



THE GREEN PLAIN PROCLAIMER

Volume 41

December 24, 2023

Number 49

Schedule of Services

Sunday

- Bible Classes 10 am
- Worship 10:45 am and 2:00 pm
- Wednesday Bible Study 7:00 pm

Elders

- Mike Ernstberger
270-753-2108 Home
270-293-7027 Cell
- James Pigg
270-759-2145 Home
270-293-2319 Cell

Deacons

- Bobby Hall
- Jesse Vincent

Preacher

- Jonnie Hutchison
Cell: 270-978-7569

Supporting Works

India—Dale Foster, David Nance, & Ronnie Gootam;
Hatti/Cuba: Arnold Gerson

Location

- Green Plain Church of Christ
3980 Murray Paris Road
Hazel, KY 42049
- Phone: (270) 492-8206
- greenplaincoc@gmail.com
- greenplainchurchofchrist.org

DOES IT MATTER HOW WE WORSHIP?

By Gary L. Hutchens

Does it matter how we worship God? This is probably a question that many people seldom, if ever, contemplate. Jesus instructed a woman of Samaria, who had been practicing worship that was not in keeping with God's teachings, "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth" (Jn. 4:23-24). One would think that such a straightforward statement from the Lord Himself ought to settle the matter forever.

Looking at what Jesus told the woman, from a mathematical perspective, there are two parts to the equation. Our worship is to be "in spirit," and it is to be "in truth." Also, what Jesus said on the matter has the effect of law, in that our worship "must" meet these two requirements.

The statement "God is Spirit" speaks to God's nature, His being, His reality; God is not flesh and blood. Thus, "Spirit" is in caps in this statement. The re-

quirement that our worship "must" be "in spirit" speaks of the nature of our worship. It is to be spiritual worship, from the heart, sincere, not just going through motions. In this statement, "spirit" is in lower case; it refers to the character of our worship.

The further statement that our worship "must" be "in truth" indicates that our worship must conform to standards that would qualify it as being true worship. Those standards, of course, are taught in God's word. Later in this same Gospel account, in a prayer to the Father, Jesus identified God's word as being "truth": "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth" (Jn. 17:17). When our worship is in agreement with the teachings of God's word as to how God wants to be worshiped, then our worship is "in truth."

Our personal feelings have to be subservient to God's will. A great many people focus on their feelings- what they want, what pleases them, what makes them feel good- to the extent that their

(Continued on page 3)

NEWS AND NOTES

REMEMBER IN PRAYER: Green Plain members: Peggy Jarvis , Maxine Pool, Jim Fielder, Hayes and Marjorie Grady, Marie Wyatt and Jim Lowrie.

Family and Friends: Ted Lovett, Jerry Lovett, Teresa Tacker, Dale Pentecost, Brett Wyatt, Bonnie Byerly, Tommy Boggess, Kim Burrows, Lucetria Hutchison, Carleigh Hutchison (Gail & Jonnie's granddaughter) and Jan's brother Ted Clark.

SYMPATHY: We extend our sympathy to Jackie and Don Spiceland at the passing of Jackie's mother, Mary Frances Outland. Please remember this family in prayer.

ENROLL IN A FREE BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE. Send your name and complete mailing address and phone number to Green Plain church of Christ 3980 Murray Paris RD Hazel, KY 42049 or email your request to greenplaincoc@gmail.com.

HOME BIBLE STUDY: Request a **FREE** home Bible study—“*Back to the Bible*” for anyone who is interested in gaining more knowledge of the Bible. Contact us to set up a time for our teachers to come into your home or meet at our building to begin this study.

PANTRY ITEMS December 2023: 3—Great Norther Beans; 10-Spinach 17-Carrots; 24-Canned Meats; 31— Mixed vegetables. All items must be **non-perishable or canned**.

December 2023; Anniversaries: 17-Mary & Jesse Vincent; 22—Marjorie & Hayes Grady.

Birthdays: 7-Mike Ernstberger; 9-Debbie Ernstberger; 12-Wanda (Robert) Barrett; 12-Jesse Vincent; 16-Chad Canter; 17-Marie Wyatt; 18-Wanda (Alex) Barrett.

“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him” (Colossians 3:17).

“Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17).

THSE TO SERVE December 2023

Announcements: Mike Ernstberger

Table AM: James Pigg & Chad Canter

Table PM: 3-Chad; 10-James; 17-Chad;
24-James; 31-Chad

Opening Prayer AM: 3-Jonnie; 10-Perry;
17-Bobby; 24-Jim L. 31-Mike

Closing Prayer AM: 3-Roy; 10-Dave; 17-Brent;
24-Chad; 31-Jesse

Song Leaders: AM-Perry; PM-Mike; Wed-Chad

Count Contribution: James & Chad

If you cannot serve contact Chad Canter



**WATCH
AND HEAR
THE
GOSPEL
24/7**

GBNTV.ORG

**GOSPEL
BROADCASTING
NETWORK**

(Continued from page 1)

feelings take precedence over the teachings of God's word. If what they want to do in worship contradicts what God's word teaches them to do in worship, their feelings get priority. They excuse their actions by appealing to their sincerity. While what they do in worship may contradict God's teachings, they believe it is justified because they're doing it from the heart. They discount the second part of the equation; their worship must not only be sincere and from the heart, but it must also be "in truth!"

Jesus' further words on this matter are recorded twice in New Testament scripture: "And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of

men" (Matt. 15:9; Mk. 7:7). The idea of such worship being "in vain" identifies it as being empty, to no purpose, worthless. The reason for it being so labeled is because it conforms to men's devising's rather than to God's instructions. This is a quotation from Isa. 29:13, indicating that this principle was true in Old Testament times as well as being true today.

Our worship is to glorify God, to express our adoration to Him. He is the recipient, we are the participants. In order for our worship to properly fulfill its true purpose, it must conform to God's will as to how He wants to be worshiped.

[-Does It Matter How We Worship? - Sunny Slope Church of Christ](#)

WHERE DID "CHRISTMAS" NOT ORIGINATE?

By Jonnie Hutchison

The religious celebration of the birth of Jesus did not originate with God. If it had originated with God, then we would be able to find in the Bible either a command to celebrate "Christmas" as a religious holy day or an example of its celebration by first century Christians. Both are conspicuously absent from the pages of God's Word. God authorizes religious practice by what He has said, not by what He has not said. Inspiration declares "*If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God....*" (1 Peter 4:11a). The "oracles of God" consist of what God has spoken (revealed in His Word, not what He has not spoken. One cannot speak where God is silent and still speak as "**the oracles of God.**" The silence of God regarding an annual **religious celebration** of the birth of Jesus prohibits such a celebration.

Consider an example: The Bible authorizes five acts of worship for the church on the first day of the week: singing, praying, giving, partaking of the Lord's Supper and

teaching or preaching the Word of God (Eph. 5:19; 1 Tim. 2:8; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; 1 Cor. 11:23-29; Acts 20:7). It's obvious that God says nothing about "dancing" as an act of worship. Does His silence then permit us to add "dancing" to our worship? Can we truthfully claim to be speaking as the oracles of God while adding a religious practice that He has not spoken? Think about it! If the silence of God permits, where do the additions originated by men end?

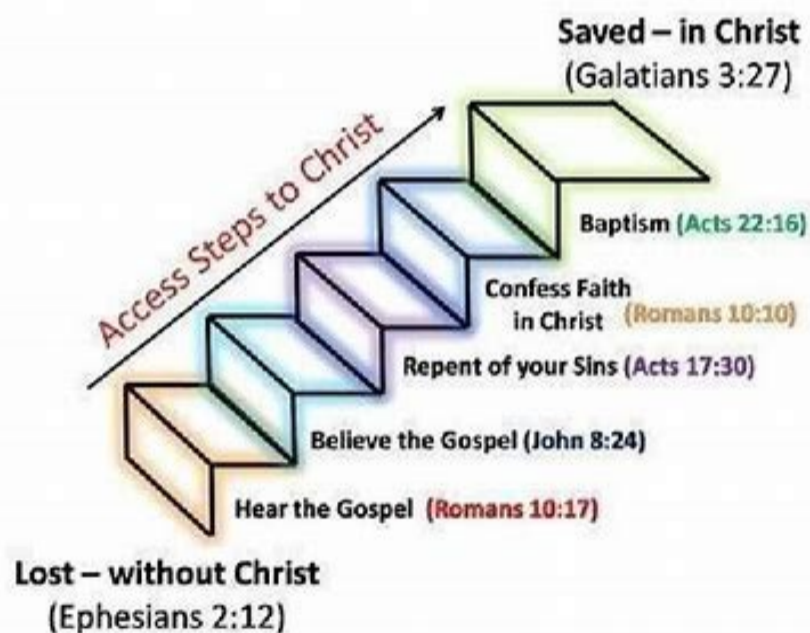
The divine account of the miraculous conception of Jesus in the womb of His virgin mother by the power of the Holy Spirit proves Jesus to be "Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us." (Matthew 1:23). We certainly should never diminish the importance of this event. However, the Bible authorizes a remembrance of the death of Jesus each first day of the week rather than an annual celebration of His birth. When Jesus instituted the

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

Lord's Supper He declared, ***"Do this in remembrance of me"*** (Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 11:23-25). Unlike the religious celebration of the birth of Jesus, there is both a command and an example of the New Testament church assembling each first day of the week to remember the death of Jesus by observing the Lord's Supper as shown in 1 Corinthians 11:23-25 and Acts 20:7. Therefore God has given us His permission by what He has spoken to remember the death of Jesus each first day of the week in partaking of the Lord's Supper. Faithful churches of Christ do not celebrate the birth of Jesus as a religious holy day because we cannot find in the Bible any **authority** from God to do so. To engage in any religious practice that is not authorized by God is a violation of the command of God, *"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God."* May each of us endeavor always to please our God and not self.

Some would argue that we should be glad that the world focuses upon Christ for at least one day a year at "Christmas." while one may be happy that such is the case, it does not change the fact that "Christmas," as a special religious holy day, did not originate with God and is found nowhere in His Word. Jesus Himself declared, ***"For in vain they do worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men"*** (Matthew 15:8-9). Is the religious celebration of "Christmas" a doctrine of God or a doctrine of men?



COME VISIT WITH US

The church building is located southeast of Murray one mile off highway 641 - Near the corner of the Green Plain and Murray Paris Roads. We look forward to seeing you!

Bible Study Opportunities

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS 10:00 AM
Study of Matthew

SUNDAY AM WORSHIP 10:45
"Where Does Religious Authority Reside"

SUNDAY PM WORSIP 6:00
"Man of Sorrows"

Wednesday 7:00 pm
Study of Premillennialism



A Bi-Weekly Podcast Available wherever you get your Podcasts