

Why God Should Be Served

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We are living in times when it is becoming increasingly fashionable to be anti-religious. People are raising the questions: Is religion really valid? If there is a God, just why should I serve him? One young atheistic college student recently said: "The so-called God of the Bible must be on a super-ego trip if he expects men to worship only him. Are there valid reasons for committing one's life to Jehovah? Tragically, far too few Christians are able to give an inquiring world satisfactory answers to this urgent query.

WHO IS GOD? - God is the supreme Spirit of the universe. (Jn. 4:24; 1 Tim. 6:15, 16) He is eternal (Psa.90:2), all powerful (Gen.17:1), and infinitely wise (Rom.11:33-35). Jehovah is holy (Isa.6:3), righteous and just (Psa.89:14), rich in mercy (Eph. 2:4), and loving (I Jn. 4:8). Thus, on the basis of his nature, our God is "worthy to be praised" (Psa. 18:3). This is one of the great lessons of the Book of Job. Satan charged that God is not worthy of man's praise separate from the physical blessings he bestows. Accordingly, as a test case, Job of Uz was greatly afflicted. He was deprived of prosperity, health and friendship. Yet through all of this, he continued to serve his Creator.

REASONS FOR SERVING GOD - First of all, it needs to be made clear that Jehovah does not covet our service from selfish motives. God, being infinite in all his attributes, is not personally enhanced by human worship. Contrary to the facts, it is commonly held that the more we worship God, the greater he is glorified, and thus, as stated above, the Lord urges men to serve him because of a "super-ego. " How wonderfully the Scriptures refute this ignorant charge. Just prior to his death, Jesus prayed: "And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (Jn.17:5) Had Jehovah's glory

been INCREASING by virtue of human service across the foregoing centuries, Christ would hardly have prayed to simply share again the glory which was characteristic of them prior to creation! Because God is love (1 Jn. 4:8), and he longs for man's ultimate happiness, he urges the human race to truly serve him. This is what man was designed to do. (See Isaiah 43:7 and Ecclesiastes 12:13.) And no person will ever know genuine contentment apart from obedience to Almighty God.

Secondly, God is worthy of our service because he is the Creator and we are his creatures. Spiritually, we are created in God's own image (Gen. 1:26); physically, we are descended from Adam and Eve. Thus, the Psalmist humbles us by emphasizing that it is God "that hath made us, and not we ourselves" (Psa. 100:3). It is in order to escape the natural responsibility necessitated by the creature-Creator relationship that men have resorted to the absurd theory of evolution. God, as the Potter, has "a right over the clay" (Rom. 9:21), and all of the foolish denials of men to the contrary will not change that fact!

Thirdly, men ought to submit to God because of the condition they are in. All responsible persons are sinners. (1 Jn. 1:10; Rom. 3:23) No, we were not born evil, but in our youth (Gen. 8:2 1) we yield to the weakness of the flesh and thus, relatively early in life we "go astray" from God (Psa. 58:3). The corruptness of mankind appears to have become increasingly vile. (2 Tim. 3:13) As we surrender ourselves to the habitual commission of sin, we become slaves thereto (Jn. 8:34), and thus, it ought to be very obvious that if we are to escape this miserable servitude, it will be by virtue of our contact with the Holy God who is able to free us from sin (Rom. 6:17,18) that we might become "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4).

Fourthly, men ought to serve God for the sheer pleasure of it. The devil has sown a deceitful tale when he suggests that the Christian life is all pain and woe. It is true, of course, that there are trials in living for Christ (2 Tim. 3:12), but there are rewards, to be claimed here and now, that are rich indeed. Our Saviour promised: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. " (Mt. 5:5) And Paul spoke of the "peace of God, which passeth all understanding, (Phil. 4:7), of which the world knows nothing. Oh, to be certain there is some pleasure in sin, but such pleasure is only "for a season. " (Heb. 11: 25) In the final analysis, the "way of the transgressor is hard. " (Prov. 13:15)

Fifthly, it pays to obey God because all accounts are not settled in this life. The inspired writer of Psalms was deeply perplexed when he observed "the prosperity of the wicked" (Psa. 73:3), even to the point of wondering if perhaps his religion was in vain (vs. 13). But he went into the "sanctuary of God" (the source of real truth as opposed to human wisdom) and the "latter end" of the wicked was revealed to him (vs. 17). Why can't men see that there is an eternity ahead through which their immortal spirits will live? Jesus raised the question: "For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? " (Mt. 16:26) The Lord here drives home the point that if one had a deed to this entire earth (how vastly rich!), and yet lost his SOUL, he would profit absolutely nothing. Think about it. It DOES pay to serve God; and dreadful will the consequences be for those who do not!

Christian Courier : Vol. IX, No. 9 - January 1974