

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

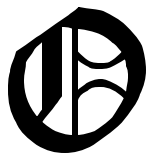
Vol. XVI

May 27, 2007

No. 21

Does Being Casual Have A Place In Serving God?

Jerry Fite



Our word, “casual” comes from the Latin “casus” meaning “chance”. The various definitions of the word *casual* reflect this root meaning. For example, the first meaning is, “falling, happening or coming to pass without volition, without being foreseen or expected”; the second, “occasional...coming at certain times without regularity”; the third, “taking place or beginning to exist without method or design”; the fourth, “careless”; and the fifth, “nonchalant, indifferent”.

God warns us to “keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God; for to draw nigh to hear is better than to give the sacrifice of fools, for they know not that they do evil” (Eccl.5:1). Being casual certainly does not fit well when we apply God’s wisdom to our lives. We come to the house of God with a foreseen or expected design: “to hear”. We are in the presence of God to honor and worship Him. We do not want to play the fool by thinking we can offer God a sacrifice and not heed his will in all facets of our life.

Coming to the house of God today as Christians has de-

sign. On the Lord’s day we do not nonchalantly partake of the Lord’s supper, but actively discern the Lord’s body, thinking about His sacrifice and proclaiming his death (I Cor. 11:23-26). Our giving does not happen without volition, but we expect to give as we have been prospered coupled with a cheerful heart (I Cor. 16:2, 2 Cor. 9:7). We pray to God with the design of only doing so according to His will (I Jn. 5:14-15), and sing with the foreseen design of praising God in spiritual songs and from the hymns, teaching and admonishing one another (Col. 3:16). Being casual or something taking place by chance or without design certainly does not describe Christians in their assembling (cf. Heb. 10:24-25).

Sadly, “casual” does describe some Christians today in their service unto God. Some make vows to be faithful to their mates in marriage and be parted only by death, and then they divorce and do not follow through with their vow. Did they not understand that they should not be casual in making promises? “Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter anything before God; for God is in heaven and thou upon the earth:

therefore let thy words be few” (Eccl. 5:2).

Some who wear the name of Christian are “casual worshippers”. They attend without regularity. They are careless in planning their activities on the Lord’s day. They are nonchalant in their service. Would you say the casual worshipper is diligently serving the Lord with zeal as demanded by our Lord (Rom. 12:11)?

Some want Bible classes to be spontaneous, with very little design other than to get everybody talking. Getting people to discuss what is on their mind for that day and cherishing each person’s viewpoint is more desirable to some than entering a class with a definite subject in mind, and not leaving until we have nailed down what the definite word of the Lord on that particular subject is. In short, some want “casual” Bible classes. God wants us to understand what the will of the Lord is, not cherish men’s opinions (Eph. 5:17).

Our outward dress should reflect a godly heart (I Tim. 2:9-10). Does what you wear to worship services, reflect a heart that is casual toward God?