

The Lakeview Lamp

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." - Psalm 119:105

April 27, 2008

When Church Is Boring

Frank Himmel

What do you do when you find that church is boring? It's time for a change! Now the question is, change what?

Many folks think the answer is change the church. I just read an article about a new church created for men only, men who find church boring. Discarding more traditional environments, they meet in a gymnasium one Saturday evening a month. A rock band provides the entertainment. The preacher speaks in front of the scoreboard, with the clock running. He guarantees to have them out in one hour! This sort of innovation is not unusual. Many religious leaders hail it as a positive development, a way to reach out to those who otherwise would have no interest in church.

Some might not go that far, yet they still insist on change. Contemporary music, drama, and short sermons that are little more than pep talks are the order of the day. Clapping and cheering have replaced old-fashioned amens. *Celebration* and *praise* are the buzzwords, with the world's calendar dictating the subject celebrated.

Malachi lived at a time when people found "church" boring. Speaking of Israel's worship, God said through the Prophet, "*You also say, 'My, how tiresome it is!' And you disdainfully sniff at it*" (**Mal. 1:13**).

God proposed two changes to these who turned up their noses at His worship. One was to just stay home. "*Oh that there were one among you who would shut the gates, that you might not uselessly kindle fire on My altar! I am not pleased with you*" (:11). The better solution, the change He preferred, was to repent. "*If you do not listen, and if you do not take it to heart to give honor to My name,' says the Lord, 'then I will send the curse upon you'*" (2:2). Notice what God did not approve: changing the structure or activities of worship to accommodate individual tastes.

The preacher can work to make his sermons more interesting, the song leader can try to select more meaningful hymns, and the one who leads in prayer can give more thought to what he says. However, when worship as God directed is boring, the main change that is needed is in the heart of the worshiper.

Nothing Beyond Our Capabilities

Jarrood Jacobs

Sometimes people think they know their capabilities better than God does. This is seen in those who will refuse to obey God, saying that they are not “able” to do what God says. What we need to understand is that God does not command us to do anything that is impossible for us to do.

In **Exodus 4:10**, God told Moses to go to Egypt and tell Pharaoh to let His people go. He said this because He knew Moses could do this. Moses responded by saying, “*O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.*” Moses had the attitude of those today who think that they are not capable of doing what God said to do. As a result, Moses angered God (**Ex. 4:14**).

When God called Jeremiah to be a prophet, Jeremiah thought that he was too young. God told him in **Jeremiah 1:7-8**, “*Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD.*” God doesn’t ask us to do anything beyond our capabilities!

In **Matthew 25:14-30**, we read about the parable of the talents. Remember that when the man had called his servants to him, he gave one servant five talents, one two talents, and one servant, one talent. We find that while the man was gone, two servants made good use of their talents, gaining double their money. The third one did nothing with the money, but gave it back to his master untouched. This man was cast into outer darkness where there was weeping and gnashing of teeth. His money was then given to the servant who had ten talents. Why did this happen? Was this man punished because he had less than the others and was not able to do exactly what they did? No. He was punished because he had the ability to do something with that money and refused to do it!

The spiritual application for us is that we may not be able to do what others do, but we do have abilities and must be about using them! God expects us to be useful in His kingdom by obeying all His commands (**Jn. 14:15**)! We dare not say we are not capable of obeying God.

Not only does God not command us to do any more than we are capable of doing, but He also will not allow our temptations to be greater than we can bear. It is written, “*There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it*” (**I Cor. 10:13**).

God is concerned about the well-being of mankind. God’s word is given to us so that we might know His will and go to Heaven. He does not command us to do anything that is beyond the grasp of our abilities (**II Tim. 3:16-17; I Pet. 4:11; Phil. 4:9**).

“How blessed are those who keep justice, who practice righteousness at all times!” Psalm 106:3

News and Notes

Mary Burnett is back in Sumner Regional Hospital, room 228, but expects to return home tomorrow.

Metty Fain remains in Highland Manor Nursing Home; Room B2; 215 Highland Circle Dr; Portland, TN 37148.

Lyda Plank passed out at work Wednesday but is doing fine now.

Cotton Read continues to have breathing trouble.

Nancy Read is having problems with her arthritis.

Tanya Stubblefield's father died Friday in Atlanta. There is not going to be a funeral, but instead a memorial service in Tampa next weekend.

Ame White got a good report from her cardiologist Wednesday and doesn't have to go back for four months.

Out of town, Visiting: The Nicholson children (AL), Jim and Tanya Stubblefield (Atlanta), Bill and Ame White (KY).
New Reports from men we support: Allen Malone (Indonesia, now home).

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"Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks" (1 Thes 5:16-18).