

Prepared to Worship **11-19-17 AM**

In ancient Israel, the Law of Moses required the people to go to the temple three times a year (Deut. 16:16). As they made this journey, they sang special songs that we have in the Bible called the Psalms of Ascent (Psalm 120 – 134). There must have been a great deal of preparation for this journey. They must have made food, brought clothing, and saw to other needs to make this trip. They cleaned out the leaven in their homes (Ex. 12:15). Ultimately, we need to consider that they did a great deal to prepare for worship. Do we prepare for worship?

There are also examples in the Bible of people not preparing themselves. This seems to be a reason why Rehoboam was a wicked king (2 Chron. 12:13). In particular, Jesus' parable of the five wise virgins and the five foolish virgins speaks a great deal to being prepared to come to the Lord (Matthew 25:1-9). We know that the worship of the OT was a foreshadow to the spiritual worship of the New Covenant. How is it that we can fail to be prepared to worship God in the New Testament worship of the Church?

Four Unprepared People:

1. The Sleeper- Consider the person who falls asleep during services, or sleeps late and arrives late. Are they tired because of lack of foresight? Ephesians 5:14
2. The Scrounger – Consider the one who, when the collection is taken up, fishes around in their wallet to offer whatever they have on hand. They didn't set aside an offering beforehand as God commands we do? 1 Corinthians 16:2
3. The Day Dreamer – Consider the one whose mind is in other places during worship. Is our inattention because we have other things on the mind? Matthew 6:33-34
4. The Runner – Consider the person who runs in to services, then when they can leaves as soon as possible. Is it because they have too many other things on the schedule? Luke 14:18-19

It is important to understand that from time to time, we are all somewhat unprepared due to the circumstance of life. We must understand that we are wanted in the house of God, even when we are unprepared. But if this is a mindset issue (which would be revealed if it is a constant issues), then it risks approaching God in a sinful and unworthy manner. Let us consider some positive examples.

Four Prepared People

1. The mindful worshiper - As the singer at the mountain, a mind prepared before assembly. They have made sure this journey will be a success. Psalm 122:1
2. The encourager – This is the one who comes early to greet others, and is mindful of the importance of visitors. They know the assembly is in part to encourage one another. Psalm 122:8
3. The introspective – This one looks at themselves and their need for the Gospel. They are prepared for communion and have examined themselves for worship. 1 Cor. 11:28
4. The commenter - This one looks into what we are studying head of time. They are ready to offer useful comment. Proverbs 27:17

Our goal is to be Intentional Worshipers. This is how we are both pleasing to God and successful in the things we offer God. Our offerings need to be more than merely checking off a list of things we owe God, but an intentional gift. Intentional means that we are prepared. Therefore, we need to make it a goal to be prepared.