

26 December 2021

How have we come to appear before God this morning?

When we gather on the Lord's Day, my prayer is that the Spirit of God would enter in among us and speak to us.

This December 26, 2021 is no different. We are thankful for a place to come to worship God freely and without persecution, a place where we can open the Word of God without fear of being restricted from one jot or tittle of preaching and proclaiming God's Word and of the gospel of Jesus Christ!

One of my greatest concerns, before any Lord's Day is that God has given me His message for His church, and for any others whom God will send to gather with us.

And then, my prayer is what I said at the FIRST, that the Spirit of God would enter in among us and do His work in the hearts and souls of all who gather.

So, you have my greatest concern before every Lord's Day service, that God will give me His message; and then you have my prayer for the Lord's Day, that the Spirit of God would enter among us and do His work.

My fear is the "good seed of the Word" will fall to the wayside, in stony ground, or among thorns, and either the wicked one will gather it up, it won't take root because the seed has no depth, or the cares of this world and lust for other things choke the Word, and it brings forth no fruit!

O that our hearts would be "good ground" this morning! How do we make sure we've come to worship God with ready, prepared hearts that are good ground...ready to receive the good seed of God's Word? And don't forget this...the SEED (God's word) is good. Nothing wrong with the seed!

The problem...is when our hearts are NOT prepared to receive it.

Where is the place of my rest, saith the Lord, where I may make my abode and dwelling? Isaiah 66:1-4

Isaiah 66:1: Where is the house that ye build unto me? And where is the place of my rest? (My presence)

The people of Israel at first had the tabernacle and then afterward, the temple, where God met with them. But God no longer descends in His glory upon the tabernacle or temple, He abides in temples NOT made with hands.

You may build me a most magnificent house and place My Name on it, saith the LORD, but you cannot build something more majestic than what I have created in the heavens and the earth!

"Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool"

I don't need (or desire) an earthly building made of brick, mortar, gold, silver, and purple and blue hangings, and on top of that, can you build a house that can contain Me and My glory? Or that can satisfy and please me, saith God? Acts 7:44-50, 17:23-31

God dwelleth not in temples made with hands, we do not come HERE to this place to find God, God doesn't dwell in

buildings, He dwells in tabernacles of flesh, in the souls of His people.

Back to Isaiah 66:3-4: The people of Israel in the time of Isaiah rebellious, disobedient to God. As a result, they were only going through the outward motions of worship, but they had no heart for God or His Word!

BUT in their minds, they needed the temple! We need the temple and God will come among us! How sadly mistaken they were!

And how sad that even today, many think God to be pleased with outward aesthetics, stained glass, and beautifully sculpted buildings!

Ezekiel 33:31-32, Matthew 15:8: "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; BUT their heart is far from me"

Listen to me: God doesn't dwell in buildings...If you're born-again, God DWELLS WITHIN YOU!

Luke 17:20-21, Ephesians 2:19-22, Romans 8:5-14, 1 Peter 2:1-5

What we learn from all these passages is that God dwells IN HIS PEOPLE! If this is true, {and it is}, this should GREATLY AFFECT the nature of our corporate worship. If God is in each of us, Christians! How greatly should this affect our Lord's Day worship!

BUT LISTEN TO ME: YOU cannot think to come to the Lord's Day worship and be READY To meet with God after having cast God aside in your life in the world, and if you haven't walked with God in your everyday life in the world!

How you come to worship determines how you will leave...remember that "God is a Spirit, those that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth". God cares nothing for external worship, formality, and buildings, God looks on the hearts of those that come to appear before Him!

God speaks to those who come with ready/obedient hearts, who desire to hear from Him. But if you come/go with nothing, after the Word of God, the gospel has been set before you, it is because you did not enter God's presence with a right heart, therefore, the fault lies with you.

How do we worship God rightly? Back to Isaiah 66:2: Where is the place of my rest, {my repose, my tranquility, my abode}, saith the LORD? What am I looking for, saith the LORD?

I'm not looking for a big, beautiful temple or church building, I'm looking for hearts and souls those who are NOT arrogant religious know-it-all's; I'm LOOKING FOR those that are poor, humble, and of contrite of spirit, and who tremble at my presence and at the hearing of my Word!

Where is the place of my rest? Not in temples made with hands, but in the hearts of my people: John 14:23, 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19, 2 Corinthians 6:16

If this be true of you and I Christian, the presence of Christ should continually be with us, for He is in us. The Lord's Day should be the peak of the Christian experience of God! Oh that each of us would enter into God's presence WITH God's presence! Psalm 100!

Revelation 1:10: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day"

How should our hearts be composed on the Lord's Day? With humility and great expectation as we come to the Lord's Day worship:

From our text (Isaiah 66:2): Poor and contrite of spirit, or if I might say, right and correct thoughts of your smallness, littleness, or nothingness before the High and Almighty God of heaven. As Psalm 144:3-4:

"LORD, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him!
Or the son of man, that thou makest account of him! Man
is like to vanity: his days are as a shadow that passeth
away"

When you come to appear before God for His worship, you should come, NOT only with a right and HIGH view of God, but with a right LOW view of yourself! Isaiah 57:15, Psalm 138:6, James 4:6

A Contrite Spirit:

Bruised and broken: Deeply affected with grief and sorrow for one's own sin against God; tender hearted and penitent before God!

Psalm 34:18, 51:17, Isaiah 61:1, Matthew 5:3-4, Luke 18:13-14

And then, if we really knew God, we would "Trembleth at His Word":

The word tremble means to revere or reverence God's Word. When we have no fear of God's Word, it is because we have no fear or esteem for the Person of God! If we expect God to come among us in our worship, we must have a very high view NOT ONLY of God, but of His Word.

Psalm 138:2, 119:113-120, 129-136, 53

How you came to appear before God will determine how you leave...

How have you come to appear before God this Lord's Day?

Isaiah 55:6-7