

# THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

April 12

2009

## Two Men Try to Worship

Worship under the best of conditions can sometimes be difficult. Distractions, human error, and sometimes funny situations can occur to take one's attention away from the Lord. Attitudes, however, can prove to be a major factor in acceptable (or non-acceptable) worship. For instance

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Two men sincerely try to worship. The first man, though, is frustrated throughout. His frustrations begin with the opening announcements when the man in charge takes ten minutes to say what any normal man could say in three. He is hardly over that when the song leader adds to his frustrations, selecting a song he is sure contains an unscriptural phrase. The man who presides at the table doesn't help when he uses the term "loaf" instead of "bread," and then the man who is called on to "give thanks for the bread" gives thanks for everything but the bread. The preacher makes a major contribution by totally misapplying a passage of scripture ("He probably didn't spend enough time on that one," the man thinks). When the worship period is finally dismissed, he tries to share his frustrations with those around him, but no one seems to care.

The second man observes many of the mistakes the first man observes. In fact, without fanfare he just doesn't sing the questionable phrase in the song and he silently thanks God for the bread when he realizes the leader's failure to do so. But while observing mistakes, he focuses attention on the good sentiments of the songs that are used, and on the death of his Savior during the Lord's Supper. He makes the prayer that is led his own and appreciates the good thoughts presented in the lesson. He has come to worship God. He makes allowances for human frailty on the part of the leaders in worship, appreciates their sincere efforts, and refuses to let their mistakes keep him from his purpose.

The first man is to be pitied. His ability to "worship" is dependent on

the ability of the leaders in the worship period, and any half-observant person knows how inept that leadership can be at times. He comes to worship, but spends the hour criticizing. He blames others for that which is really his own problem. Consequently, his problem with worship becomes a problem also with his brethren; but one cannot have a problem with his worship and his brethren without having a problem in his relationship with God.

The second man, by maintaining a positive attitude toward his brethren, even when they make mistakes, is able to worship acceptably and is drawn closer to God by his worship.

We are not condoning sloppily conducted worship periods. Leaders in worship should seek to avoid mistakes and to do their work effectively. But acceptable worship depends far more on the heart and attitude of the worshiper than on the abilities of leaders. Our first man may point the finger of blame at others, but his real need is a total change of attitude within himself.

✍️ Bill Hall



## Practicing Christianity at Home

OTHER THAN A SINGLE individual, the oldest, smallest, closest, and most basic nit of society is the family. Families, therefore, form the building blocks of a community, a nation, a civilization. As families go, so go the city, the country, the world. That our country at the opening of the twenty-first century is in trouble few would deny. The reason? God has not only been left out of the schools and much public life, but, practically, out of our homes also.

When love, respect, morality, godliness, spirituality, duty, fairness - the bonding elements of the family - are not taught and enforced daily in the home, how can they exist in society? No nation can long survive the lack of these fundamentals in family life. Their absence in our country signals the need for the introduction of Christianity as the foundation of both family life and society.

Christianity by Biblical definition can never be viewed as occasional acts of righteousness, whether in personal life or in the home. The term Christianity in its real sense describes people - not merely by acts and deeds but by who and what they are. Yes, Christians "practice" good works, but these activities emanate from character that is developed by the regenerating power of God's Spirit through the gospel (see Titus 3:4; John 3:5; 1 Corinthians 4:15; 1 Peter 1:22,23; Romans 6:4). The fruit of the new birth manifests itself daily in private life, the business world, social

relationships - and within households.

Christianity, according to God's design, makes its way into the home through husbands and fathers who take charge of their families and rule them well (see 1 Timothy 3:4,5). When a man, as leader of the family, loves the Lord his God with his whole heart, he on behalf of his household chooses whom he and his family will serve (see Joshua 24:15; Acts 18:8; 1 Corinthians 1:16).

A worthy man, full of love and devotion to God, gives himself sacrificially as a husband to his wife and cares for her, nourishing and cherishing her as an honorable vessel: a godly example of commitment that impacts both the wife and children (see Ephesians 5:25-29; 1 Peter 3:7).

When a mother responds to heavenly, God-like love from her husband and the father of her children with affection, respect, and admiration, children grow up in the warm atmosphere of kindness, gentleness, humility, and longsuffering - the qualities of love that Paul says endures (see Titus 2:4,5; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7). What children see daily in their fathers and mothers and by that parental influence seek to emulate is the love of God and Christ; an unconditional care and offering of themselves to members of the family and to fellow citizens.

Fathers, with the support of mothers, not only choose, as did Joshua, to serve God but also to devote themselves to the training of their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (see Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4). The children likewise experience, as an expression of parental love, firmness and discipline that refuses to spare the rod of correction: chastisement of the body that conditions the mind and soul for reverence and holiness (see Proverbs 13:24; Hebrews 12:4-11).

The effectiveness of love and training depends largely on the spiritual maturity and example of parents who themselves walk where their Lord walked (see 1 Peter 2:21). Like Abraham of old, fathers and mothers command their children and households "after" them, demonstrating Christianity by their own faithfulness to the Lord and their insistence that the children walk in their footsteps (see Genesis 18:19). Religious conviction, spiritual devotion, and moral uprightness set a course of conduct that unalterably and unmistakably give God-directed guidance to the family.

*"Jesus answered and said to him. 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.'"* John 14:23-24

✍ L.A. Stauffer

## MEETING BEGINS TODAY

Our meeting with Steve Neimeier doing the preaching begins today. I hope every member has made their plans to be present for every service this week, if at all possible. We are confident Steve will do his job well. This is why we invited him to be with us in this meeting. We appreciate his ability and his love for the truth.

A meeting such as this presents us with a two-fold opportunity. We have the opportunity to **receive** good and the opportunity to **do** good. We will receive good by being taught and edified by the lessons presented. If we are not in the right relationship with God we will be taught from His word what we need to do to be in that right relationship. If we are faithful servants we will be strengthened and encouraged by that same word.

We will also have the opportunity of doing good. Our presence will be an encouragement to all others present and to Steve, as he proclaims the word throughout the week. We will also do good by inviting our friends and neighbors to attend the meeting that they, too, may hear the good news of Christ Jesus.

We are glad you are here this morning and we hope to see you each night this week through Friday night.

✍ James Hahn

### **Belleville church of Christ**

5635 S County Rd 200E - Belleville, IN - (317) 539-5258

[www.bellevillechurch.net](http://www.bellevillechurch.net)

#### **Schedule of Services**

Sun. Bible Study. . . . . 9:30 a.m.  
Sun. Morning Worship. . . . 10:30 a.m.  
Sun. Evening Worship. . . . . 5:00 p.m.  
Wed. Bible Study. . . . . 7:00 p.m.

#### **Elders**

Charles Carpenter. . . . (317) 839-3873  
James Hahn. . . . . (317) 745-1507

#### **Deacons**

Leon Nevins . . . . . (317) 272-2966  
Don Perry. . . . . (765) 676-5825  
Alvin Stanley. . . . . (317) 831-3514

#### **Evangelist**

James Hahn. . . . . (317) 745-1507