

Redwater Restorer

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness..." (Matthew 3:3)

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Acceptable and Unacceptable Worship

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Redwater
Church of Christ

Services:

Sunday
Bible Class 10:00 a.m.
AM Worship 10:45 a.m.
PM Worship 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday
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God has shown, in the Bible, His approval with those who follow His will and His displeasure and wrath with those who refuse to worship Him the way He has directed. An example of acceptable and unacceptable worship in the Old Testament is that of Cain and Abel. Cain and Abel both worshipped God. Abel did as God directed, but Cain tried to worship God the way he saw fit. We read in Genesis 4:3-5, *"And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect."* Why did the Lord have respect for Abel's offering and why did He reject Cain's offering? Hebrews 11:4 tells us, *"By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain."* Notice Abel offered his sacrifice *"by faith"* but Cain did not. Romans 10:17 says, *"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."* So faith comes by the word of God. Abel offered his sacrifice by faith or according to the word of God. If we worship God by faith, we worship as the word of God directs. Abel offered the firstborn of his flock *"by faith"* and it was accepted because his worship was according to the instructions of God. But Cain chose to ignore God's instructions and sacrificed an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord. Cain chose to sacrifice to God the way he saw fit. Cain did not offer his sacrifice according to God's instructions, so God rejected his sacrifice and worship, since it was not *"by faith"*. From this example we see our worship must be *"by faith"*, that is *"by the word of God."* We read in Romans 14:23, *"For whatever is not from faith is sin."* *If our worship is not "by faith", that is it is not "by the word of God", then it "is sin"*. It will also be rejected just like Cain's. It is a very serious matter if God rejects our worship.

Our Lord says in Mark 7:7, *"And in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."* When we follow the commandments of men instead of God's instructions, our worship becomes vain. If our worship is vain, it is

empty, hollow, and useless. It will do us no good. If it is vain, it would be as though we had not worshipped God at all and we will be lost. When we worship in the way "we want" then God is dishonored and insulted. When we worship the way God has told us in His word, God is honored and glorified. As we read in John 4:24, *"God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."* To worship in truth is to worship as the word of God directs. Jesus said in John 17:17, *"Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth."* Since the word of God is truth, when we worship God in truth, we worship Him according to His word. The only way God will accept our worship is to follow His directions in the Bible. God says in Hosea 4:6, *"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."* If we don't know what God says, we are going to be destroyed or lost for our lack of knowledge. It is sad to say but the vast majority of people are illiterate of God's word. They don't really know what the Bible says.

When people are ignorant of God's directions on how He is to be worshipped, they wander in spiritual darkness. Our Lord says in Matthew 15:14, *"And if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the ditch."* We must first have a desire to know the truth of God's will and then be willing to change when we find we are wrong and are not worshipping according to His truth. Jesus says in John 8:32, *"And you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."* Only the truth can make us free, otherwise we are still under the bondage of sin. We may be sincere in our worship, and we must be, but if we do not worship God *"in truth"*, that is as God directs, then our worship will be vain and unacceptable to God. Also if we try to worship God *"in truth"* but not *"in spirit"*, that is not with the proper motive of honoring God and with reverence, then we are just practicing ritualism and our heart is far from it. This type of worship is also vain and unacceptable to God, for Jesus says in Matthew 15:8, *"These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me."* We must worship God both in spirit and in truth.

Questions Concerning Worship

1) (Genesis 4:3-5) In Cain's worship and Abel's worship

- God respected the worship of both Cain and Abel.
- God respected Abel's worship and had no respect for Cain's.
- God respected Cain's worship but not Abel's.

2) (Hebrews 11:4) Abel's worship to God was accepted and Cain's worship was rejected because

- Abel offered his sacrifice by faith and Cain did not.
- God did not like Cain.
- God liked Abel.

3) (Romans 10:17) Where does faith come from?

- Our parents.
- Our church.
- The word of God.

4) (Romans 14:23) If our worship is not by faith, that is not according to God's word

- It is sin.
- It is accepted of God if we are sincere.
- It doesn't really matter.

5) (Mark 7:7) If we follow the doctrines of men in our worship

- It is vain.
- God will accept it.
- It makes no difference.

6) (John 4:24) Our worship to God

- Doesn't really matter as long as we are sincere.
- Does not have to be in spirit and in truth.
- Must be in spirit and in truth.

7) (John 17:17) What is truth?

- What we believe.
- The word of God.
- What our church has published in its creed.

8) (Hosea 4:6, Matthew 7:13-14) Why will the majority of people be lost in eternity?

- A lack of knowledge of God's word.
- The majority will not be lost.
- The majority of people will be saved.

9) (Matthew 15:14) What happens religiously if the blind lead the blind?

- They will both be saved since they are not responsible.
- Their travel will be slow but sure.
- They will both fall into the ditch (in other words be lost eternally).

If you are interested in any of the following please check the appropriate box and mail to the address below. Please include return address and phone number if possible.

Personal Bible Study

Home Correspondence Course

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