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servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also" (Jn. 15:18-20). You see, in this life, we really have only one of two choices: Will we be the friend of God and an enemy of the world, or a friend of the world and an enemy of God (Matt. 6:24; Jas. 4:4; etc.)? Uzziah made the right choice in his early years. What choice will you make?

Another lesson we learn is the danger of being filled with pride. Pride brought this great man down. It will do the same for men and women today. There is a reason God wants His children "clothed with humility" (I Pet. 5:5). Are we so clothed? If not, why not? Scripture teaches us that if we humble ourselves, God will exalt us, but if we exalt ourselves, God will humble us (I Pet. 5:6; Jas. 4:6,

10)! Which do you choose? If you're unsure as to which would be the better choice, then go back and read about Uzziah. In addition to this, read about King Saul (I Sam. 9-15)! In both cases, when these men were humble, God could use them. Yet, when pride lifted them up, they fell! In both cases, these men lost their kingdoms. Yes, "pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall" (Prov. 16:18). Let us never forget this!

**Conclusion**

What is the legacy of King Uzziah? Sadly, for all the good he did, it was overshadowed by his sin later in life. This is not unlike what God said in Ezekiel 18:24, 26. Let us heed the warning as well! It is possible for a Christian to sin, depart from the faith, and die in that state (I Tim. 4:1; Heb. 3:12-13). Don't be like Uzziah! Live faithfully to the Lord all of your days! Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com ♦

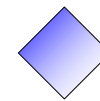
**The Three Monkeys**

Three monkeys sat in a coconut tree, discussing things as they're said to be. Said one to the others, now listen, you two, there's a certain rumor that can't be true: that humans descended from our noble race; the very idea is a shocking disgrace.

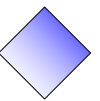
Never did a monkey desert his wife, starve her babies and ruin her life. And you've never known another monk to leave her babies with others to bunk, or pass them on from one to another, till they scarcely know who their mother is.

And another thing you'll never see: a monk build a fence round a coconut tree, and let the coconuts all go to waste, forbidding any other monks to taste. Why, if I put a fence around a tree, starvation would force you to steal from me.

Here's another thing a monk won't do: go out at night and get on a stew, making whoopee, disgracing his life, then reel madly home, and beat up his wife. They call this pleasure and make big fuss; they've descended from something, but not from us! ♦



# The Voice of Truth



April 25, 2010

**Acceptable Worship**  
By Jimmy Pettigrew

There are at least four kinds of worship alluded to in the New Testament: (1) ignorant worship (Acts 17:23); (2) vain worship (Matthew 15:9); (3) will worship (Colossians 2:23); and (4) spiritual and true worship (Romans 12:2; John 4:23-24). In Hebrews 12:28, it says that worship must be done "acceptably." One reason the Lord's church exists is so Christians can come together and worship God (1 Corinthians 11:18, 20, 33-34; Hebrews 10:25). God demands that we worship Him and Him alone (Matthew 4:10). In Revelation 22:9, the angel admonished John to "worship God."

But what does the Bible say regarding acceptable worship? What is God's will on the matter? Worship is either right or wrong depending upon God's will. The only right worship is that which is authorized by God! "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:23-24). Notice the word "must." What does this say about how we worship? We are to worship God "acceptably with reverence and godly fear (awe)" (Hebrews 12:28). Worship must be "in spirit," that is, the worshiper must genuinely engage his spirit in the worship activity. He must be mentally and emotionally involved. "I was glad when they said to me, Let us go into the house of the Lord" (Psalm 122:1).

Also, worship must be "in truth." God has always required that man approach Him "in truth," according to the divine commands which he revealed to man. In Genesis 4:3-7, we have the account of the worship of Cain and Abel. God accepted Abel's worship but rejected Cain's. Why? Because one did the will of the Lord while the other chose to disobey God's instructions. We know that God told them what to offer as sacrifice from the reading found in Hebrews 11:4: "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and

by it he being dead yet speaketh." "By faith" is the key. That simply means that Abel was told what to do, then believed and obeyed the instructions. Furthermore, Cain was also told what to do, but for some reason chose not to fully obey the instructions of the Lord. As a consequence of his conduct, God rejected his worship. God plainly told him, "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him" (Gen. 4:7). Partial obedience is not obedience, but disobedience!

In Leviticus 10:1-2, we read of another example of not worshipping God in truth. We can learn the importance of worshipping just as God instructs from the example of Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10:1-2). What was wrong with their worship? They "offered strange fire before Jehovah, which he had not commanded them." What happened to them? "There came forth fire from before Jehovah and, devoured them, and they died before Jehovah." Paul wrote, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope" (Romans 15:4). So, what does Leviticus 10:1-2 teach us? We must not add to or take away from God's word (Revelation 22:18-19). We must abide in the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9). We do not have the authority to decide how we are going to worship God. We MUST worship as He instructs! (Colossians 3:17).

Unfortunately, the current atmosphere in the church tends to treat worship as a time for entertaining the worshiper and catering to the worshiper's wants. People have lost the deep, reverent mind-set that approaches the worship assembly with a strong sense of respect and careful meaning to please God. Worship is important! It is not intended to be entertainment, but it is the act of paying reverence to God. To worship as one desires, without

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www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com		

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regard for the Lord's will, is to be guilty of "will worship" (**Colossians 2:20-23**). Instead of attempting to entertain people in our worship, we need to develop our appetites for pure, New Testament worship!

What ways do men worship God acceptably? When the church came together for worship, "Paul preached unto them" (**Acts 20:7**). Preaching and teaching God's truth is involved in worshipping God acceptably (**Acts 2:42; 2 Timothy 4:2**). The lessons and sermons are designed to teach God's word so as to encourage obedience by those who listen.

What ways do men worship God acceptably? Paul said, "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (**Philippians 4:6**). We pray, not only to praise and thank God, but also to ask for our needs and the needs of others (**1 Timothy 2:1-4**). The early church continued steadfastly "in prayers" (**Acts 2:42**). We are to pray to God, in the name of Jesus (**Luke 11:1-4; John 14:13**).

What ways do men worship God acceptably? Again Paul said, "speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord" (**Ephesians 5:19**). The entire assembly joins in singing gospel songs. There is no choir or special

## What Does the Cross Teach?

By Jimmy Pettigrew

The fact of a crucified and risen Savior is the very heart of Christianity. It is not within man's power to save himself (**Jer. 10:23**). How thankful we should be that we can be reconciled to God, only through the cross of Christ (**Eph. 2:16; Col. 1:20**). May we consider some things for which the cross teaches.

- (1) Man's guilt. **Romans 3:9-10, 23**
- (2) God's righteousness. **Romans 3:24-26**
- (3) God's power to save. **Romans 1:16, Romans 8:3**
- (4) God's gracious offer. **John 3:16, Titus 2:11**
- (5) God's love. **Romans 5:8, John 3:16**
- (6) Necessity of man's obedience. **Philippians 2:8, Hebrews 5:8-9**
- (7) To assure Christians that cleansing is available. **1 John 1:7-10**
- (8) Shows the worth of the church. **Acts 20:28, Ephesians 5:25**.

groups, but simple congregational singing.

What ways do men worship God acceptably? The Lord's Supper is to be observed every first day of the week (**Acts 20:7**). The Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ, (**1 Corinthians 11:23-29**), prior to His death on the cross and was observed by the Lord's church. The supper consists of unleavened bread and fruit of the vine as memorials of the body and blood of Jesus (**1 Corinthians 11:20-36**).

What ways do men worship God acceptably? By giving to the cause of Christ! "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye. Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come" (**1 Corinthians 16:1-2**). The work of the church is wholly supported by Christians freely giving on every Sunday. These are the five items which are to be done in worshipping God. These are acceptable to Him when we do them in "spirit and truth" (**John 4:23-24**).

Brethren, all worship problems share at least two traits in common: one, rejection of the principle of God's authority, and two, a desire to feel one's religion through man-made attractions. May God help us to be strong and committed to His ways and have a "Thus saith the Lord" for all we say and do; "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour" (**1 Timothy 2:3**). "Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (**1 Peter 2:5**). ♦

- (9) The need for holy living. **1 Corinthians 6:18-20, 1 Peter 1:15**
- (10) The need for humility. **Philippians 2:5-8**

Christ came to earth to do the will of His Father. He willingly endured the persecution and pain that wicked man brought upon Him. He humbly obeyed God, and died on the cross for the sins of mankind. Looking at what the cross teaches should cause us to gladly and willingly give up anything that stands between us and God. It should result in an attitude of commitment and dedication like we have never seen. It should motivate one to be restored. It should cause one to become a Christian. ♦

## "King Uzziah's Legacy"

By Jarrod Jacobs

Who was King Uzziah? He was one of the kings of Judah. Chosen to rule at the age of sixteen following his father's assassination (**II Chron. 25:27-28**); Uzziah (also called Azariah, **II Kings 15**) ruled for 52 years in Judah.

Uzziah was a man truly blessed by God, but he squandered it all because he became filled with pride. As a result of his pride, he sinned before God (**Prov. 16:18**). Please understand, this did not happen overnight. He began his reign as a very faithful person, and he enjoyed many happy years reaping the benefits and blessings from his relationship with God. Sadly, the good he did was overshadowed by his sin and its consequences.

When we read of Uzziah, we find the early part of his rule was spent in obedience to God. "He did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah did. And he sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God: and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper" (**II Chron. 26:4-5**). During this time, "God helped him" fight and conquer the enemies of Israel (**v. 7**). Yes, God was in control and He made Uzziah to prosper and made him great during these times.

Not only do we find King Uzziah dominant over the enemies of the Lord, but we also see him active in fortifying Jerusalem, and providing for the well-being of the people and livestock of Judah (**II Chron. 26:9-10**). In other words, the prosperity and blessing was felt "from without and within" in the kingdom! Truly, the blessings of God were raining down upon Judah; and Uzziah deserves credit for his leadership during this time. The first fifteen verses of **II Chronicles 26** make it abundantly clear just how powerful King Uzziah (and Judah) had become because of God's blessings.

Sadly, this did not last. It was not because God lost his power, but because Uzziah lost his humility. After a time, we learn that Uzziah's "heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense" (**II Chron. 26:16**). Azariah and 80 priests were determined to stop him from committing this sin, but he allowed his anger and arrogance to overrule God's will. As a result of his sin, God struck him with leprosy. He ran out of the Temple (**v. 19-20**), but it was too late. Uzziah suffered with leprosy for the rest of his days, living in an isolated house, cut off from the population (**v. 21**).

How could this be? How could someone who was "on top" fall so low? Sadly, he fell into the same trap that God warned the nation might fall into in **Deuteronomy 8:11-20**. Notice that God's warning was that after they had eaten and were full, that their heart could "be lifted up" and this would bring about their downfall. When we read **II Chronicles 26:16**, we see that it says when Uzziah was "strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the Lord his God ...." In other words, he fell into the very trap God had warned about back in Moses' day! This was not the first time, nor was it the last time this occurred in history, but it is still very tragic that Uzziah fell into the trap of arrogance, pride, presumption, anger, and self-willed action that resulted in his downfall. Perhaps the only positive we can see coming from the last part of Uzziah's life is that when his son Jotham reigned, he did not follow in dad's footsteps of presumption and arrogance (**II Chron. 28:2**)!

What lessons can we learn from Uzziah's legacy? Let me suggest that first of all, we can learn that when we determine to do God's will, God sees and will bless us (**Prov. 15:3**). Jesus told the people, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (**Matt. 6:33**). Those following the Lord's commands today will certainly enjoy spiritual blessings (**Eph. 1:3; Rev. 22:14**) as well as physical, for God knows how to bless His people! (**Ps. 37:25**) Are we following what the Lord says to do?

A second lesson learned is that when we obey the Lord, it will cause some to be displeased. When I think of Uzziah fighting and conquering the Philistines, Arabians, and Me-hunims, I don't think they were pleased with the situation! Too, the Ammonites "gave gifts" (paid tribute/paid taxes) to Uzziah. I wonder why? Today, when we do what the Lord says, and are blessed, others will not like it. Some may mock us (**Acts 17:32**), some may speak harshly about us (**II Cor. 10:10**), some may do cruel things to us. Yet, through it all, if we continue faithful to God, we will continue to enjoy His blessings! Jesus said such reaction to goodness and righteousness was common. He told His disciples, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The

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