

## *Worship: Decently and in Order*

### *1 Corinthians 14:33-40*

Theme: Worship, decently and orderly

Aim: To show the need to observe appropriate behavior during worship periods.

1. When I was at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier recently, I noticed a sign that asked folks to remember that this was a memorial and to act accordingly.
2. Society (and each of us) acknowledge that certain ways of acting are appropriate in some settings, but not in others.
3. Behavior that might be more than appropriate at a basketball game would not be appropriate at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

I. One of our “worship principles” was found in 1 Corinthians 14:40. Let’s examine that verse. Note context of the other “worship principles” of verses 26, 33 and the why.

A. What do the words “decently and in order” mean?

1. Decently translates a word that literally means “in good shape or form.”
  - a. Used in 1 Corinthians 12:24 and translated “presentable” (comely, KJV) as opposed to “unpresentable,” verse 24.
  - b. Also found in Romans 13:13 and translated “properly.” (honestly, KJV).
  - c. Compare: 1 Thessalonians 4:12.
  - d. To me, the idea is what is proper, what is fitting, and appropriate which is the definition of the English word “decent.”
2. “In order” translates a word which is defined as “an arrangement, to put in order.”
  - a. It is used most often in Hebrews and applied to the “order” or arrangement of the priests.
  - b. See Hebrews 7:11a, et al.
  - c. Most commentators see this word as the opposite and the corrective to the confusion of verse 33.

B. Now, a disclaimer.

1. This lesson not aimed at anyone. I am not “picking on” anyone.”
2. The elders and I discussed this over a year ago. It is a needed lesson in every church today.
3. It is a natural outgrowth of our lessons on “true worship” and has a lot to do with our attitudes of worship.
4. It has to do with the practical aspects of our being together.

C. One more thought here.

1. Someone has said “Familiarity breeds contempt.”
2. I am not sure that applies in religion, I hope not.
3. But I do believe that sometimes familiarity breeds indifference.
4. By that I mean that sometimes we just don’t “see” until someone point it out to us.
5. All of us want our time together to be as profitable as it can possibly be. That is the goal of this lesson.

II. Let’s make application of the principle of “decently and in order.”

A. Preparation is necessary to come before God.

1. On two occasions the Israelites were told to prepare for three days before meeting God, Exodus 19:10-11, Joshua 3:5.
2. What does that imply for us today?
3. Can we be in the right frame of mind, the right spirit, without preparation?

4. One thing that can be distracting is not being ready when the appointed time for worship to begin arrives.
5. Maybe being in our seats ready to start when the time comes would be helpful.
6. Along that line, there is always room at the front! There are also fewer distractions down front!

B. Now some general observations about our conduct.

1. Wait until the Lord's Supper is over to get out the money, there is plenty of time.
2. To the adults:
  - a. Let the kids alone, don't make goo-goo eyes at them.
  - b. Some kids would do a lot better if it weren't for the grown ups!
3. To the teen-agers.
  - a. Paul challenged Timothy to be an example of youth, are you?
  - b. Someone is looking up to you!
  - c. Worship is not the time to talk or write notes.
  - d. How would it feel to know you were the cause of someone stumbling?
4. Can we keep the bathroom and water trips to an absolute minimum? No one is going to die of thirst in five minutes.

C. Now to a very difficult matter. Those noisy little children.

1. First, let me say, if we do not have kids present we are a dying church.
2. Where else do we want the young families to be?
3. But kids do present a problem. They have a hard time sitting still for the whole service. And they have a tendency to cry a lot.
4. Try this experiment: Sit on a bench that was designed for someone a lot bigger than you while listening to someone talk for what seems to be an eternity in language that you simply cannot understand, all the while expected to be still and quiet which goes against every natural urge that you have. How successful will you be?
5. Young families need our understanding and support, not our condemnation. Sometimes it is easy to forget how it was when we had little kids.
6. Every young mother has labored with the question "When should I take my child out?"
  - a. We do have a nursery for the little ones.
  - b. There is a great "cry room" for the discipline of older ones. It is also called "outside."
7. When you bring toys from home, try to choose those that don't make a lot of noise.
8. And remember the cards in the racks are not art pads.

D. One final point that is a real pet peeve of mine... the invitation song.

1. When the preacher starts to "wind down" out come the song books.
2. Some begin preparation to leave, some do leave.
3. How does that affect someone who might be contemplating obeying the gospel?
4. I know that it discourages the preacher.

E. Remember: "*It ain't over 'till its over...*"

1. All I am asking is lets be more thoughtful of how we worship.
2. Doesn't the purpose of worship demand that we do it "decently and in order?"
3. After all we are not at the ball game, we are worshipping Almighty God.

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