

VIGIL



“Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”

~ I Peter 5:8

Volume XXXVIII No. 4
October/November/December 2010
Change

CAN WE CHANGE WORSHIP?

Chance Hicks

Can we change worship? Yes. Man, because he is created as a free moral being, has the ability to change worship. The question should be, “Can we change worship and it still be pleasing to God?” The answer to this question is a resounding NO! Man has the ability to change worship, but we do not have the right, or authority, to change it. For our worship to be acceptable to God it must be in accordance with what He has prescribed in His word. Individuals have changed God’s prescribed worship pattern since God first gave them (cf. Genesis 4; Leviticus 10:1-2). When these individuals changed the worship from God’s pattern to their own, their worship was no longer pleasing to God. Worship according to God’s instructions is a sweet, smelling savor to Him, but when worship is changed it goes from a sweet, smelling savor to a foul stench to the nose of God.

Jesus in speaking with the Samaritan woman at the well discussed the topic of worship: “Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:21-24). Jesus Christ gave the two components essential to worshiping God acceptably: in spirit and in truth. Worship to God must contain the proper attitude (“in spirit”) and the proper actions (“in truth”). If we change our attitude from “I want to worship God” to “I have to go worship,” then our worship is missing the essential element of spirit. If we change our actions in

worship from God’s prescribed actions to man’s preferred actions, then our worship is missing the essential element of truth.

Look at some things concerning worship that some have changed.

The Audience of Worship

Sadly, many individuals have changed the audience of worship. Individuals often leave the worship assembly with the statement, “I didn’t get anything out of worship today.” These individuals have changed the audience of worship from God to themselves. Worship is not for us; we are not the audience of worship! God is the audience of worship. Jesus said that true worshipers “worship the Father” (John 4:23). When asked to worship the devil, Jesus stated, “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve” (Matthew 4:10).

Continued on page 32

Editorial

Should Christians be Afraid of Change?

Change is defined by Webster's Dictionary as "to give a different position, course, or direction to" (Webster's Dictionary, p 186). Change in and of itself is not wrong. Some change is inevitable, while other change is nothing more than an attempt to dethrone God! Should we as Christians be afraid of change? Only if the change is an attempt to set aside the commands of God. William Woodson writes in his book *Change Agents and Churches of Christ*, "When change agents speak of 'change,' they mean changes will be made of the very sum and substance of the church of Christ" (73). This is where Christians must be concerned.

Can we change the items of worship and be pleasing to God? Two points must be considered. First, God has established the items of worship. Christ said, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). The five items of worship, as established by the authority of word of God, are: congregational singing, praying, preaching, giving, and partaking of the Lord's Supper (cf. Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2; Colossians 3:16; Acts 2:42). To add to these or to take away from these would be a violation of the word of God (cf. Deuteronomy 4:2; Proverbs 30:6; Revelation 22:18, 19). When one changes these items of worship they disrespect God! But it is not disrespecting God to change from five songs per worship service to six. We are commanded to sing, but not told how many songs to sing. We are commanded to pray, but not told how many prayers to have. We shouldn't mark Christians simply because the order of their worship isn't exactly like ours. Secondly,

God has never left worship up to man's discretion! Under the Patriarchal, Mosaical, and even in the Christian age, God has told man what He desires in worship. He told Cain and Abel (Hebrews 11:4). He told the Israelites (Exodus 20; Leviticus). He has also made His will known to us today (John 4:24). It would be presumptuous for anyone to deviate from what God has commanded and to think that God will be pleased.

The way of Salvation is not a subject to be changed. Is there any way to be saved other than what God has given? Absolutely not! God requires us to: Hear the word of God (Romans 10:17), believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6), to repent of our sins (Luke 13:3), to confess His name before men (Romans 10:10; Acts 8:37), and to be baptized for the remissions of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Mark 16:15,16; Matthew 28:18-20). To suggest that one could eliminate one of these elements is ludicrous. It is through God's grace, mercy, and love that He has made available the means of salvation (cf. Titus 2:11, 12; Ephesians 2:8, 9; John 3:16). Jeremiah penned, "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jeremiah 10:23). Why would anyone want to change what God has done for man?

The walk of a Christian is neither up for debate nor change. John wrote, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). There is a moral standard established by the word of God. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be

any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you" (Philippians 4:8, 9). There is a manner of life Christians must observe. "But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience" (2 Timothy 3:10). Modesty is still a consideration for those who are Christians. "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array" (1 Timothy 2:9). Marriage, divorce, and remarriage are still governed by God. "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marieth her which is put away doth commit adultery" (Matthew 19:9). As Christians we have a responsibility to let our light shine (cf. Matthew 5:16). We can't walk like the Devil and represent Christ. It simply won't work!

How we handle the word of God can't be changed. What is the Bible? Paul told Timothy, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16). The Bible is the word of God! It reveals God's commands. When one takes that lightly, they will find it easy to disregard the will of God. We will be judged by God's word. "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). The Bible is God's law for us (cf. James 1:25). Our eternal life depends upon what we do with it. If we change the Bible into a book of suggestions, then we would find it easy to ignore what God says. Is there something you want to change?

HOW DOES THE PULPIT HELP/HINDER CHANGE?

James E. Rogers

“The pulpit,” refers to preaching and preaching has always been important in God’s plan to save man. Enoch, the first known prophet, tried to change the people of his day from wickedness to righteousness by preaching about judgment (Genesis 5:18-24; Hebrews 11:5, 6; Jude 14, 15). Noah, “a preacher of righteousness” (2 Peter 2:5), sought to change the disobedient into obedient (1 Peter 3:18-22). He saved his house (Genesis 6-8; Hebrews 11:7). Micaiah, “a prophet of Jehovah” (1 Kings 22:7, 8) tried to change Jehoshaphat and Ahab (22:13-23). He received a slap in the face and prison for his effort (22:24-28). Isaiah tried to save Israel from captivity (Isaiah 1:1-31). He saved the remnant from eternal destruction, but Israel went headlong into Assyrian captivity. Jeremiah and the prophets tried to change Judah from provoking Jehovah to anger (Jeremiah 44:1-30). Their answer was: “As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of Jehovah, we will not hearken unto thee” (44:15, 16). They, with Egypt, were given into the hand of enemies (44:30). John, the Immerser and Jesus, tried to turn National Israel back to Jehovah (Matthew 3:1-12; 4:23-25). They rejected John and crucified Jesus. John tried to change Herod and it cost him his head (14:1-12).

The apostles changed “about three thousand souls” from a “crooked generation” to a saved generation (Acts 2:1-47). The majority were not changed (Matthew 7:13, 14). Paul changed “some” in Thessalonica “from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven” (Acts 17:1-9; 1 Thessalonians 1:9,10) and some in Corinth from being “fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with men,

thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers” and “extortioners” to being “washed . . . sanctified . . . justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God” (Acts 18:1-18; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 15:1-11). John tried to change unfaithful members from sin to salvation (Revelation 2, 3).

The pulpit helps or hinders change as the pew reacts to the preaching (Matthew 13:3-23; Mark 4:1-20 and Luke 8:4-15). The soils represent four kinds of receptions. There were two groups who heard Jesus’ preaching; the “you” and the “them.” When the Gospel is preached, the “you” will see, hear, understand and change for the good. The “them” will not see, hear, understand and change for the good. The soil made the difference!

A Bad Pulpit Helps to Change for..

Paul exhorted Timothy to “charge certain men not to teach a different doctrine, neither to give heed to fables and endless genealogies” (1 Timothy 1:3, 4). These were teaching this “different doctrine” because they were adhering to silly myths (4:7; 2 Timothy 4:4; Titus 1:14) and Jewish genealogies (Titus 3:9). This “pulpit” furnishes occasion for disputes and speculations. (1 Timothy 1:4; 6:4; 2 Timothy 2:23; 3:9). This causes the pew to deviate from truth and be deflected to babbling (1 Timothy 1:6; 6:21; 2 Timothy 2:18). This pulpit exists from ignorance being presented as truth. These preachers do a lot of fancy talking, yet they do not comprehend what they are affirming (1 Timothy 1:7). The path of these preachers is seen in 1 Timothy 1:6, 19; 5:15; 6:10, 21.

This pulpit leads the pew to refuse to put up with healthy instruction (2 Timothy 4:3). When the pew has thus been influenced, it will accumulate teachers who will

preach the silly myths it wants to hear and will turn away its ears from the truth (Titus 1:14). 2 Chronicles 18:1-27 is an appropriate illustration of this matter. When the ears are turned from the truth, the only thing left is a lie (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12).

This pulpit seems to be popular in our day. As congregations accumulate large staffs of people who will not put up with the truth, they are changed for the bad. This needs to be stopped!

A Good Pulpit Helps Change for..

The word of God is the seed of the kingdom. The seed is good and has the ability to produce the right kind of change. If the Gospel will not change people for good, God does not have anything else to use (Romans 1:16). We are to “preach the gospel to the whole creation” (Mark 16:15).

When the Gospel is preached to those with good and honest hearts, they admit it into their minds with approval (Mark 4:20). This means they have examined it and seen that it was true (Acts 17:11). As they examine truth, they comprehend it (Matthew 13:23). Having accepted and understood the Gospel, they “hold it fast” (Luke 8:15). Having accepted, understood and held fast the Gospel, they “bring forth fruit with patience” (Luke 8:15). They are productive with constancy and in various amount depending upon ability (Matthew 13:23; 25:15). Their productivity is for good.

The pulpit can effect change for the good and hinder change for the bad when it faithfully presents the Gospel. The action of the faithful pulpit will not change. We must remember that change takes place in the pew!

PO Box 2895
Cookville, TN 38502

HOW SHOULD ELDERS VIEW CHANGE?

Tim Hayes

The question: How should elders view change? The answer: Through the eyes of God.

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood (Acts 20:28).

The phrase “to feed the church of God” could be translated “to shepherd the church of God.” The concept of shepherding is the idea of providing that which is needed for the flock. The apostle Paul reminded the Ephesians’ elders that they were shepherds over the flock of God. These sheep did not belong to the elders but to God. It was God who made these men elders; it was God to whom the sheep belonged; therefore, it is God who knows what is needed for the sheep.

The shepherd boy turned king made this statement, “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee” (Psalm 119:11). David knew what sheep needed to keep them healthy David also knew what he needed to remain faithful unto God. The chief Shepherd (I Peter 5:4) knows the needed diet of His sheep. *And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst (John 6:35).* The proper diet for the sheep of God is the word of God.

When changes present themselves elders must ask, “Is this change in accordance to God’s word?” If the change is not according to the word of God it will not strengthen the congregation and will not be acceptable to God.

A number of the Old Testament prophets wrote of the shepherds of Israel and how they failed in their duties. God showed His disdain for the leaders of His people who failed

to faithfully execute their responsibilities in following His word.

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 2 Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? 3 Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. 4 The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. 5 And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. 6 My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them (Ezekiel 34:1-6).

The words recorded by Ezekiel should be frequent and familiar reading for all elders of the Lord’s church. Thus one can readily realize that the work of an elder is not for the faint of heart or those who suffer from a weak back.

There are many good and godly elders and elderships throughout the body of Christ. These men understand the duties of a shepherd. These men understand the proper diet for the flock. These men realize that feed which is not from God is poison to the sheep.

In describing the responsibilities of the congregation to her elders and the responsibilities of the elders to their congregation the Hebrews

writer penned these words: *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you (Hebrews 13:17).* The word translated “watch” is defined as: to be sleepless. Godly elders are ever awake to the winds of change, to discern if these changes would lead them from the paths of righteousness (Jeremiah 6:16).

Unfortunately, some elders and elderships have been swept away with change which did not come from God. After Paul warned the elders of Ephesus, John would later write that they had left their first love (Revelation 2:4).

Change that leads the church away from God is manifested in many different forms. But the origin of all changes of error is with Satan. Satan may package the change under the disguise of an enlightened way to worship and serve; a progressive attitude and understanding; an acceptable scholarship necessary for the contemporary society or moving away from that which is archaic. Satan’s desire is for all who will to turn from the will of God.

It is not necessary for an eldership to know all the errors past and present. It is demanded of God for an eldership to know the word of God. By knowing the word of God an eldership will know when a change of error presents itself and will be able to defeat it (Titus 1:9-16).

Let our prayers be those of thanksgiving for all who faithfully serve as elders over the Lord’s people, for they watch for our souls.

PO Box 1602,
Pell City Alabama

HAS THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH CHANGED?

John Daniels

“The world today is in the midst of change. Whether it is in technology, mass communication, or politics, “change” seems to be the buzzword. This mind set has not escaped some in the Lord’s church; a group of young, well-educated, articulate men is calling for a new hermeneutic. They say that our “old hermeneutic” of approaching Scripture has been hurtful and divisive” (David Hester, *Among The Scholars*, p. 29).

As a result of this mindset, the role of women has changed in many churches. Many Denominations now have women preachers, pastors, bishops, etc. Sadly, this trend is beginning to catch on in some churches of Christ.

Christians generally agree that there is a divinely built-in order as relates to authority and subordination (1 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:12-13; Ephesians 6:1). Man is not an island (Romans 14:7). We live in relation to others. Every aspect of our lives involves the principles of authority and subordination. Thus, there are teachers and students (Matthew 10:24); employers and employees (Matthew 20:1-16). Three Divinely established institutions: home, civil government, and the church, must all adhere to these noble principles. Wives are subordinate to their husbands and children to their parents (Ephesians 5:22; 6:1). Citizens are subject to their government and laws (Romans 13:1-6). Members of the church are to obey the elders of their respective congregations (Hebrews 13:17; Acts 20:28).

Authority does not necessarily imply superiority in quality or ability, nor does subordination necessarily imply inferiority in the same. These principles relate to roles or positions that we assume within our homes, our countries, and within

the church. The Biblical doctrine of submission, like all of God’s commands and teachings, is one that people, who desire to please God, will willingly accept and obey. Christ (John 1:1); He is equal with God (Philippians 2; 6); yet, He willingly let go of His glorious position and took on the form of a servant (Philippians 2:7), and He willingly learned obedience (Hebrews 5:8). Woman, Man, child: All are equal as pertains to their value and nature (Acts 17:29); as pertains to redemption (Galatians 3:28); but, all are not equal as pertains to role or position. Being in Christ does not erase social or gender distinctions, and these distinctions must reflect the principles of authority and subordination.

Note the reason Paul gave for the women to ask their husbands at home: “for it is shameful for women to speak in church” (1 Corinthians 14:35b). Not a cultural shame, for Corinth was known for its many priestesses, but a spiritual shame, as even taught in the Law of Moses (cf. 1 Corinthians 14:34b). Paul makes a specific application, by appealing to a general principle. Evidently the prophets’ wives were speaking out in the assembly but it was shameful for women to speak in church (general principle). So they are told to be silent and ask their husbands at home (specific application). The general principle remains true, even if the specific circumstances are not present. Women are still to be submissive (1 Corinthians 14:34), they are still not to teach or have authority over a man (cf. 1 Timothy 2:11-12; 3:15).

The principle applies no matter what the geographical location. We are dealing with a command of the Lord, not Paul’s personal bias. As Paul makes clear in succeeding

verses (1 Corinthians 14:36-38), we either acknowledge the Lord’s command, or display our spiritual ignorance!

Does all this mean that women cannot contribute to the local congregation? NO! In the church at Rome, we read of the service of Phoebe, a helper of Paul and many others (Romans 16:1-2). The help of Priscilla, even risking her life for Paul, (Romans 16:3-4). One named Mary, who bestowed “much labor.” (Romans 16:6). Twin sisters, Tryphena and Tryphosa (Romans 16:12). Even today, the growth of many churches is the result of “much labor” by women.

How can this be, if women are limited in what they can do in the public assemblies? Public assemblies are actually a small part of the overall work of a congregation. There is much work outside of the assembly that must be done, if a church is to grow. Women are often in a position to provide much of this needed work.

The true measure of a local church is not defined only by what occurs in the assembly. It includes what the members do day by day, in the home, at work, in the world. It involves what benevolence, edification, and evangelism takes place on a daily, personal basis. When godly women are active in the services of the Lord, using the unique talents and opportunities given to them, souls are saved, they are strengthened in the Lord, and care is given in times of need.

No, the role of women in the church has not changed! May the purity of the church remain in place as the woman continues to function happily within the framework that God has given her.

208 Hicks Dr.
Sevierville, TN 27862

DOES THE TERM “PATTERN” AFFECT CHANGE?

Brad McNutt

It was always a great day when I got to go to work with my Dad. He was and is a very skilled carpenter in Mississippi. I remember one specific day that I went to work with Dad we had to make some new saw horses for the company because the others were getting too old. To begin the process, I remember watching Dad get the patterns for the saw horses from the shelf at the shop. Then we proceeded to trace them on pieces of wood and cut them out. After cutting all of the pieces then we began to assemble them. Being an effective carpenter as my Dad is, all of the saw horses were put together and they were all the same height, balance, and ready for use. Why was this possible? What would have happened if he had not followed the pattern?

This fond memory of building with my Dad represents a great spiritual truth for us today. We are trying to do the work of building up the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 3:10). There are a couple of questions that arise when considering this subject such as: Does God have a pattern that we should follow? Can we change that pattern? To properly examine this subject we will examine our terms, look for examples of God’s patterns, and see God exhortation concerning His pattern.

Examination of Terms

The word “pattern” appears three times in the King James New Testament. The Greek scholar Zodhiates defined the word translated “*pattern*” in Hebrews 8:5 as meaning “*to strike, smite with repeated strokes. A type, i.e. something caused by strokes or blows*” (Zodhiates pg. 1399). Webster defines “*pattern*” as “*a model or plan used as a guide in making things*” (Webster pg. 1056). The term “*change*” is defined as “*to put or take (a thing) in place of*

something else; substitute for; replace with...” (Webster pg. 245). Therefore, the question is can we change or substitute God’s model or guide with another guide?

Examples of God’s Past Patterns

God is a God of order and wants His work done in an orderly fashion (1 Corinthians 14:40). Since God is a God of order we can find many instances in the Bible where He demanded order in His service. The first example that comes to our attention is Noah. Noah was instructed by God to build an ark because God would punish the world and save only those inside the ark. When God gave this command to Noah He had a very specific pattern for Noah to follow. God told Noah the type of wood to use, to have rooms, pitch the ark within and without, the length, breadth, height, one window, and it was to be three stories high (Genesis 6:14-16).

The Bible is very clear in stating that Noah followed the pattern of God perfectly (Genesis 6:22). What would have happened if Noah would have changed or substituted the type of wood that God commanded or the dimensions of the ark? What would have happened if Noah had not pitched the ark inside and out? The ark never would have floated. However, the ark did float because Noah followed God’s pattern!

Another example of God’s pattern is found with Moses and the building of the tabernacle. After leaving Egypt and receiving the law at Sinai Moses was commanded to build God a sanctuary so that He could dwell among His people (Exodus 25:8). God also gave a very specific command that Moses was to follow the pattern that he received from God (Exodus 25:9, 40; Hebrews 8:5; Acts 7:44-NKJV). God told Moses how to construct the tabernacle and the instruments that

would be placed in the tabernacle (Exodus 25:9). What would have happened in Moses would have changed or substituted an instrument in the tabernacle? What would have happened if Moses would have rearranged the tabernacle by placing the Most Holy Place first and then the Holy Place? This was never an issue because Moses followed God’s pattern!

An example of a man not following God’s pattern is David. He was attempting to return the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem (2 Samuel 6). God had already revealed the pattern concerning how the Ark of the Covenant was to be carried (Exodus 25:13-15). However, David had a new oxcart therefore changing God pattern for carrying the ark. As a result the ark was shaken and Uzzah reached forth his hand to stay the ark, touched the ark, and was killed. David would later reveal the reason why this happened “because we sought him not after the due order (pattern – B.M.)” (1 Chronicles 15:13). In this instance it is easy to see how God feels about His patterns being changed or substituted.

Exhortation Concerning Patterns

Today we need to learn the lessons of the Old Testament (Romans 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11). We must learn that God is a God of patterns and man will never be able to improve the patterns of God. He encourages us to follow His pattern (Hebrews 8:5). Since God has given us a pattern to follow (the Bible – B.M.) we should not alter that perfect pattern (James 1:25; Galatians 1:6-9). Now back to the original question, “does the term ‘pattern’ affect change?” Not only does the term “pattern” affect change it prohibits change!

7725 State Route 121 North
Murray, KY 42071

IS CONTEMPORARY HERETICAL?

Hugo McCord

An article has been mailed to me entitled, "Is Contemporary Heretical?" The author writes, "That change is very healthy." But sometimes change is sinful, as from the gospel which Paul preached, "let" the changer "be accursed" (Galatians 1:8).

On the other hand, sometimes change is commendable, as from "False teachers' back to "the truth of the gospel" (2 Peter 2:1; Galatians 2:5). Apollos changed his preaching from "John's baptism" to Christ's baptism (Acts 18:25-27; Matthew 28:18-20).

The author of the article gives Paul as an example of one ready to make any changes necessary to convert sinners: "I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some" (1 Corinthians 9:22). But, Paul's fervent desire to convert his kinfolds led him into a sinful change, a change from "the blood of Christ" back to "the blood of goats and

bulls" (Hebrews 9:13-14). He offered animal blood in a temple sacrifice in 48 A.D., 28 years after animal blood was out of date (Acts 21:26). He violated what he himself had written:

Do I seek the approval of men or God? Or do I seek to please men? If I were yet pleasing men, I would not be a slave of Christ (Galatians 1:10).

Four years after Paul's sin he made it clear that he had done wrong as he wrote that Jesus had taken the law of Moses "out of the way, having hailed it to the cross" (Colossians 2:14).

Indeed, change is "very healthy" and required by the Lord if "worship" becomes "mindless and heartless routine." Some people in Isaiah's day engaged in "mindless and heartless routine," honoring the Lord "with their mouth and with their lips, "but they had "removed their heart far from" him (Isaiah 29:13).

Similarly, Jesus called "mindless and heartless routine" in worship "vain" and hypocritical: "This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me:" (Matthew 15: 7-9)

No, "Contemporary" is not necessarily "Heretical." Whether the songs sung in worship are old or new, or whether they be "psalms" or "hymns" or "spiritual songs" (Colossians 3:16), is not defined by the Lord. What he specifies is that the singing be "with grace in" the worshipers' "hearts to God" (Colossians 3:16).

The "sacrifice of praise to God" is in two parts and is unchangeable: (1) external, "the fruit of lips" (Hebrews 13:15); and (2) internal, "plucking the string of "the heart " to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19).

Deceased

VIGIL is published under the oversight of the elders of the Adamsville Church of Christ, **Ronnie Hayes**, Editor, and **Chance Hicks**, Associate Editor. You may go to our website www.acoc.org to read and download archived issues of Vigil.

WORKS BY FRANKLIN CAMP AND BOBBY DUNCAN

Redemption Through the Bible, Preacher's Class, Sermons on CD in MP3 format *Redemption Through the Bible* is a series of Bible studies through the entire Bible that was studied primarily at the Adamsville congregation. The entire set is on a total of 44 CD's in MP3 format. The Preacher's Class has a total of (12) and his sermons are contained on (2) CD's. Also, we have available six books: *The Work of the Holy Spirit In Redemption*, *A study of the Book of Colossians*, *A study of the Book of Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon*, *A study of the Book of Job* by **Franklin Camp**, and *The Gift of the Holy Ghost and Sermon Outlines* by **Bobby Duncan**. You may order these books or CD's by calling Christian Family Bookstore @ 1-800-782-8175. Proceeds from the sale of these CD's and books go to the Franklin Camp Preacher's Scholarship Fund.

ADAMSVILLE CHURCH OF CHRIST
4207 Veterans Memorial Drive
Adamsville, AL 35005
(205) 674-5659 or 674-8273
Web: www.acoc.org
E-mail: acofc@adamsvillechurch.org

Non Profit
US Postage Paid
Birmingham, AL
Permit # 159

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Can We Change Worship? By Chance Hicks ----- continued from page 25

Because individuals have changed the audience of worship from God to themselves, they have inserted into worship those things which please them. They worship with musical instruments which God has not authorized (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians. 3:16) because they like them or because they think it sounds better. It pleases them, and so they do it. Notice who has become the audience of worship – the creature instead of the Creator! How sad it is that individuals have changed the audience of worship! May we in our worship make sure that God is the one on the throne receiving the worship of which He is worthy!

The Blocks of Worship

By the blocks of worship, we are referring to the prescribed acts which compose worship. Just as building blocks are put together to build a structure, so there are blocks, or acts, which must go

together in order to worship properly. The five acts of worship are singing (Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19), praying (Acts 2:42; 1 Thessalonians 5:17), giving (1 Corinthians 16:1-2), teaching/preaching (2 Timothy 4:2; Acts 2:42), and partaking of the Lord's supper (Acts 2:42; Acts 20:7). All of these blocks are essential to acceptable worship in the sight of God. We cannot refuse to participate in a specific act of worship such as singing, actively participate in the other four, and still offer acceptable worship. We cannot pick and choose the items of worship we will do and those we will not do. The blocks of worship cannot be changed if we desire to worship God acceptably. May we engage our hearts in all five acts of worship to praise our Father!

The Clock of Worship

Some have changed the clock of worship. We are not talking

about changing the time from 10 to 11 on Sunday morning. Some have changed the clock of worship in that they have changed worship from the first day of the week to Saturday or some other time. The New Testament prescribes worship on the first day of the week, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until "midnight" (Acts 20:7). The first day of the week is the day set aside by God for worshipping Him. May we give the first day of the week its proper place as a day to assemble together with the saints to worship our Father!

Let's determine to keep making our worship a sweet, smelling savor to God by worshipping according to His instructions.

4207 Veterans Memorial Dr.
Adamsville, AL 35005