

**PSALM 25: 4-5 "SHOW ME YOUR WAYS, O LORD" GROUP BIBLE STUDIES –
LEARNER'S PACKET - LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES**

LESSON #12 – GOD'S WAY TO BE WORSHIPPED

GOD'S WAY – Throughout Scripture, God has expressed a number of ways He wishes to be worshipped. In Leviticus, there are many commanded rituals for His people to follow. Those rituals were only as valuable as the lessons they tried to teach. When the rituals were no longer understood, God's people grew indifferent to Him, and lost touch with their Creator. Our age has seen a similar lessening of meaningful worship. That is why this lesson deals with God's Way to be worshipped.

THE PRAYER –We begin with prayer. Dear Lord, we would worship You. Today, we ask that You will send Your Holy Spirit upon us. Let Him open our mouths to praise, our hearts to be receptive, our minds to be taught, our purses to be shared, and our hands to reach out in fellowship. In Jesus' Name Amen

THE WORLD'S WAY – The world has had a great deal of enjoyment telling stories about worship. Hear are a few of them. Your comments are appreciated:

- Someone once asked an old man to dedicate his life to the Lord. "No thanks," he said, "I'm miserable enough with the religion I've got." Do you know such a person? _____
How does he show his misery? _____
- A woman commented to her neighbor: "I really don't know what you see in the church." "Oh," said the neighbor, "you really don't know what you are missing! It's such a wonderful rest after a hard week's work, to sit in the pews and think about nothing!" Do you know such a person? YES/NO
- *POEM: Every time I pass a church, I stop in for a visit
So when I'm carried in, the Lord won't say, "Who is it?"*
Do you know any church members that the Lord might say, "Who is it?" (No names, please) YES/NO
- Church signboard: "Open on Sunday. Come early for a back seat." Is this your sign? YES/NO
What is the only service where the sign wouldn't be appropriate? _____

Worship in our time has been captured by the spectator mindset. To spectator Christians, worship is an excursion made to an attractive site, for the purpose of seeing a show – if and when there is enough extra time. Taking the thought even farther, many people rate worship as entertainment which should be presented to them by others without any commitment, obligation or participation needed on their part.

THOUGHT: God never intended His worship to be viewed by fans in the stands. From the beginning, God expected His people to be involved. If we forget that, the world does not. The empty pew, a vacant place at the church, a non-participating body, a non-singing tongue, is a vote with the world and against the Lord. All of these things are graves in the midst of a congregation. Before we go any farther, let's see what the Lord says about the kind of worship He would like to receive from His people. Look at the passages below and supply your answers:

SCRIPTURE SEARCH 1 –

PASSAGE	QUESTION	ANSWER
Genesis 4: 3	What did the brothers do?	_____
Genesis 4: 5	How did God receive Cain's offering?	_____
Genesis 4: 6-7	What advice did God give?	_____
Acts 2: 37	What are the marks of Christ's people?	_____
Romans 10: 9-13	Anything else?	_____
Colossians 3: 12-14	What else might we see?	_____
Colossians 3: 16	What do Christians do?	_____
1 Cor. 14: 26	What is the purpose of this all?	_____
	Who was excluded from worship?	_____
1 Timothy 2: 1	How about prayers?	_____
John 4: 23-24	What kind of worship does God want?	_____

FIRST APPLICATION: If everyone in a congregation entered God's house believing, and praying, that the

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Spirit would use the entire congregation, the effectiveness of the witness would be dramatic. It is not wrongly that an individual noted: "In any church service, the congregation preaches more than half the sermon....The atmosphere is either a barrier through which the Word cannot penetrate; or else it is such filled with such expectancy that even the poorest sermon becomes a living flame." It's true that God isn't impressed with great organs, large numbers and fancy robes. But it's equally true that a full sanctuary of Spirit-touched worshippers leaves a positive impact on the people in the pew as well as on the pastor in the pulpit. All of which says that enthusiastic, sincere worship is contagious, and so is the lack of it.

2. SCRIPTURE SEARCH - THE WAY OF GOD IS GOOD AND BEST – Let's look at the 2nd and 3rd chapters of Revelation and see the warnings God gives His churches. Do those warnings might apply to us?

PASSAGE	QUESTION	ANSWER
Revelation 2: 4	What does God have against the Ephesians? What does that mean to us?	_____ _____.
Revelation 2: 10	What is caution to the church at Smyrna? How does that apply?	_____ _____.
Revelation 2: 14	What does God have against those in Pergamum? Does that speak to us?	_____ _____.
Revelation 2: 20	To those in Thyatira God said what? God would have His people today do what:	_____ _____.
Revelation 3: 2	What is wrong in Sardis? What should any church do that is this way?	_____ _____.
Revelation 3: 8	What does God encourage the church at Philadelphia? Do you know of congregations afraid to do that? What can they do?	_____ YES/NO _____.
Revelation 3: 15	Is there a problem at Laodicea? Is that a bad thing? What should happen here?	_____ _____ _____.

God spoke to each of these churches in Asia Minor. To most of them He offered warnings against compromise and pride. Those warnings are just as appropriate to congregations today. When we listen to God's words, heed His warnings, things will be corrected and our worship and witness will be restored to the sincerity and power for which God is looking.

THOUGHT & ILLUSTRATION: - Of course, nobody, and no church is going to rediscover the joy of worship because a Bible Class says so. On the other hand, changing for the right motivation might just do the job. Perhaps this story might help: During the Vietnam War, a West Point graduate was sent to lead a company of new recruits. One night they were overrun by the Viet Cong. All escaped--except one badly-wounded man. The company could hear their comrade calling for help. Finally, the young lieutenant crawled out and pulled the wounded man back to the trench. As he pushed the wounded man into the trench, a bullet ripped through him, killing him instantly. Months later, the rescued man returned to the States. The lieutenant's parents asked him to dinner, wishing to know this young man whose life was bought at such a great cost. That night, the man arrived late, was drunk, loud and obnoxious. He told off-color jokes, was profane, and showed no concern for his hosts' feelings. At the end of the ordeal, the husband ushered the embarrassing visitor to the door. As the door closed, his wife sobbed, "To think that our son had to die for somebody like that!"

The story touches me. Especially since I'm the guy for whom the Son died. Because that is so, I shall endeavor to do all I can to thank the Father, to speak well of the Son, and praise Them for Their love to me. My worship and thanks can never be good enough, complete enough, or glorious enough for what They have done. And that is what I think it means to follow God's Way of Worship.

THE WAY OF PRAYER – Dear Lord, in our worship may the Spirit raise up: more action and less faction; more praising and less straying; more backers and fewer slackers; more praying and less playing; more of God's plans and less of man's. We ask it in Jesus Who gave His life for us. Amen.