun and moon; Praise Him, all stars of light! 4 Praise Him, highest heavens, And the waters that are above the heavens! 5 Let them praise the name of the Lord, For He commanded and they were created. 6 He has also established them forever and ever; He has made a decree which will not pass away. 7 Praise the Lord from the earth, Sea monsters and all deeps; 8 Fire and hail, snow and clouds; Stormy wind, fulfilling His word; 9 Mountains and all hills; Fruit trees and all cedars; 10 Beasts and all cattle; Creeping things and winged fowl; 11 Kings of the earth and all peoples; Princes and all judges of the earth; 12 Both young men and virgins; Old men and children.13 ¶ Let them praise the name of the Lord, For His name alone is exalted; His glory is above earth and heaven.14 And He has lifted up a horn for His people, Praise for all His godly ones; Even for the sons of Israel, a people near to Him. Praise the Lord!

- 2. This is a sample of how the Jews praised God in their worship and how we should praise Him today.

VII. **Obedience To God** - Another rule for pleasing worship is obedience to God.

- A. God does not receive the worship of those who live in rebellion to His law. (Eccles. 12:13; 1 Sam. 15:22; Prov. 28:9; Matt. 7:21).
- B. As we can see God’s word emphatically teaches that worship must be from an obedient heart to please God. Worship without obedience is vain. Worship without obedience is abominable to Him.

Conclusion.

- I. It is important that we keep in mind these “Seven Rules For Pleasing Worship” when worshiping God. God will be please and our worship will be acceptable to Him and spiritually uplifting to us.
- II. **Once I heard about a little dog who fell into a lake and was drowning.** The dog managed somehow to swim over to a nearby boat. The dog put its paws up on the edge of the boat. Just then a man in the boat took a knife and hit the dog across the paws. The bleeding dog fell back into the water. In a few minute the dog again managed to put its paws up on the boat, but once again the man took his knife and hit the dog

across the paws and the dog fell back into the water and drowned.

- A. **Most people are moved by this story.** They have feeling for this little dog and wonder how the man could have done such a cruel, vicious, horrible thing. But many who are moved with compassion for this poor little dog have heard the story of Jesus and how He was nailed to the cross and suffered and died for us and are not moved with compassion for the One who loved us and died for us.
- B. How can we be so hardened, so ungrateful, so unloving? His great love, His great suffering should motivate us to love Him and surrender our lives to Him in baptism. Only those in Christ will be saved. Only those in Christ can worship acceptably. Will you accept the Lord's invitation as we stand and sing?

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