

## **WORSHIP GOD WITH REVERENCE AND AWE**

God has ordained that we worship him (Rev. 22:9). The church exists to praise God and honor his name (Acts 2:47). Our challenge is to worship God in an acceptable manner. Acceptable worship is conditioned on worshipping according to His revealed will (Matt. 7:21), doing what God expects of us in the way he said to do it.

It is just as important that we worship with appropriate reverence and awe (Heb. 12:28). It is always expected that God's creatures show appropriate reverence toward the Creator (Eccle. 12:13). "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified" (Lev. 10:3). This is especially the case when we assemble as his church to worship Him and study his Word.

When we worship, we stand on holy ground in the presence of the great I AM. Remember the story of Moses before the burning bush, when he stood in the presence of God. Jehovah spoke to his servant and reminded him that in His presence, he stood on holy ground. Moses was filled with awe. He hid his face and was afraid to look upon God (Ex. 3:3-5). Similarly it behooves all of us to keep this foremost in our hearts when the time arrives to approach God in worship. We all should :

- \* Show respect by our silence. "Be still and know that I am God" (PS. 46:10). "The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him" (Hab. 2:20). Let all chit-chat cease when worship begins.
- \* Show respect by clearing our minds of all thoughts save those of adoration and praise for God (Jas. 4:8).
- \* Show respect by listening to and accept the instruction from God's Word (Josh. 3:9; Ps. 119:117).
- \* Show respect by appropriate solemnity and gravity (Heb. 12:28; Is. 17:7). Worship is no time for cuteness, for flippancy, casualness or comedy. This is important for both those who lead and those who follow in worship and service. This sacred reverence should be reflected in our sermons, our singing, our prayers and communion. It should be evident in our classes as well as our worship hour. We who are adults must teach this truth to our children by instruction and by our godly example.

The reason we must worship God with reverence and awe is because he "is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12:28). He is our Creator and Lord. He has the power to kill and make alive, to wound and to heal (Deut. 32:39). He alone has the power to destroy both body and soul in hell (Matt. 10:28). Because Jesus is in our midst when we assemble, we must show proper deference to his majesty (Matt. 18:20). May reverence and awe always and on every occasion be conspicuous in our assemblies for worship and study. JHW