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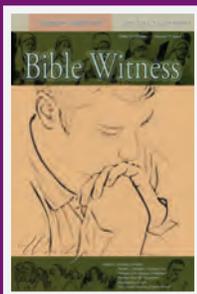
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Bible Witness

Worship

Worship: Worship Him Only
Worship: Christians' Highest Duty
Worship in the Beauty of Holiness
Worship Must Be Theocentric
Worshipping in Vain
The Coming Worship of the Antichrist



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SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

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USE OF ARTICLES

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Editorial

What goes on as worship in many churches is woefully indecorous. It hardly befits the glory and holiness of God. In fact, much of what is rendered as worship is not only inappropriate and undignified, but also shockingly rude in the presence of the Most High.

It is so mournful that modern churches are more concerned about pleasing the worshippers rather than God. When the main focus of the worship service is shifted away from God, it is no more a true worship, though there is scintillating music and dances, and other well-choreographed performances. It is more and more apparent that what brings people to church is a great appetite for entertainment rather than genuine faith in Christ and His Word. Many a church worship has become a mere show biz in the name of Christ and this is not genuine worship.

Churches everywhere need to remember that true worship is wholly focused on God and His holy will. Instead of being overwhelmed by the expectations and feelings of worshippers, the churches must seek to please God and honour Him.

If it is not about God's glory, our worship shall be anything but worship!

The articles on worship in this issue are the edited extracts of some sermons preached during the 3rd Missionary Conference of Gethsemane Bible-Presbyterian Church (6-11 December 2011), which was held in Ethiopia. We publish them for the edification of all our readers everywhere. At this juncture, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to Rev Ephrem Chiracho and Rev Reggor Galarpe, who laboured with me in the conference to instruct the participants on the biblical perspective of worship.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt thanks to Bro Kenneth Wong, who has served in the Bible Witness Media Ministry for seven years and nine months. During all those years Bro Kenneth laboured much to do the layout and printing of this magazine. Since January 2011, being impressed in his heart of the Lord's call to teach His Word in mission fields, he has joined Far Eastern Bible College for theological studies. We pray that the Lord will use him according to His good will for the furtherance of the Gospel.

The departure of Bro Kenneth from BWMM has resulted in much difficulty in the production of Bible Witness magazine. Till the Lord provides someone to serve full-time in this area, the magazine can only be produced less frequently. We covet your constant prayers for all those who labour in BWMM and for the publication of Bible Witness to continue.

Finally, our heartfelt thanks to all those who have encouraged and supported us. We need your continued support for the spreading of the truth of His Word around the world. We have more and more requests for copies of Bible Witness from different parts of the world. Without your support, we cannot print and send the magazine to those who request for them, especially those from poorer countries.

May the grace of our Great God be with all those who fear and serve Him.

*His servant,
Prabhudas Koshy*

Letters Received

Dear Rev Koshy,

... Just to share a little about the Bible Witness' contribution to our "Christian Beacon". Three of your articles on backsliding were translated for the April-June 2011 issue of Christian Beacon. This issue focused particularly on Christian backsliding. We thank God that there are good feedback. Some of our readers shared that they were blessed particularly by that issue. Praise God.

Thank you for kindly allowing us to continue to translate the articles from the Bible Witness. We will continue to give due acknowledgment for every article translated. . .

In Christ,
Rev Biak Lawm Thang
Yangon, Myanmar

Dear Pastor Koshy,

I'd like to use the Apostle Paul's oft-repeated greetings in his epistles: "Grace to you and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ."

I would like to inform you that on 01-17-2012, I received one M-bag of Christian literature from your ministry. It contains 2 complete sets (back issues) of the Bible Witness magazine, 1 hardback book and 4 paperback books. Thank you so much for these valuable Bible study materials! I know that it will help us greatly in teaching and preaching the Word of God in our local church, particularly the book on systematic theology and the different articles in your magazine. Rest assured that these materials would be used for the glory of God, the edification of saints and the salvation of His elect in our area of ministry. Kindly extend my gratitude to the people who help you in the producing and printing of these kinds of materials (Hebrews 6:10; Acts 20:35).

I'm very grateful that you've included my name in your mailing list to regularly receive the Bible Witness magazine. I've also read in Gethsemane Bible-Presbyterian Church's website that you posted my last e-mail in the Pastoral Exhortation (Dec. 4, 2011). I commend you and the BWMM in your uncompromising stand in defending the inspired, inerrant and infallible Word of God underlying the King James Version of the Bible.

I hope and pray that we will be able to steadfastly testify the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24), according to the revelation of the mystery (Romans 16:25)... until His appearing (2 Timothy 4:8). Why? Because it is our blessed hope (Titus 2:13), our comforting hope (1 Thessalonians 4:18; 5:11) and our purifying hope (1 Thessalonians 5:23; 1 John 3:3) - before we stand at the judgment seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10; cf. to Romans 14:10-12; 1 Corinthians 3:12-15). Like the Apostle Paul, let us finish the race that is set before us (1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Philippians 3:12-14; Hebrews 12:1-2; 2 Timothy 4:6-8).

Pastor Koshy, please extend my warm regards to your immediate family and to all the staff of BWMM. May God richly bless all your efforts in the dispensation of grace (Ephesians 3:1-11). Once again, thank you very much and just keep on doing the good work (2 Thess. 3:13)!

Your brother and fellow servant in Christ,
Edgar V. Villaflores
The Philippines

Worship Him Only

Prabhudas Koshy

Our Lord Jesus declared, when Satan tempted Him to fall down and worship him, “Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve” (Matthew 4:10; cf. Luke 4:8).

Satan is adverse to the worship of God. He is a rival to God. If he had attempted to get the Son of God to worship him, one can be sure that he would spare no effort to infiltrate and interfere with the worship of God in our churches. He is constantly seeking to distract worshippers and also distort the worship of God.

To always remain as true worshippers, we must uphold the truths of God’s Word as Jesus did in the above instance. Lack of strict adherence to God’s Word will result in distorted and pseudo-worship.

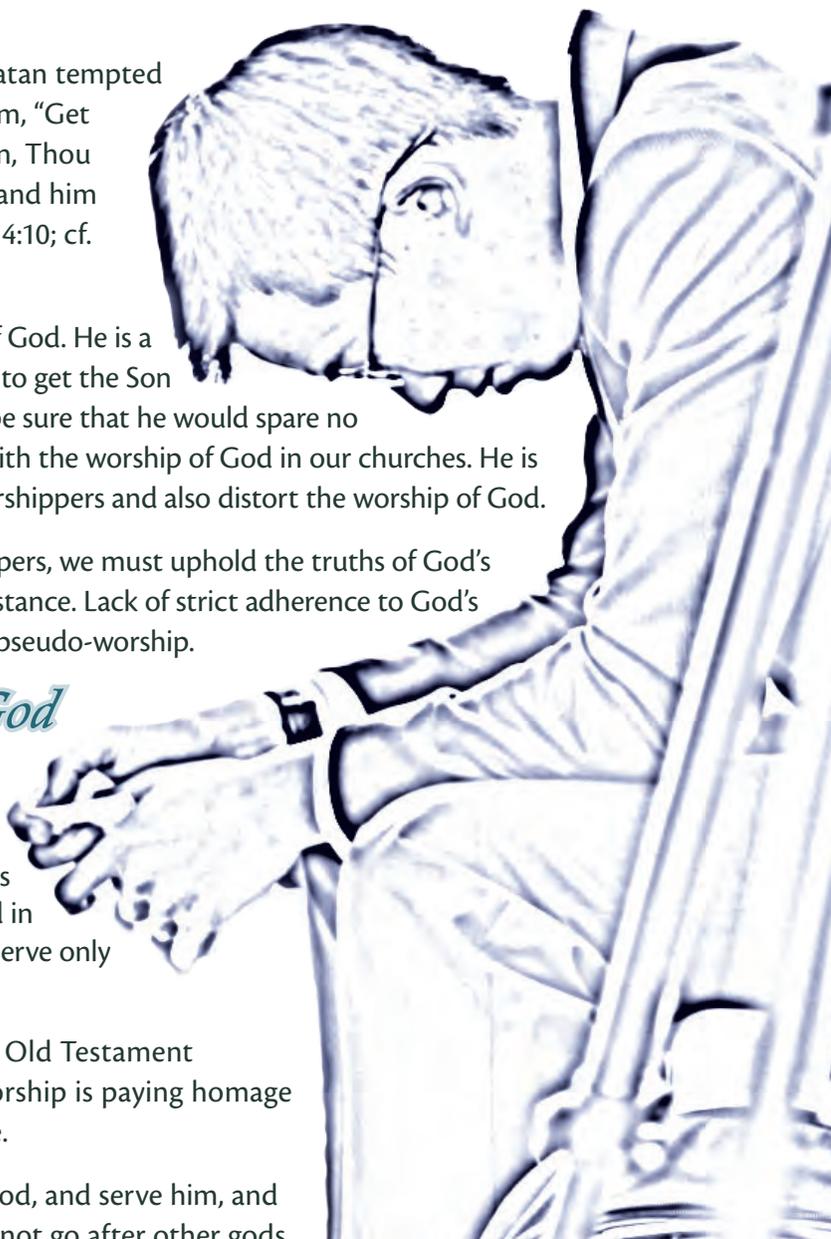
Worship the Lord God

First and foremost, Jesus pointed out, “it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” He was referring to the explicit command in the Old Testament that we shall serve only the Lord God and none other.

Consider carefully the following Old Testament passages that insist that true worship is paying homage to the Lord God Almighty alone.

“Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name. Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you; (For the LORD thy God is a jealous God among you) lest the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth” (Deuteronomy 6:13-15).

“And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with



all thy heart and with all thy soul”
(Deuteronomy 10:12).

“Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God;
him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt
thou cleave, and swear by his name”
(Deuteronomy 10:20).

We are not only commanded to give our
worship to the LORD alone, but also not to
forsake His worship. To neglect the worship
of God is to deny God Himself.

Hence, we must count it our
greatest duty to come before His
presence to worship Him.

Worship no other

To render worship to any other than the
LORD is explicitly and strongly prohibited
in God’s Word. Consider the following
prohibitions in God’s Word:

“For thou shalt worship no other god:
for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a
jealous God: Lest thou make a covenant
with the inhabitants of the land, and they
go a whoring after their gods, and do
sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee,
and thou eat of his sacrifice; And thou take
of their daughters unto thy sons, and their
daughters go a whoring after their gods,
and make thy sons go a whoring after their
gods” (Exodus 34:14-16).

“Ye shall not go after other gods, of the
gods of the people which are round about
you” (Deuteronomy 6:14).

“And go not after other gods to serve them,
and to worship them, and provoke me not
to anger with the works of your hands; and
I will do you no hurt” (Jeremiah 25:6).

“Little children, keep yourselves from idols.
Amen” (1 John 5:21).

How about the worship of angels? In
Revelation 22:8-9, we read, “And I John
saw these things, and heard them. And
when I had heard and seen, I fell down to
worship before the feet of the angel which
shewed me these things. Then saith he
unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy
fellow servant, and of thy brethren the
prophets, and of them which keep the
sayings of this book: worship God.” From

here, it is clear that the worship of
angels was refused.

Instead, we must
worship God.

How about the
worship of saints

of God, like the apostles? According to
Acts 10:26, the Apostle Peter prevented
Cornelius from worshipping him when he
fell at his feet – “But Peter took him up,
saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.”

The whole focus of worship must always be
on the LORD God. Worship pertains only
to the Lord God Almighty who created
all things and no creature should ever be
worshipped. The Westminster Confession
of Faith, chapter 21, paragraph 2, states:
“Religious worship is to be given to God,
the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and to
Him alone; not to angels, saints, or any
other creature.”

Worship is a time of paying tribute to God.
Everyone involved in worship services,
namely the worship leaders, musicians, the
preachers and even worshippers, must focus
on praising the Lord. None should seek his
own pleasure or praise. Worship is not a
time to applaud preachers and performers
but to praise God alone. It is not the feelings
of the worshippers but the glory of God
that should be the centre of worship.

***To neglect the
worship of God is to
deny God Himself.***

Worship must be Trinitarian

When we speak of worshipping God, we must always be mindful that we speak of Trinitarian worship.

That God is one, and that He is three is the very essence of who God is. The Trinitarian doctrine of God – One God, Three Persons – is thoroughly biblical and uniquely Christian.

The great affirmation (Shema) of Deuteronomy 6:4 – “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD” bespeaks the unity of God as One. The baptism formula, “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matthew 28:19), is evidence of the fact that the name of God comprises Three Persons – the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Many more of such Scripture portions can be cited to affirm that God is triune.

The Scriptures also have ample evidence that each of the Three Persons receives the worship of His people.

“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 3:14).

“That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him” (John 5:23).

Matthew 28:19, which mentions the Holy Spirit along with the Father and the Son, testifies to the Spirit’s rightful place

in our worship. Moreover, Paul’s well known benediction in 2 Corinthians 13:14 includes the Holy Spirit also as the object of our worship – “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.”

Admittedly, we have fewer records in the Scriptures concerning the worship of the Holy Spirit. This is not surprising because in God’s design of our salvation, the Spirit is the One who awakens us to worship the Father and the Son. Jesus said, “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you” (John 16:13-14). Let us not forget that the One who awakens us from our spiritual deadness to true worship is God.

When we call on the Father, the Son or the Holy Spirit, we call on each one as the representative of the Trinity. When we say, “Our Father, which art in heaven”, we are not becoming anti-Trinitarian. He is the Father in the Trinitarian relationship within the Godhead, representing the Son and the Holy Spirit. When we call on any one of the Divine Three, by implication, we pray to all Three.

If we were to render appropriate and acceptable worship to God, our worship must be directed to the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. The Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 21, Paragraph 2, states: “Religious worship is to be given to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”

Praise our God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

When we call on the Father, the Son or the Holy Spirit, we call on each one as the representative of the Trinity.

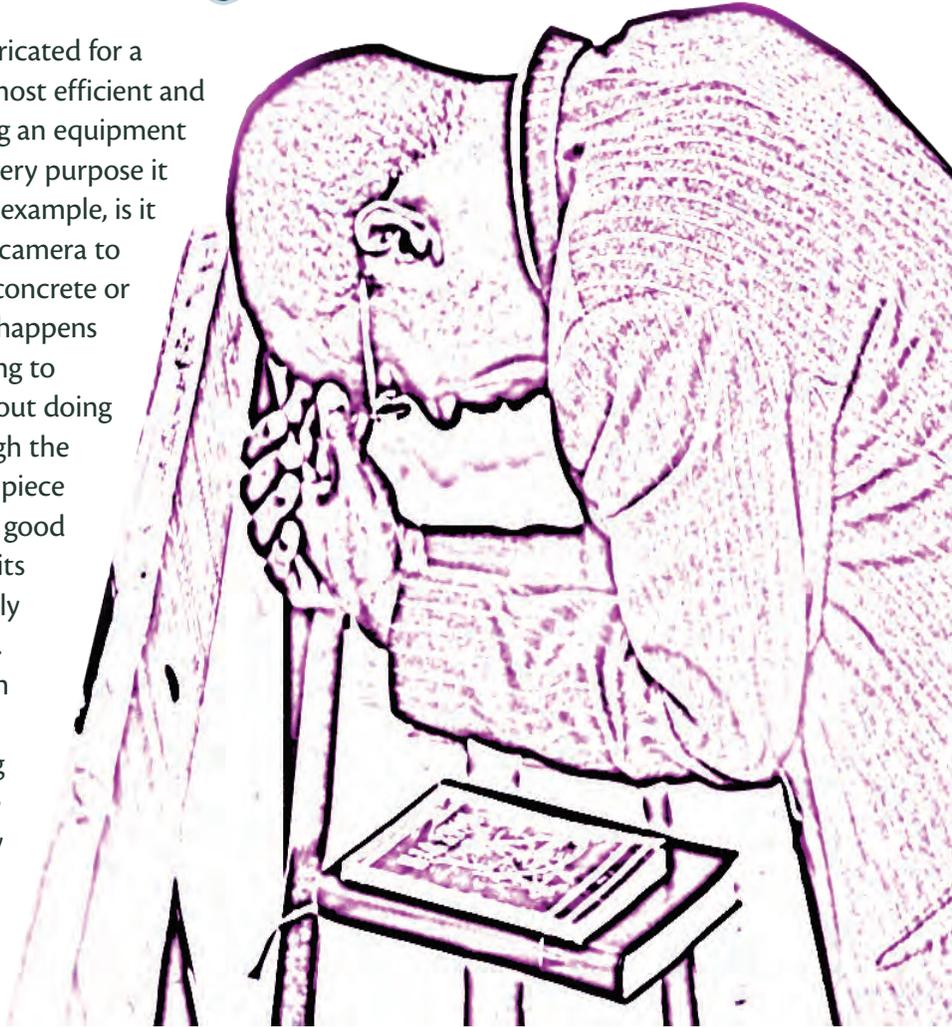
Worship: Christians' Highest Duty

Ephrem Chiracho Ouchula

Every equipment is fabricated for a specific purpose. The most efficient and productive way of using an equipment is to employ it for the very purpose it has been made for. For example, is it possible to use a video camera to mix the ingredients of concrete or to chisel stones? What happens if we do so? We are going to waste the camera without doing anything good. Although the camera is an expensive piece of equipment, it is only good as long as we use it for its intended purpose. Apply this example to our life. What are we doing with our life? Are we using it productively or wasting it away? Let us examine our hearts and carefully consider our ways!

There is a divine reason and purpose for our existence.

This purpose is not to be found in man himself, as proposed by the theory of evolution and humanistic rationalism. The reason for our existence is found in God as revealed in the Holy Scriptures. God had a special purpose when He created us in His own image. We are created to worship the LORD and bring glory to Him. The Bible in Revelation 4:11 says: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and



power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created" and in 1 Corinthians 6:20: "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." The Scriptures also exhort: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31; cf. Romans 11:36). The life of a Christian is an act of worship.

We know that our God is the most glorious being in and of Himself. We cannot increase or reduce His glory. Yet, we glorify Him by demonstrating His communicable attributes in our daily conduct. The Bible says: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see

your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). We

glorify God by doing His will; by doing what pleases and honours Him at all times, in all places and under all circumstances.

Man is either a God-worshipping or self-worshipping creature (cf. Romans 1:18-25). After the Fall, every man is self-centred, and God is given the second or third place or no place at all in his heart (Psalm 14:1). But, this situation has changed when we are redeemed by Jesus Christ. He has restored us to the glorious purpose we were originally created for. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10). Now, we can love God above all things, worship Him earnestly and bring glory to Him at all times, in all places and in all circumstances (1 Corinthians 6:20).

Worship is our highest duty. Amazingly, our body has become the very abode of the living and true God (cf. 1 Corinthians 6:19). Therefore, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5). Truly, "man's chief end is to glorify God and to

enjoy Him forever" (Shorter Catechism, article #1). The whole duty of a man, especially that of the redeemed man, is to glorify God by a life of acceptable worship at all times. Our God is worthy to receive glory and honour from lives He has created and redeemed.

Now, how can we accomplish this highest duty of our life? How is our worship demonstrated?

This duty is demonstrated in our consecration to Christ (Romans 12:1-2)

In Romans, chapters 1 to 11, the apostle, Paul, established the fact that we are saved from eternal damnation by the grace of God revealed through the substitutionary life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. At the end of his discourse, being overwhelmed by the glory of God's redemptive plan, Paul broke into praise, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! ... For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen" (Romans 11:33, 36). Then, from Romans 12 onwards, Paul sets forth the worthy response of the redeemed soul who has freely received this gracious salvation from God.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Romans 12:1). The worthy response to God's saving grace is a total consecration of our life to God. Anything less than this is not worthy to be offered to God. The picture used here is that of a whole burnt offering

The whole duty of a man, especially that of the redeemed man, is to glorify God by a life of acceptable worship at all times.

(cf. Exodus 29:18). The sacrificial lamb is totally consumed by fire on God's altar, and therefore, nothing is left to be used for other purposes. What a staggering imagery! Is this true of your life today? Have you laid it entirely on the altar for God's purpose and set it apart to do only things that are holy and acceptable to the living God or have you taken it down from God's altar and tried to do something else with it? This is like using the video camera to dig a foundation or to chisel stones. What a waste!

Our days are flying by. With each passing day, we have one day less to make our lives count for Christ and His cause. And before we realise it, we shall be called to be with the LORD. Therefore, whether we eat or drink, do business or study, do works of ministry or go on a picnic; whatsoever we do, let us strive to do all according to God's revealed will to bring glory to Him (1 Corinthians 10:31). This is an act of true worship. Only then can we make every

moment of our life count for Christ. By this, we are laying up our treasures in heaven and shall receive our rewards from Christ at His appearing (Matthew 6:19-21; cf. Revelation 22:11-12).

This duty is demonstrated in our obedience to Christ (Matthew 21:28-31a)

Jesus declared, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). Obedience is listening to God, knowing His will and then doing what pleases Him. Its basic concept is submission to God and His revealed will. True obedience involves volition as well as practice. Jesus once used the illustration of the two sons of a certain man who were commanded to do a specific job (Matthew 21:28-30). The first son said, "I will not", but afterward he repented and went. Though he was not willing at first, yet when he carefully considered his father's kindness and authority as well as his own duty towards him, he changed his mind and gladly did his father's will. On the contrary, the second son promised to do his father's will promptly, yet he did not move his hand to do the job.

Children of Gethsemane Bible-Presbyterian Church of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa



Pastor Ephrem Chiracho prays for the children during worship service



He was rebellious at heart! Likewise, many Christians today agree with God's truth in their minds but they lack commitment to do God's will in practice. According to the Bible, this drawing near to God while the heart is far away is equivalent to paying lip service to Him (Matthew 15:7-9). This is hypocrisy; a false worship that God hates!

True obedience is not slavishly keeping of a set of rules. It is a joyful effort to do all that God commands, being motivated by His love. Jesus declared, "If ye love me, keep my commandments"

(John 14:15).

This is what makes Christian obedience unique.

Such loving submission to God's Word is

better than offering fat of rams (1 Samuel 15:22). God has revealed His will and purpose for our life in the Holy Scriptures (cf. Micah 6:8) and He requires a response that is worthy of His name and mercy. How are you walking with God in your daily life? Do you feel that God's commands are unreasonable and oppressive or do you feel privileged to do the will of Christ who bought you with His precious blood?

To serve is to know God's will and do it to the best of our ability.

Loving obedience is true worship that God demands and accepts from us. And such obedience leads us to experience divine blessings (cf. Deuteronomy 28:1-14).

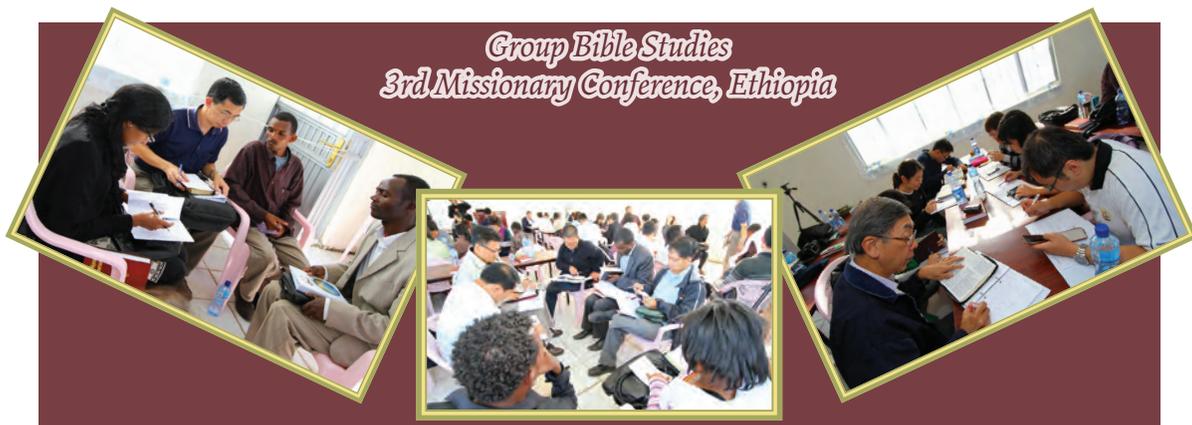
This duty is demonstrated in our service to Christ (Ephesians 2:10)

The life of a Christian is one of lifelong service. To serve is to know God's will and do it to the best of our ability.

The Bible declares: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10). When God sent Moses to Egypt to deliver Israel, He commanded Pharaoh, "Let my son go, that he may serve me" (Exodus 4:23). We are saved to serve God; to do the good work He has appointed for His glory. Neglecting this duty is equivalent to missing the very purpose of life. This means wasting precious moments of our life on earth. We live only once and our life will soon be gone for ever. So, what are we doing in these irreplaceable days of our life?

Jesus illustrated God's kingdom with the example of a team of servants entrusted with various talents to trade with (Matthew

***Group Bible Studies
3rd Missionary Conference, Ethiopia***



25:14-30). When the day of giving an account came, some proved to be faithful stewards while others were not. Stewardship brings privilege as well as accountability! God has entrusted to us various gifts, opportunities and connections to serve His purpose. What are we doing with them? Are we serving Him or ourselves? What are we using our bodies for? "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God... Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Romans 6:13, 16).

A life of service is a life of true worship. A life that does not serve Christ is one that is wasted and void of eternal significance.

Many of us are good at making excuses for not doing God's will. Humanly speaking, those men whom Jesus called to discipleship in Luke 9:59-62 had good reasons not to follow Him. Yet, their excuses were completely unacceptable in God's sight. What about your excuses for not doing the will of God? What does the LORD say about them? Are you using your life fruitfully or wasting it?

Serving the LORD does not necessarily mean you have to be a full-time worker in the church ministry. But it means that in every vocation God places you, you must seize opportunities to serve His purpose; use your position, connection, influence, possession, etc. to win souls for Christ and to promote His Gospel. Serving God means doing all things willingly and earnestly as unto Christ, not as servants of men, but joyfully as servants of Christ (cf. Ephesians 6:5-9).

Service to Christ is every Christian's calling; it makes a fruitful and meaningful life for him. A life of service is a life of true worship. A life that does not serve Christ is one that is wasted and void of eternal significance. Is your life a service to Christ? Is it a life of worship to the living and true God? Are you a faithful steward of God in all the things He has entrusted to you? How would the all-knowing God judge you?

Worship is our highest duty. True worship is demonstrated in our total devotion to Christ, in our loving obedience to His Word, and in our faithful service offered to Christ in every vocation of life that God has designed for each one of us. May the Lord help us, and grant us wisdom as well as a willing heart to make our lives count for Him before "the night cometh, when no man can work"! Amen!

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any time of the day

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Worship in the Beauty of Holiness

Reggor B. Galarpe

Let us consider the subject “Worship in the Beauty of Holiness” based on the Scripture text, 1 Chronicles 16:29 which says: “Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.” It is a portion of David’s thanksgiving psalm (1 Chronicles 16:8-36) on the occasion of bringing back the ark of the covenant into Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 16:1-2).

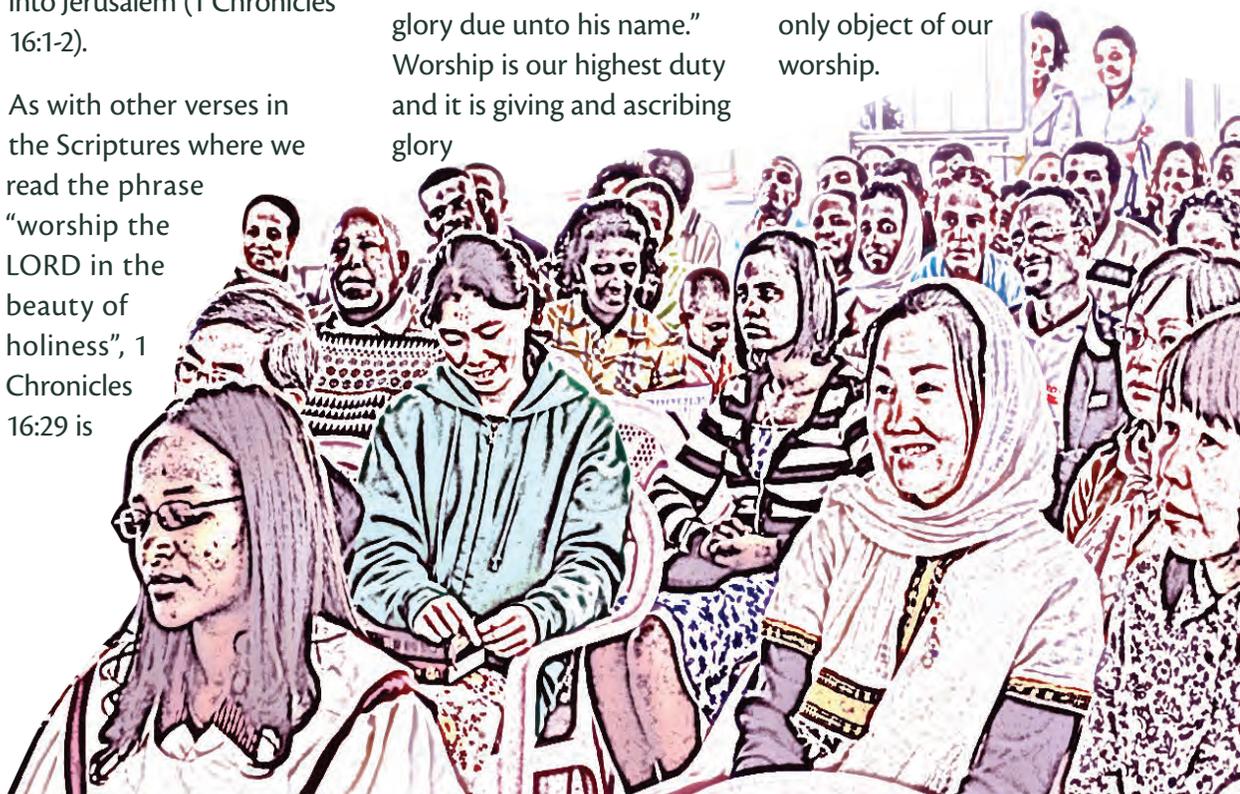
As with other verses in the Scriptures where we read the phrase “worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness”, 1 Chronicles 16:29 is

one important scriptural guideline on worship. Looking closely at our text, there are three things for us to take note of: (1) the command to worship, (2) the object of worship and (3) the manner of worship.

Firstly, the command to worship. We are told to worship. Interestingly, our text sheds light on what worship is all about as the first part of it says: “Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name.” Worship is our highest duty and it is giving and ascribing glory

and reverence unto God. It continues to tell us of one element of worship, that is, “bring an offering, and come before him”. Yes, worship is coming before God’s presence, bringing with us our offering and sacrifices of thanksgiving.

Secondly, the object of worship. The second part of the verse reads: “worship the LORD.” We are to worship the Lord and Him only! The Lord is to be the one and only object of our worship.



Thirdly, the manner of worship, which shall be our main subject for this article. We are told to “worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness”. This phrase occurs more than once in the Bible. We read in Psalm

29:2: “Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.” Psalm 96:9 – “O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth.”

At the heart of this call to worship are the right approach and right attitude in worship. These are two important principles that must be upheld if we are to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

The right approach: worship must be consistent with the character of God

Since worship is ascribing glory, giving honour and adoration to God, the worshipper must bear in mind the character of God. This is clearly emphasised on the occasion when Jesus told the Samaritan woman, “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). From here, we learn that our worship must be consistent with the character of God.

One of the attributes of God is His holiness. We read of the prophet Isaiah’s vision of the seraphims crying one to another: “Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory” (Isaiah 6:3). And in the vision of John in Revelation 4:8: “And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord

God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.” God is a holy God and therefore, they that worship him must worship him in the beauty of holiness.

As we think about it, there is nothing more beautiful than holiness, and we know that God is infinitely holy. Therefore, our worship ought also to be characterized by holiness, that is, the beauty of holiness. And that would imply:

- (1) Worship must not be associated with anything that is an affront to God’s holiness.
- (2) Worship must be totally free from anything that is offensive to or contradicts the character of God.

It is so sad that many of today’s worship, which are rather self-styled and presumptuous, worldly and carnal (even sensual) do not



hold up to this biblical standard of worship. Instead of worship in the beauty of holiness, it has degenerated into plain worldliness. Surely it is not pleasing, neither acceptable nor glorifying unto God.

A holy God must be approached in holiness. “O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth” (Psalm 96:9). Notice that the psalmist describes the beauty of the Lord in His holiness and then continues to describe the manner of approaching the Lord in worship – “fear before him”. Here we are taught that to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness is to approach Him with reverential fear. We read in Psalm 5:7 – “But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy

mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.” Likewise, Psalm 22:23 says: “Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.”

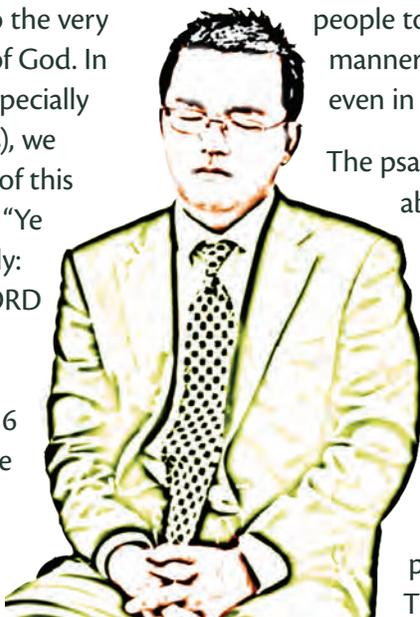
In the vision of Isaiah, he saw angels having 6 wings – 2 wings covering their face and 2 wings covering their feet, which is a gesture of their reverence before the majesty of the Lord in the beauty of holiness. In John’s vision in Revelation 4, together with the four beasts crying “Holy, holy,

holy, Lord God Almighty”, “four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power” (Revelation 4:8, 10-11).

As God is a thrice-holy God, our worship of Him ought to be a holy and solemn activity that must be done in decency and in order, in reverence and in awe, as well as in the beauty of holiness.

The right attitude: the worshipper must conform to the character of God

Not only must our worship be consistent with the character of God, the worshipper must conform to the very character of God. In the O.T. (especially in Leviticus), we read often of this command: “Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy.” 1 Peter 1:15-16 – “But as he which hath called you is holy, so



be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.” It is God’s will for His people to be holy in all manner of conduct, even in their worship.

The psalmist thought about it in

Psalm 24:

“Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?” (v. 3).

The psalmist

was contemplating: “Whom will God admit as an acceptable worshipper?” Herein lies the answer in verse 4: “He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully”, which is further elaborated in Psalm 15.

The prophet, Isaiah, in seeing a vision of the Holy God surrounded by angels crying: “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty”, was moved to confess: “Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell

in the midst of a people of unclean lips..." (Isaiah 6:5). Isaiah was mindful of his own standing before God and knew very well that sin is one great affront to the character of the thrice-holy God and so he could only say: "Woe is me!" How about us? Do we have that sensitivity each time we come before God in worship? Remember, in worship we are in His very presence.

God's holiness demands that we must come to worship Him in the beauty of holiness. It is not to be taken lightly, instead it should be a matter of concern to everyone who is committed to worship the Lord. So if we approach God in worship without holiness, then there is no

Conclusion

Worship is the very purpose of our existence – "the chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever." Someone once said that "to worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God; to feed the mind with the truth of God; and to devote the will to the purpose of God".

Worship in the beauty of holiness is a must, for

beauty in worship but rather the ugliness of sin.

Perhaps, our greatest concern now would be this – "What is the 'beauty of holiness'?" If we think of God's beauty of holiness, we would think of God in the splendour of His infinite purity, in all His transcendent awesome glory.

Speaking of the same pertaining to man, it would be that quality or the kind of life that is evidenced by godliness, purity and consecration unto God. It is the one beauty that God wants to see among His people every time they come before Him in worship. It is not that God will not be delighted when we come

without holiness there can be no acceptable worship. To worship in the beauty of holiness will entail the right approach as well as the right attitude. To be right in our approach but wrong in our attitude would be hypocrisy; and to be right in our attitude but wrong in our approach would be irreverence. We need to get these two things right so

dressed up appropriately for worship but it is the beauty of our inward purity as evidenced by outward sanctity, i.e. our personal holiness and sanctification that pleases Him most!

I believe the Apostle Paul had this in mind when he wrote Romans 12:1-2: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."



that we would not be guilty of hypocritical or irreverent worship. We must worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness, for without holiness no man can see the Lord.

Worship Must Be Theocentric

Prabhudas Koshy

To worship God is to render the honour due unto His name. This is the highlight of Jesus' words: "worship the Lord thy God" in Matthew 4:10, and that of the angel in Revelation 22:9, "worship God".

The Eternal God is the object of our worship; His infinite excellency is the basis and focus of our worship. True worship is coming before His holy presence, contemplating on His Person, attributes and works, and lauding Him with praise and thanksgiving.

The beauty of worship is not about how immensely pleasing it is to the worshippers, but rather how reverentially the worshippers exalt and please God. When the thoughts and desires of the worshippers are neither fixated on God nor yielded to Him, all their worship becomes an abomination. The prophet, Amos, declared God's revulsion at such worship service: "I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. . . Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols" (Amos 5:21-23). Of such men, Isaiah said that they "make mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth, nor in righteousness" (Isaiah 48:1b).

Worst of all, not to be fully occupied with God in worship is to deny God His deity. As Jeremiah said: "And though they say, The LORD liveth; surely they swear falsely" (Jeremiah 5:2). Even the apparent confessions of praise that the worshippers made were rejected by God for their lack of sincerity.

Rebuke for double-mindedness in worship

God hates double-mindedness in worshippers. The apostle, James, admonishes worshippers: “Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded” (James 4:8). The apostle here addresses those who are irresolute in their devotion to God, whose hearts are not decidedly fixed, but vacillating between godliness and sin. So they are urged to draw nigh to God with sincerity and purity of heart.

Worshippers must revere the holiness of God's presence and genuinely repent of

their sins as they render their praise to Him. There should be no hesitation or indecisiveness in their hearts to leave sin, and approach God as His true servants. Worshippers must wholeheartedly seek God in awe and solemnity.

“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water” (Hebrews 10:22). Jesus shed his blood and died on our behalf that our sins may be removed and thus we may come to Him with full assurance.

Tragedy of consumerism in worship

Unfortunately, what goes on today as worship in many churches is not God-centred but man-centred. It is generally the celebration of the “cult of consumerism”. In such a worship, the consumer or the congregation is sovereign. Hence, all attention is directed to pleasing the congregation. The churches promote their worship services as “seeker-friendly”. They want the worshippers to feel some sort of relevance and greatness. Their emotional happiness becomes the major goal of church worship. So worship activities and messages are devised to provide a sense of self-gratification to all worshippers. Human feelings and satisfaction are enthroned in those worship services.

Worshippers who arrive in the church are treated to a large dose of self-pleasure

and self-satisfaction, which they have come looking for. Such worship services are trendy and superficial. There is little solemnity and reverence for God, but much light-hearted and frivolous singing, dancing and messages.

In this sort of situation, immoral and materialistic men flourish quickly and become the leaders of the churches. They take the stage during worship services as pastors and worship leaders. Dreadfully, in their worships, the holiness of God is slighted and worldliness is endorsed. This is a subtle kind of idolatry, and it is unhesitatingly espoused in many church services. This is the tragedy of modern worship activities.

When human feelings and needs are made the major focus of church worship, the glory of God is relegated. God has strongly condemned such worship in His Word. “Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me

When human feelings and needs are made the major focus of church worship, the glory of God is relegated.

with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men” (Isaiah 29:13). The Lord Jesus echoed Isaiah’s warning in Matthew 15:7-9: “Ye hypocrites, well did

Proper conduct in worship

When we come to worship God, we enter His presence. It is entering the throne room of God, though not literally but in the spiritual sense, it is standing in worship before His throne. What sort of appearance would be expected from worshippers who enter His holy presence? Certainly, their conduct must befit His holiness and majesty.

The Scriptures teach us that in His presence is fullness of glory, honour and joy. “Glory and honour are in his presence; strength and gladness are in his place” (1 Chronicles 16:27). The Scriptures also tell us that “in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore” (Psalm 16:11).

Hence, we must come before God with a heart of reverence and spiritual joy. “Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods” (Psalm 95:2-3; cf. Psalm 100:2).

Many have incorrectly assumed that the words “joyful noise” sanction worldly forms of celebrations (music and dances) in church worship services. This has led to much carnal ecstasy rather than reverential joy before God. It is inexcusable

Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”

that worldliness abounds in church worships, corrupting the very nature of Christian worship everywhere.

Worship requires that our thoughts, passions and the whole being be drawn to the august presence of God. We must teach our hearts to say like the psalmist: “My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him” (Psalm 62:5). Our heart’s expectation must be the glory

of God and the joy that

His presence grants us. The confession of the worshippers should be: “O LORD, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy

We must come before God with a heart of reverence and spiritual joy.

name” (Isaiah 26:8).

If our inward disposition is fully attuned to give glory to God, then there will be a natural outflow of proper conduct in worship. The original concept that is reflected in the Hebrew word for worship, *šāhā(h)*, is that of bowing down. It is a word which compels us to adopt an attitude of reverence. Surely such should be the conduct of those who acknowledge the high throne of God. True worshippers should embrace a reverential life before God at all times. Their meditation, singing, prayer, thanksgiving, hearing of the preaching and all interactions must be a homage rendered to God.

Worship according to God's will

Worship must be completely congruent with His person and His will. But how do we know who is and what is His will? We know Him and His will through His Word. So to worship the Lord in any manner that is contrary to what He has revealed in His Word is to come before Him in defiance, resisting His greatness and authority. In other words, to offer acceptable worship to God, we must fully conform to God's expressed commands and provisions in the Bible.

Worship is not a matter of human creativity as many think in these days. When it comes to spiritual matters like worship, human ideas and imaginations are unhelpful and precarious, especially when they are not regulated or guided by the Scriptures. Without guidance from the Scriptures, our ideas are severely tainted by our own sins and the influences of the world (Romans 3:11-12, 23). So worship is to be kept solemn according to the truth of God's Word. It should never be an exhibition of human ideologies, philosophies, cultures and trends which are contrary to the revelation of God's glory and truth.

God's expectation of our worship is evidenced by the fact that the first four of the Ten Commandments are related to the worship of God.

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3).

"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven

image... Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them..." (Exodus 20:4, 5).

"Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain" (Exodus 20:7).

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8).

We will do well if we remember that worship was never invented by man, but ordained by God. It is about spiritual sacrifices ordered by God unto His own glory. It is not about novelty, but about conforming to the eternal truths of God. His Word is the manual for our worship.

An act or performance done in God's name cannot be called genuine worship unless it is done in accordance to His Word. No matter how acceptable a worship service might seem to the onlookers, if it disregards

the truths in His Word, God will reject it outright. The following are some cases in point.

God rejected Cain's worship but accepted Abel's because the former was from a wicked and unbelieving

heart (cf. Genesis 4:1-3; Hebrews 11:4; 1 John 3:12). Another account to consider is the offering of strange fire by Nadab and Abihu before the Lord, which resulted in their death by fire (cf. Leviticus 10:1-2). There are more such instances of worship which God had rejected (cf. 1 Samuel 15; John 2:13-22).

It is a dangerous thing to worship God in any way other than what He has prescribed in His Word.

God's expectation of our worship is evidenced by the fact that the first four of the Ten Commandments are related to the worship of God.

According to His perfect holiness and wisdom, He has given us instructions concerning worship. To worship Him according to human ideas is to defy Him and provoke Him to wrath.

We should never be presumptuous when we worship God. Jesus said to the Jews: "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9; cf. Mark 7:7). In fact, He had already charged them in Matthew 15:6 that



Conclusion

God not only commands worship, but also directs it by His revealed will for His own glory. Worship is all about God. Worship is centred upon God. The highest priority in worship is reserved for Him; all else, even our needs and concerns must be secondary to His glory.

Worship is not perfected by human excellence but by God's own presence,

they have "made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition".

This truth is emphasised in the Westminster Confession of Faith: "The light of nature showeth that there is a God, who hath lordship and sovereignty over all; is good, and doeth good unto all; and is therefore to be feared, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in, and served, with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the might. But the acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by himself, and so limited by his own revealed will, that he may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, unclear any visible representation, or any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scripture" (Chapter 21, paragraph 1).

empowerment and counsel. Only when the worshippers anchor their souls by faith on what God has revealed pertaining to Himself, His glory will be exalted.

Never expect God to submit or surrender His glory to our pleasure and advantage; that is blasphemous. But rather let us humbly seek to behold His glory by faith and sing His praise evermore.

Give unto the LORD, O ye mighty,

Give unto the LORD glory and strength.

Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name;

worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness

Psalm 29:1-2

Worshipping in Vain

Reggor B. Galarpe

“Worshipping in vain” or “vain worship” is the kind of worship that is worthless, unacceptable and even an abomination in the eyes of God.

The third of the Ten Commandments says: “Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain” (Exodus 20:7; cf. Deuteronomy 5:11). We often think

of this commandment pertaining to the proper use of the name of the Lord in our everyday speech and vocabulary – that we should not use it thoughtlessly and carelessly, sometimes even as a “swear word”. Yes, it is true, but there is more to it. Realise that the Ten Commandments speak a lot about worship.

The First Commandment makes it very clear that there can only be one

object of our devotion and worship, to the exclusion of others (v. 3); the Second Commandment is a prohibition of idol worship (v. 4-5); the Fourth Commandment speaks of the day of worship (v. 8-11); and our text, which is the Third Commandment, is about holding the name of the Lord in reverence!

Many of God’s people today are mindful not to violate the Third Commandment by



“swearing” and “cursing” or irreverent use and mention of the name of the Lord, but I wonder how often this commandment is violated in the manner of worship.

Corporately, you can see for yourself how many a church today has been holding worship irreverently – no longer in spirit and in truth; no

longer in the beauty of holiness; no longer Christ-centred. Individually, we should start examining ourselves – how do I come before God in worship?

Vain worship in the Scriptures

There is a common belief among many Christians: “God will accept anything offered by well-meaning worshippers.” However, it is clear in the Scriptures that sincerity is not the test of true worship. Consider the case of Cain, Aaron’s golden calf, Nadab and Abihu’s offering of strange fire, King Saul’s intrusion into the priestly office, Eli’s wicked sons who pilfered what was offered to God, Elijah’s confrontation with Jezebel and the priests of Baal, and many others.

Vain worship is comprised of a wide variety of unacceptable worship – false worship, idol worship, deviant worship, self-styled worship, etc.

Although we may have been delivered from the evils of worshipping false gods, idols and images, and all self-styled worship, we may still be guilty of “worshipping in vain” when our heart is not right with God. This is the most subtle form of “vain worship” which many of us could possibly fall into. I say it is the most subtle as it is difficult to measure from outward appearance. After all, it is the problem of the heart.

True worship requires devotion of the whole heart, soul, mind and strength in all areas of worship – when it comes to praise, we ought to

Although we may have been delivered from the evils of worshipping false gods, idols and images, and all self-styled worship, we may still be guilty of “worshipping in vain” when our heart is not right with God.

praise God with our whole heart; when it comes to service, we must serve Him with all our strength; when it comes to giving, we must give our best and not leftover.

Vain worship: Its character

Consider how the Lord denounced the worship of Israel in the following verses and see for ourselves what constitutes vain worship:

A wicked heart:

God abhors all forms of

outward services when the heart is full of wickedness and rebellion.

“Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people

of Gomorrah. To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or

of lambs, or of he goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many

prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood” (Isaiah 1:10-15).

All who would render to God acceptable offerings must begin by putting away their sins (see Isaiah 1:16-18).

Insincerity of heart:

“Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men” (Isaiah 29:13). The Lord rebuked His people because of their insincerity in worship. It is nothing more than paying lip service and a form of ritualism.

Self-styled worship:

Notice also in the last part of Isaiah 29:13 – “and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men.” Here is another form of vain worship – worship that is not prescribed by God but based

on human authority and tradition taught by men.

The very same verse was quoted by the Lord Jesus in rebuking the scribes and the Pharisees as we read in Matthew 15:7-9: “Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”

Maintaining the form of worship but without real substance:

“And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness” (Ezekiel 33:31). There are people who just “love” to worship, perhaps to be seen of men, even to hear the preaching of the word but have no thought whatsoever of heeding and obeying God’s Word. Here, it is a case of having a covetous heart – “for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.” The Lord



Jesus in the gospels said: “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Matthew 6:24). True worship requires obedience to God’s Word.

Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof:

This means going through all the motions of worship but not allowing it to influence our lives. It imposes no restraint on our passions and carnality and amounts to an empty show of piety and religion!

We often find the Lord Jesus having to deal with this kind of people. We read in Matthew 23:27-28: “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.” The Apostle Paul warned in 2 Timothy 3:5: “Having a form of godliness,

but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.” Let us therefore turn away from false worshippers, and not be such ourselves!

Inconsistencies in conduct:

“An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written” (Romans 2:20-24). Here is a case of not “walking the talk”. Realise that God is blasphemed by our inconsistencies or double standards.

Irreverence:

In Malachi 1, God rebuked the people of Israel for their

irreverent worship. Verse 7 – “Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the LORD is contemptible.” They treated worship with disdain and flippancy by offering the blind, lame and sick animals (v. 8) instead of bringing the best they had. They were demonstrating contempt for the seriousness of worship. In verse 10, God says: “I have no pleasure in you, saith the LORD of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand.” He declined to accept their worship because their attitude was not right. (Read Amos 5:21-24; Hosea 6:4-6.)

If we read carefully the words of the prophets, we would notice that the prophecies of Israel’s and Judah’s destruction resulted from their vain and unacceptable worship, and their failure to worship God with the proper attitude. Worshipping in vain is to provoke God to anger. Hence, may we be careful to avoid all forms of vain worship when we come before God.

The Coming Worship of the Antichrist

Ephrem Chiracho Ouchula

Worship is the honour, reverence, service and homage, in thought, feeling or act, paid to someone. Only the living and true God, the Creator and Redeemer of man, deserves such worship. Yet, the Holy Scriptures show that at the end of ages, people will render this worship to the antichrist. In this article, we are going to briefly examine the nature of the antichrist's worship in order to safeguard ourselves, our families and our churches from its snare.



Identity of the antichrist

The antichrist is an eschatological figure who opposes Christ. He stands against Christ and attempts to replace Him, pretending that he himself is the Messiah (cf. Daniel 9:26-27; 2 Thessalonians 2:4). He demands worship that belongs exclusively to the Triune God. He is the false Christ; the wicked one, the man of sin and the son of perdition, who will come at the close of human history (2 Thessalonians 2:3-8). He will be an international leader during the seven years of tribulation period, obtaining both political and religious power through deceptive miracles performed by the power of the Devil (2 Thessalonians 2:7-10;

Revelation 13:3-18). At his appearance, he will make a covenant of peace with Israel, pretending to be her Messiah but will break his covenant in the middle of the great tribulation, and consequently persecute the Jews (Daniel 9:26-27; Revelation 13:7). Yet, he will be defeated by Jesus Christ and face eternal punishment (2 Thessalonians 2:8; Revelation 19:19-20). The prosperity and joy of the wicked is short-lived and ends with condemnation!

The antichrist is characterised by the denial of the Father and the Son, and also the incarnation of Christ (1 John 2:22; 4:3). He

is always associated with the fallen spirits who energise him, and inspire and empower the false prophets (Revelation 13:1-16; 16:14). The antichrist is also associated with the false church that commits spiritual adultery—glorifying and worshipping men and angels instead of God (Revelation 17:1-7). Christ predicted that false Christs would come with false prophets to deceive many with lying wonders (Matthew 24:23-25). When the apostle John wrote

Worship of the antichrist

It is universal

The Holy Scriptures declare: “And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Revelation 13:8; 17:8). The only exception is born-again believers whose names are written in the book of life of the Lamb of God. That is why the elect Jews who shall be saved during the tribulation period will not worship the antichrist. Though they will pay with their lives for

It is exclusive

The antichrist not only demands people to worship him, but he also exalts himself above any that is called God and claims an exclusive worship. He “opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God” (2 Thessalonians 2:4). The Bible says that at the second

It is blasphemous and idolatrous

The antichrist is a blasphemer – “And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven”

his epistles, many professing and deceptive preachers were said to be antichrists, who were working by the power of the antichrist (2 John 1:7). Yet, the Holy Spirit working through the Church is withholding the manifestation of the antichrist (2 Thessalonians 2:5-8). When the Church is taken up in the rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17), the way is made ready for the revelation of this antichrist (2 Thessalonians 2:5-8).

denying him worship, they will persevere till the end (Revelation 13:10; Daniel 7:25; 8:24). In all periods of the redemptive history, the edge of the sword, the flame of fire or the fury of ferocious beasts could not quench true faith and love of Christ in the hearts of His people. Dear brethren, will you stand alone with Christ when the evil day comes or will you join the masses to do wickedness for fear of being stigmatised?

coming of Christ and the establishment of the millennial kingdom, Christ Jesus will receive exclusive worship (Zechariah 14:9). Therefore, it is no wonder that the antichrist attempts to do the same thing, pretending that he is the Messiah. He demands total allegiance in religious, political and economic spheres (cf. Revelation 13:3-17).

(Revelation 13:6-7; cf. Daniel 7:25). The most grievous blasphemy against God is to claim that one is God, and thus demands worship that exclusively belongs to the

living and true God. Yet, this is one of the characteristics of the antichrist. He “opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God” (2 Thessalonians 2:4). He will desecrate God’s temple in Jerusalem and stop the worship of the living and true God (Daniel 11:21). Truly, the antichrist is the vile person, the man of sin, the wicked one and the son of

It is deceptive

The antichrist works with the power of Satan who is the source and embodiment of lies (cf. Genesis 3:1-6; John 8:44). Thus, the basic strategy that leads to the worship of the antichrist is deception, which the Bible calls delusion. The antichrist comes and convinces people “with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie” (2 Thessalonians 2:10-11). Beware! If we consciously refuse to practise the truth but love unrighteousness, we have fallen into the trap of the evil one. What is the passion of your heart? Check the cravings of your old self before it is too late to turn back.

What does the antichrist use to deceive people and make them believe that he is the Messiah? The Bible is explicit: “Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders” (2 Thessalonians 2:9; Revelation 13:3-15). God permits the wicked one to use lying wonders to deceive unrighteous people in order to judge sinners who hate the truth of the Gospel (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; Matthew 24:24-25). Our God is a miracle-

perdition (Daniel 11:21; 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 8). Idolatry is to render the worship that belongs to God alone to any creature or being. The Bible categorically says that those who worship creatures or idols actually worship Satan who is behind every false religion (1 Corinthians 10:19-20; Deuteronomy 32:16-17; Psalm 106:37-39). Therefore, the worship of the antichrist is idolatrous and satanic.

working God. That is why we pray to Him in our distress, sickness and destitution, believing He will hear and answer our prayers, sometimes miraculously. Yet, if someone claims to have power to do miracles and wonders, and calls people to receive their “miracles”, know that this is the work of the evil one. Jesus Christ testified that ministers of Satan do perform such great signs and wonders to cause the unrighteous ones to believe lies, to their damnation (Matthew 24:24).

The apostle John calls the ministers of the antichrist, deceivers. “For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh” (2 John 1:7; cf. 1 John 4:3), and the core target of their deception is to deny the incarnation and humanity of Jesus Christ. This is intended to take away the salvation God granted through Jesus Christ (cf. 2 Corinthians 4:4). The doctrine of Christ is central to the worship of God because we know God, are reconciled to Him, made His children, and are able to worship Him through Christ alone. Denying Christ’s incarnation is denying His substitutionary atonement for our redemption. Thus, once the truth of Christ’s incarnation is removed,

there is no light that brings sinners to salvation. Church leaders must be vigilant to make sure that only sound doctrine is preached and taught at all times. There is

It is demonic

This thought goes with the foregoing theme. The antichrist (the beast) does great signs and wonders with the help of the false prophet. There is mighty power working through him. But, what is the source of



that power? The Holy Scriptures declare: “the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority” (Revelation 13:2). The dragon is the old serpent, the

It is doomed

Ultimately, the antichrist and all his worshippers will be conquered by Christ and condemned to eternal punishment. When the Lord Jesus comes down to earth at the end of the Armageddon War to deliver the remnant of Israel and establish

no place for entertainment and sensational preaching that dilute and remove the message of the Gospel from the pulpit.

Devil and Satan (Revelation 12:9; 20:2; cf. Genesis 3:1-6). The worship of the antichrist is energised by the Devil who ultimately receives the worship (cf. 1 Corinthians 10:19-20; Deuteronomy 32:16-17). Therefore, the

worship of the antichrist is demonic worship. During Christ’s forty days of fasting and prayer, the Devil tempted our Lord by promising to give Him all kingdoms of the world, their glory and power if Christ would fall down and worship him (Luke 4:5-8). But, Christ declared that worship is to be given to the living and true God of Israel alone! Dear brethren, beware! If Satan had tempted the perfect

Son of God, he shall also tempt you through the cravings of your heart. Make sure that both the means and the end of all your endeavours are righteous that you may prosper in your life and ministry.

His millennial kingdom, He will take the antichrist and his false prophet and cast them alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone (Revelation 19:19-20; 2 Thessalonians 2:8). This is the ultimate destiny of all false worshippers.

Dear brethren, let not anyone or anything deceive us into departing from the true worship of God. All our worship activities, our daily walk as well as in the weekly church services must be guided and regulated by the truth of God’s Word so that we are able to glorify God in our body and in our spirit. May God preserve us in the path of righteousness till He comes or calls us home! Amen!

Gethsemane B-P Church

3rd Missionary Conference, Ethiopia

6-11 December 2011

Conference Speakers



Rev Dr Prabhudas Koshy



Rev Ephrem Chiracho



Rev Reggor Galarpe

Missionaries & Preachers Who Participated



Preacher Daniel Lim



Preacher Dennis Kabingue



Preacher Jeremiah Sim



Preacher Kelvin Lim



Preacher Edsel Locot



Rev Eben Yoon



Preacher Joshua Yong



Preacher Engida Tefera



Preacher Imane Dola



Preacher Degu



BIBLE TRIVIA - EXODUS 3

Sarah Yong

READ THE CHAPTER FROM YOUR BIBLE, THEN COMPLETE THE PARAGRAPH BELOW USING THE WORDS IN THE BOX AS YOUR GUIDE.

MOSES HEARD	MILK KNOW	SEEN LARGE	BRING ISRAEL	DELIVER EGYPTIANS
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The LORD said, "I have surely _____ the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have _____ their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I _____ their sorrows; and I am come down to _____ them out of the hand of the _____, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a _____, unto a land flowing with _____ and honey." So God called _____ to speak to Pharaoh, that he should _____ forth the children of _____ out of Egypt.

THE NAMES OF GOD

IN THE SCRIPTURES, GOD REVEALS HIS NAMES. THROUGH HIS NAMES, HE TELLS US A LOT ABOUT HIMSELF. THE FOLLOWING NAMES OF GOD ARE FOUND IN EXODUS CHAPTER 3. FILL IN THE MISSING LETTERS TO COMPLETE EACH NAME.

- * G _ _ (v. 1)
- * The _ _ _ _ of the LORD (v. 2)
- * The _ _ _ _ (v. 4)
- * The God of thy _ _ _ _ _ (v. 6)
- * The God of _ _ _ _ fathers (v. 13)
- * I AM _ _ _ _ I _ _ (v. 14)
- * The God of A _ _ _ _ _ (v. 15)
- * The God of I _ _ _ _ (v. 15)
- * The God of J _ _ _ _ (v. 15)
- * The LORD G _ _ of your f _ _ _ _ _ (v. 16)
- * The LORD God of the H _ _ _ _ _ (v. 18)
- * The LORD _ _ _ God (v. 18)

"This is my name forever, and this is my memorial unto all generations"
(Exodus 3:15).

Answers to Vol. 11, Issue 4 - Bible Trivia - Exodus 2 (p. 25)

Fill in the blanks

(1) Daughter of Levi, (2) Pharaoh's daughter, (3) Moses, (4) Reuel, (5) God

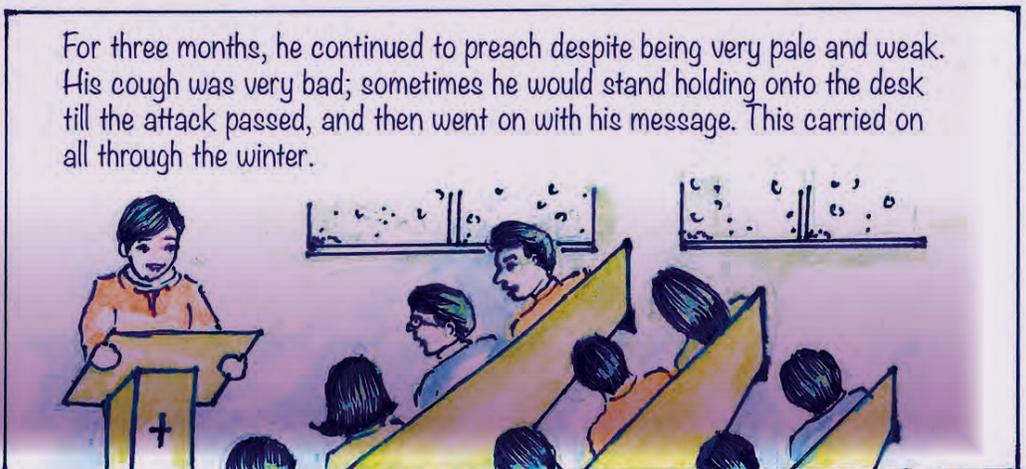
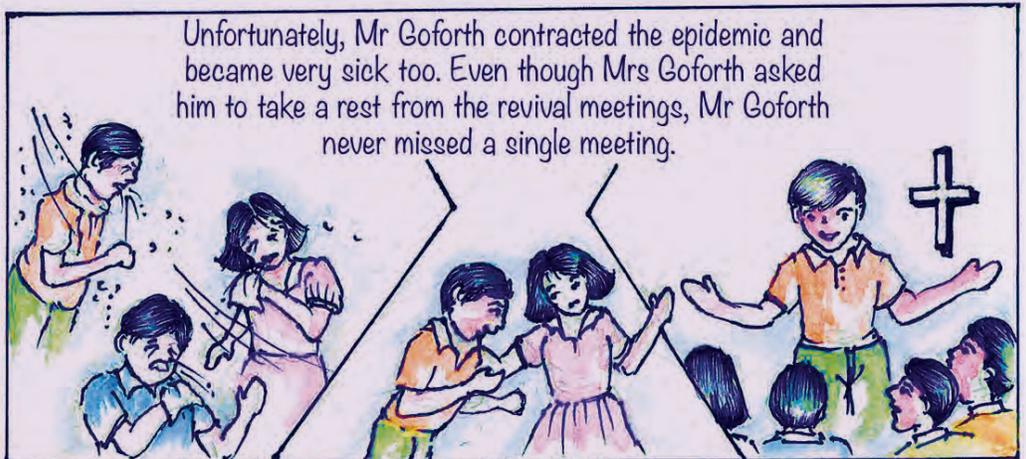
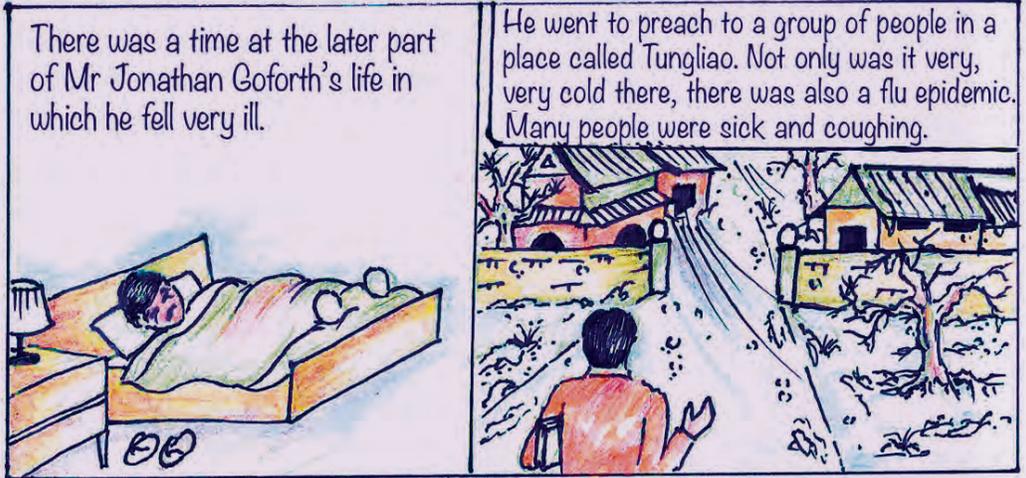
Spiritual lesson

(1) incline, (2) trouble, (3) supplication, (4) day and night, (5) nigh, (6) hope, (7) merciful, (8) helper, (9) strengthen, (10) salvation

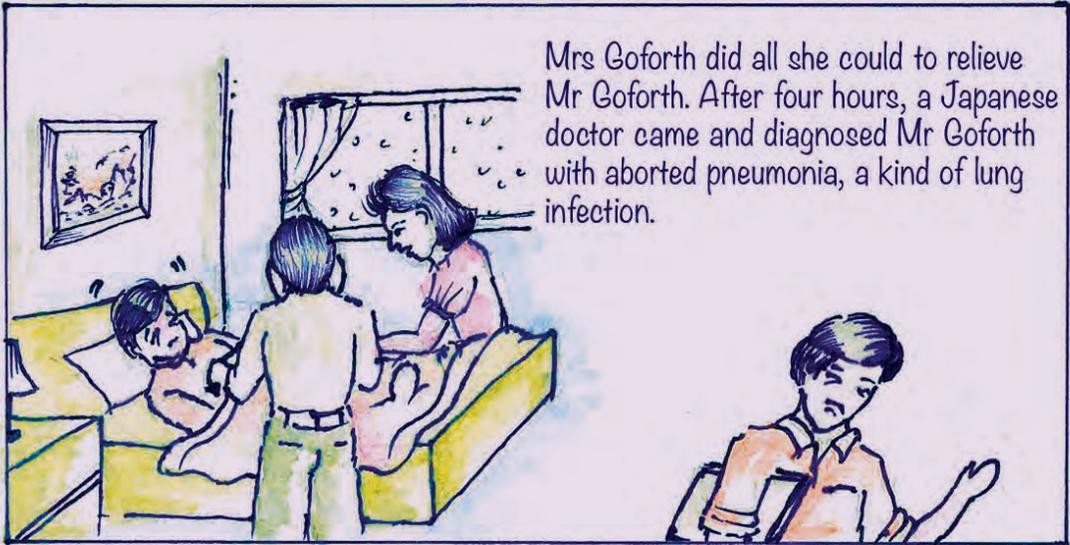
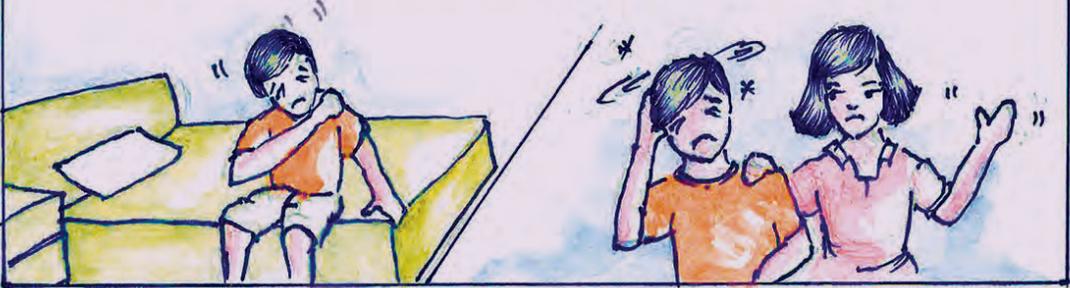
"I was afraid you would keep me from my work!"

A real incident from the life of Jonathan Goforth, a Canadian missionary to China.

Bibliography: "Goforth of China" by Rosalind Goforth.
The stories are retold by Sis Ruth Low.
Illustrations are done by Bro Linus Kok.

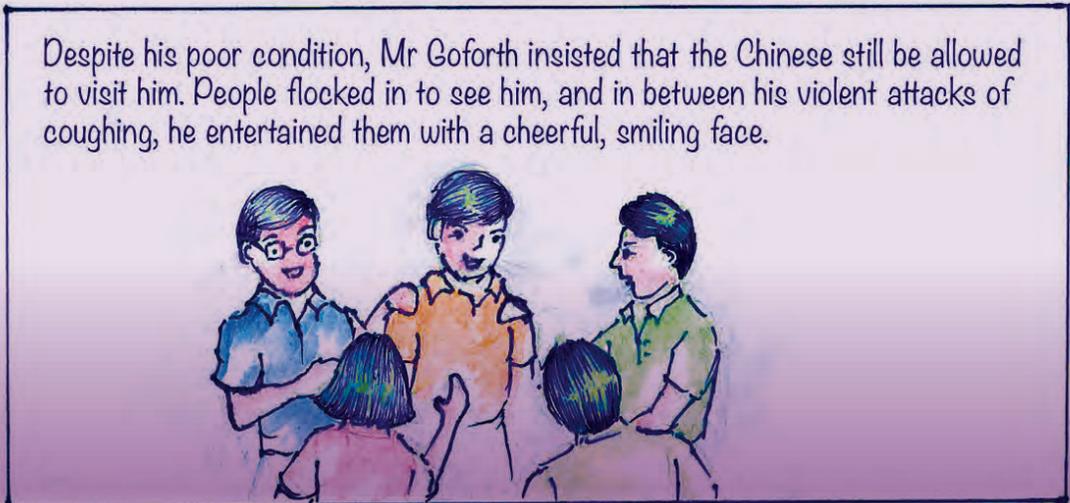


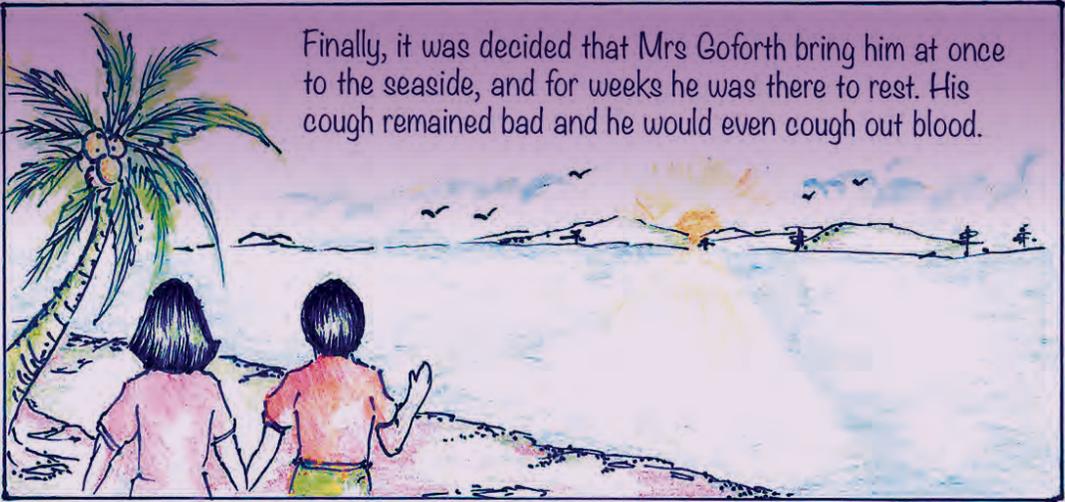
Then one morning, as he arose to go for a day's preaching, he became so deathly faint. For once, he yielded to Mrs Goforth's urging to return to bed. She asked him, "Do you have any pain?" "Yes," he replied, "very severe under my left shoulder." "How long have you had it?" "Three days." "Why didn't you tell me before?" "Because I was afraid if you knew, you would keep me from my work!"



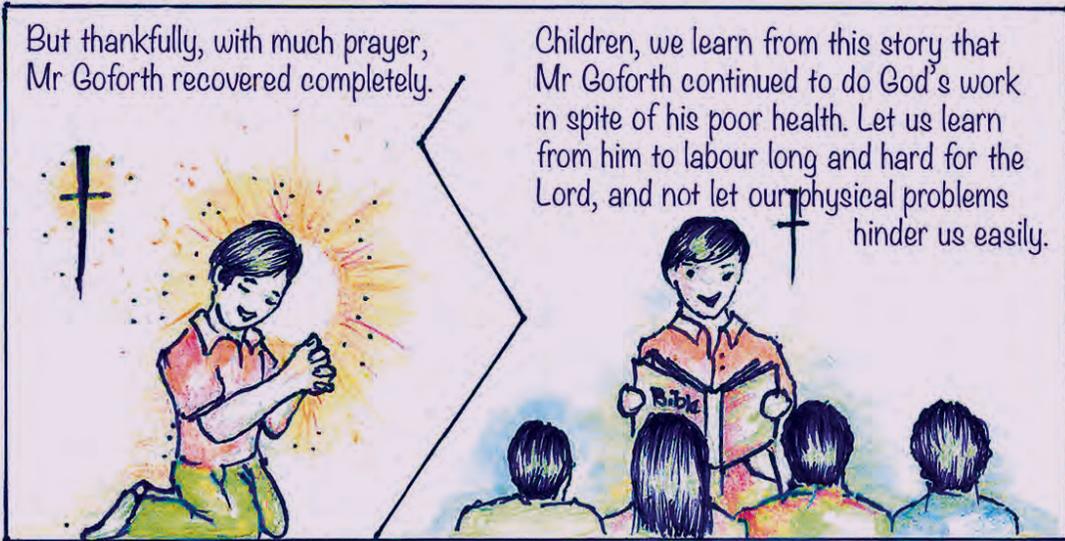
Mrs Goforth did all she could to relieve Mr Goforth. After four hours, a Japanese doctor came and diagnosed Mr Goforth with aborted pneumonia, a kind of lung infection.

Despite his poor condition, Mr Goforth insisted that the Chinese still be allowed to visit him. People flocked in to see him, and in between his violent attacks of coughing, he entertained them with a cheerful, smiling face.



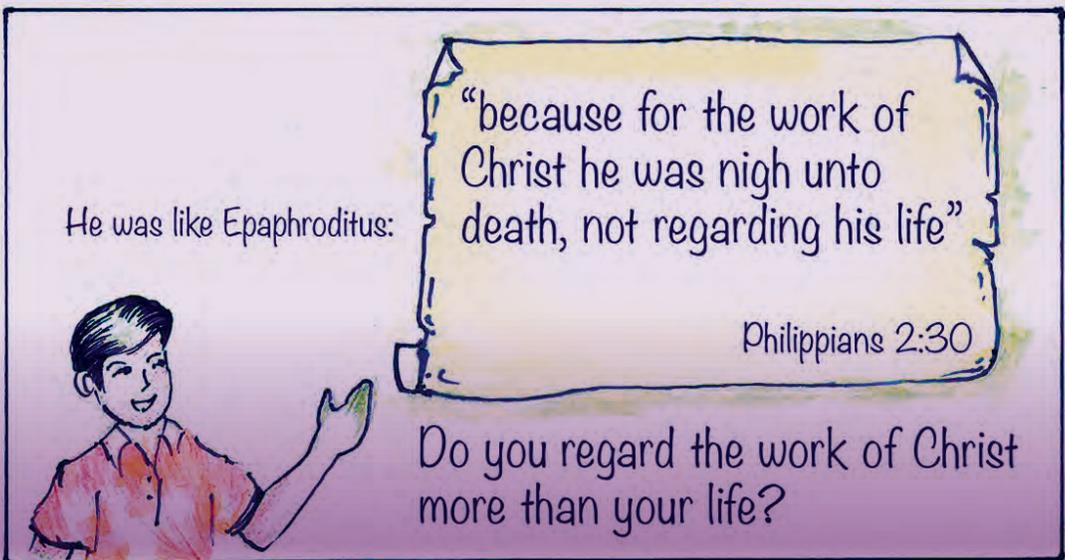


Finally, it was decided that Mrs Goforth bring him at once to the seaside, and for weeks he was there to rest. His cough remained bad and he would even cough out blood.



But thankfully, with much prayer, Mr Goforth recovered completely.

Children, we learn from this story that Mr Goforth continued to do God's work in spite of his poor health. Let us learn from him to labour long and hard for the Lord, and not let our physical problems hinder us easily.



He was like Epaphroditus:

"because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life"

Philippians 2:30

Do you regard the work of Christ more than your life?

Missionary Conference Participants in front of the Church, 11 Dec 2011



Nearly Completed Buildings of Gethsemane B-P Church & Gethsemane Bible Institute, Ethiopia

The Church



The dormitory and administration buildings

