

November 16, 2019

THE SURE WORD by Jonnie Hutchison

HOW ARE YOU WORSHIPPING GOD?

Jesus said, "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4:24). One obvious implication from these words of Jesus is that there is a right way to offer worship to God. It is imperative that one worship God with the right frame of mind (in spirit) and according to what God has revealed in His Word (in truth). God has specified in the New Testament the avenues of worship for the church that are acceptable to Him. He gives us permission to sing (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16-17), to pray (1 Timothy 2:8), to give (1 Corinthians 16:1-2), to partake of the Lord's Supper each Sunday (Acts 20:7) and to preach (Acts 20:7).

May one add additional acts of worship to the five God has specified? May we add the blessing of animals as an act of worship? May we add dancing or drama presentations to our worship? Is it acceptable to God to add anything to our worship that He has not specified? Some may argue that "God doesn't say not to add these things to our worship so it must be ok." Think about it – God doesn't grant His permission for any religious practice by what he does not say, but by what He says in His Word. Suppose your child went to a party but did not ask your permission. Would it be acceptable to you if your child said, "You didn't say not to go, so I thought it was ok?" Your response would be, "You didn't ask my permission!" God gives permission by what He says, not by what He does not say.

Worship is not directed to the worshippers but to God. Worship is not for the purpose of entertaining the worshippers but offering praise and adoration to God. Worship is not to please oneself but to please God. To worship God "in spirit" one's mind but be focused upon God not on self.

The avenues of worship that God has given His permission for us to do emphasize the spiritual aspect of worship. To add anything else to the worship of God is to shift that focus away from the spiritual. When Nadab and Abihu assumed they could add "strange fire" which God "had not commanded" to their worship, they suffered severe consequences (Leviticus 10:1-2). Is what God commands as worship today any less important to Him?

Yes, "God is Spirit and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." How are you worshipping God? Visit our webpage at greenplainchurchofchrist.org. worship with us hip each Sunday at 10:00 & 10:45 am and 6:00 pm.