

5-23-2021 weekly message

Meditation of the week: Psalm 91:1-16

Text: Romans 12:1-2

Title: **Ritual practice, and Reasonable service pleasing God**

Christian churches gather together on Sunday to do worship service unto God. If we don't discern whether that worship is a worthy worship that God is pleased with or whether it is just a religious practice offered by Gentile religions, we shall be ended up with tragic life in worship service in vain. worship

God, who saw the Jews worship in vain in the Age of the Law, reproved them through the prophet Isaiah:

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

11To 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.

12When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?

13Bring 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.

14Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. 15And 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)

He said that God did not delight in their religious practices offered by the Israelites fallen and left God like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, and that he considered it abominable.

Through the prophet Ezekiel, he once again reproved how heinous their sins were more than the Sodomites:

"As I live, saith the Lord GOD, Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters.

49Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.

" (Ezekiel 16:48-49).

Jesus, who appeared in the land of Judea, rebuked most Jewish religious leaders after seeing them like the Sodomites, becoming hypocrites and worshiping in vain:

"Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, 8This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. 9But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

" (Matthew 15:7-9).

Apostle Paul testified to Christians in Rome about what is the worthy worship service to God is and what kind of life they should live to worship 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. 2And 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." (Romans 12:1-2).

In other words, it means that worshiping God in worthy manner, they should not be conformed to the world.. And they should present their body as living sacrifice unto the things that please God. Jesus presented his body unto the sinful world as a perfect living sacrifice as a ransom to be the finisher of our faith (Heb. 12:2)

When Apostle Paul wrote to the members of the church in Ephesus, he testified of how they lived conforming to the world before they were saved:

" And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires

of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

4But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

5Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

6And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

7That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. "(Ephesians 2:1-7)

When Apostle Paul said, "Do not be conformed to the world,". He warned against living following the lust of the flesh like the people in the world. In other words, those who are saved by God's grace no longer live mingling with the people of the world who are spiritually dead, but they have already been spiritually sitting with Jesus Christ on the right side of God's throne and living with Him. Therefore, going to church to worship is not for religious rituals, but for worshiping Heavenly Father in heaven in the presence of the Holy Ghost. Jesus himself spoke to the woman in Sychar about the worship unto God:

"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 24God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:23-24)

When King David prayed to God, he confessed that he is not a person who received a lot in the world, but a person belonging to the kingdom of God:

" From men which are thy hand, O LORD, from men of the world, which have their portion in this life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure: they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes. 15As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." (Psalm 17:14-15).

King David, although he was the king of Israel, did not agree with the people of the world. Only in the future when Christ appears, and die for his sins, and rise again, he shall be resurrect with the Old Testament saints (Matthew 27:50-53). He confessed that he lived in the hope of being transformed into the image of Christ at the time of rapture.

However, if there is anything that saddens true Christians, it is to see those who follow the flesh in the end times follow the words of the preachers preaching prosperity in the present world, and are in conformity to the world, like those who have received their lot in the present world. It is a fact that there are so many corrupt Christians who look for corruption rather than the reward that they will receive at the judgment seat of Christ on the day when Jesus Christ appears, and there are many preachers who deceive them. Jesus clearly said:

" He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. 12And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." (Revelation 22:11-12)

Then Apostle Paul testified how they present their body as living sacrifice saying unto the members of the church they are supposed to serve to make the reasonable service unto God.

" For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. 6Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; 7Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness." (Romans 12:4-8).

However, it hurts when we see too many people want to gather in large churches in the end times and worship in vain, thinking that they are serving God while practicing ritual practices in conforming to the world. But even in a small place gathering two or three people worship in the name of the Lord, if they not conform to the world, and sacrificing themselves to serve other members shall receive a great rewards in the judgment seat of Christ.

Amen! Hallelujah!