

ADMIRING JESUS

Michael Pickford

It's one thing to admire someone greatly; it's quite another thing to be devoted to someone. I might admire a great athlete for his talent, or a great performer for his abilities, or a great builder for his skill; but this does not mean I'm devoted to them. I fear that some of us are in danger of being great admirers of the Lord without being great devotees. God wants our admiration; but more, He wants our devotion.

If I'm just an admirer, I might not be apt to be generous in my giving (2 Corinthians 9:6-8). Generous, cheerful giving takes devotion. If I'm just an admirer, I might not be as faithful as I should be in attending the services and bible classes (Hebrews 10:25). That takes devotion! If I'm just an admirer, I might not be willing to make those painful choices when it comes to saying no to temptations. That takes devotion!

The level of devotion the Lord calls us to is much higher than many of us are willing to shoot for—too much work, too much time, too many sacrifices. Many just want enough religion to make them feel good. That's not devotion!

Admiration religion is a religion of convenience, Devotion religion is a religion of conviction. Be devoted (Matthew 6:33). 

The elements of our worship, as prescribed by God's word, are as follows:

- **SINGING:** Ephesians 5:18,19; Colossians 3:16
- **PREACHING/TEACHING:** Acts 2:42; Eph. 4:11,12
- **PRAYING:** Acts 2:42; Acts 12:5
- **LORD'S SUPPER:** 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Acts 20:7
- **GIVING:** 1 Corinthians 16:1,2; 2 Corinthians 9:6,7

COME WORSHIP WITH US!

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY...9:00
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP.....10:00
SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP.....6:00
WEDNESDAY EVENING SERVICES....7:00

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- www.defendthegospel.com
 - 1st Sunday Singing Night: 6 pm
 - 5th Sunday Night: Guest Speaker
 - Men's Business Meeting. 1st Monday of each month at 7 pm.



SOUTHSIDE SEARCHER

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"They...searched the scriptures daily..." –Acts 17:11

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"IN THE ASSEMBLY OF THE SAINTS"

Michael Pickford

Hebrews 10:25 is a familiar passage. We are not to forsake the assemblies. But God doesn't just require our presence; He desires a certain decorum as well. "God is greatly to be feared *in the assembly of the saints*, And to be held in reverence by all those around Him" (Psalm 89:7). In each assembly ...

Our Dress is Important. The way we dress is always important. I'm speaking of modest apparel. In our age we don't have a problem so much with the way folks dress as we do with how folks undress! "*As a ring of gold in a swine's snout, So is a lovely woman who lacks discretion*" (Proverbs 11:22). In the assemblies we are to "*Consider one another*" (Hebrews 10:24-25). Our immodest attire can distract other worshippers, either causing them to focus on criticizing you in their mind during services, or lusting after you (Matthew 5:28; 18:6). Both of these can be prevented with modest apparel. Please wear clothing "*Which is proper for women professing godliness*" (1 Timothy 2:10).

Our Disposition is Important. Our attitude and demeanor, these are important in the assemblies as well (Nehemiah 8:5-6). What's your attitude in the assembly? "I wish I were somewhere else." "I'd rather be fishing or golfing." "The singing is terrible." "The sermon is awful." "How long is that preacher going to preach anyway?" "It's too hot in here," "It's too cold in here." These thoughts and more can sour our attitude within the assemblies. We need to be careful to keep Satan from distracting our minds and actions during the assemblies. We must firmly stand our ground in our determination to be edified and educated in the assemblies, as well as to edify and educate others.

Our Discernment is Important. "*I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding... I will also sing with the understanding...*" (1 Cor. 14:15). When the law was read to the people in Nehemiah, I'm impressed with the fact that "*The ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law*" (Nehemiah 8:3). They sought to discern God's will. Worship services are not the place to do homework, work crossword puzzles, pass notes, read a novel, "people watch," text, play games, whisper back and forth, eat, snack, et.al. This is a time to show reverence towards God and respect toward our fellow worshipper. God wants your attention! This is a time to pay attention, worship Him, and learn His word and will (Ephesians 4:11-14; 5:17-19). 

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JOY TO THE WORLD

Michael Pickford

Many are surprised to hear that there's not a single word in the Bible about a holiday called Christmas. The word "Christmas" is not there, nor are there any examples of anyone in the Bible ever observing anything called Christmas.

As I understand it, Christmas originated with the Catholic Church. The *local church* has no scriptural authority to have pageants, parades, decorations, or dinners in honor of Christmas. As an *individual*, I have no problem observing Christmas as a National holiday.

For many in the world, Christmas is a time to celebrate the birth of Christ. To me, Christ's birth is something to rejoice in all through the year. If Christ had not been born into this world, He could never have made that great sacrifice of love on the cruel cross so that I might have the forgiveness of sins and a living hope of eternal bliss in heaven. This is why the Bible states in view of Christ's birth, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people" (Luke 2:10). After Mary had conceived of the Holy Spirit, an angel said to Joseph in a dream, "And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

We do not know exactly what time of the year Jesus was born. Some suggest it was during warmer months because the shepherds were in the fields with their flocks (Luke 2:8). Possibly, but we just don't know because God doesn't tell us. In fact, even the year the Lord was born in is debated. However, we should continue to be joyful daily over the fact that He came into this sin-cursed world to live a life free of sin and offer Himself as the perfect sacrifice for our sins.

By the way, though God didn't set up a memorial for Christ's birth, He did set up a memorial for our Lord's death. It's the Lord's Supper. We should observe this upon the first day of every week (Acts 20:7) while the church is gathered together (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:17-18, 20). And we do this to "Proclaim the Lord's death till He come" (1 Corinthians 11:26).

May we always live our lives in joy for everything the Lord has done for us (Philippians 4:4). ☺

STOP AND THINK!

Michael Pickford

So who's wiser, the man who talks without thinking or the man who thinks without talking?

Many people have placed themselves in embarrassing and even dangerous situations by speaking first then thinking later.

Feelings have been unnecessarily hurt, relationships have been torn apart, and friendships have been destroyed from a lack of thoughtful speech.

"Those who control their tongue will have a long life; a quick retort can ruin everything." –Proverbs 13:3 ☺

DUTY LIST...

SUNDAY MORNING

- Announcements.....Michael Pickford
- Scripture Reading...Michael Pickford
Reading: Proverbs 14:15-21
- Song Leader.....Lynn Buttrey
- Opening Prayer.....Kenny Johnson
- Lord's Table:
 - Lead.....Kenny Todd
 - Serve.....Eli Todd
 - Serve.....John Nelson
- Closing Prayer.....Sam Miller

SUNDAY EVENING

- Song Leader.....Kenny Todd
- Lord's Table.....Kenny Todd

WEDNESDAY EVENING

- Song Leader.....Kenny Johnson
- Invitation.....Eli Todd

Thank You For Serving!

GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

There is only one true saving plan of Salvation outlined in Scripture. No substitutes will do. Have you really been saved? Get out your Bible and study the plan below.

- Hear The Gospel: Romans 10:17
- Believe: Mark 16:16; John 8:24
- Repent of Sin: Acts 2:38; 17:30
- Confess Faith: Romans 10:9, 10
- Be Baptized: Mark 16:16;
Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21
- Remain Faithful: Rev. 2:10

Obey Today!

***Home Bible Studies
Available Upon Request!***