

The Grace of God



"For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us..." (Titus 2:11-12).

August 26, 2007 (Vol. 7)

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 design. 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?

The Object Of Our Worship

Jerry Fite

How should you react when your child comes home from school and informs you that one of the activities of the day was visiting with a "living goddess"? Should you chalk it up as harmless make believe? Rejoice that your child is being exposed to diversified cultural beliefs that will profit them in accepting others? Or, use the occasion to equip your child with the truth of the Bible in combating error?

Some parents have had this experience this past week as a 10 year old girl, named Sajani Shakya came to visit the Lafayette Elementary School in Washington, D.C. She is from the Katmandu Valley in Nepal. According to the Houston Chronicle, Both Hindu and Buddhist priests in this area choose a girl with such characteristics as skin "of golden color" and body shape "like a banyan tree." At home she is worshipped as she sits on an "small ornate throne" in the "goddess house". She has to rise early in the day for her family and other devotees to "pray to her." People give money to her "as offerings" and seek to "touch her feet" when she is "carried through the streets".

To Bible believers this is error and blasphemy. But to Eastern religions, who believe God is everywhere and in everything, the practice is reasonable. For they are worshipping an ideal, "purity". these select young girls, represent "the idea of virginal, premenstrual purity". Their

belief is that the goddess Kali inhabits these young girls. Then, after the age of ten, when they reach puberty, the goddess leaves them. Then, the young ladies are free to work and to marry.

Two Biblical truths seem appropriate to bring to our children's attention when faced with these beliefs bidding for acceptance in our society:

The first truth is that our worship is reserved for a PERSON, not an IDEAL. We need to be reminded that God has revealed Himself as a DIVINE PERSON. Notice the personal pronoun in the following statement of Jesus: "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and **Him** only shalt thou serve" (Matthew 4:10). The New Testament teaches us that worship is not for those who may even be conveying exalted and glorious messages, as Peter and God's angel before John did; but the sole object of our worship is God (Acts 10:25-26, Rev. 21:8-9). God is not divided up into gods and goddesses, each conveying an idea that we conceive as ideal. God says, "I am He: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I am Jehovah and besides me there is no saviour" (Is. 43:10-11). While God is certainly "pure" (Psalm 18:26), we do not worship "Purity". We worship only one God, not many ideals.

A second truth is that the object of our worship never ceases to be God. "For I, Jehovah, change not..." (Malachi 3:6). This cannot be said of young Sajani. She is being worshipped because of a particular ideal of purity. When her body changes she will cease to be a goddess. The object deserving of our worship does not cease to be God.

Parents be prepared to instruct when your child says

as some third graders did, "it would be cool to be a god or goddess." Or, when they tell you that they talked to a living goddess today and she likes "to play hide and seek" and "computer games".

Mommy, I feel closer to "God" than ever before.

PEOPLE TO REMEMBER & PRAY FOR

Johanna Fletcher, Othena Kinnard (home), Wesley Geer, Mag Bumbalough, Thelma Cunningham, Mary Cox, Monie Petty, Dave Poteet (NHC 212), Dorris Williams, Robert & Betty England, Joe Smith, Mike Tenpenny, Thelma Klein, Nathan Hill, DeLeesa Price (expecting). Lydia Poe, Larry Bumbalough, Jake Hale, Joshua & Misty Poteet, Ed & Carolyn Williams, Kenley Streeval. Matthew Taylor (leukemia).

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- **Radio Program** - Every Sun. 2pm, AM 1050 WSMT
- **Door To Door** - Every Tuesday @ 6pm.
- **Home Bible Study** - Sat. Sept. 1st, 15th & 29th.
- **Ladies Class** - 2nd & Last Sunday Each Month.
- **Business Meeting** - Sun. Aug 26th.
- **GM** - Raymond Castillo, Oct.14-19, 2007.
- **GM** - Lanny Smith, Oct.12-17, 2008.

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2007 September

SUNDAY-MORNING	9/2/07	9/9/07	9/16/07	9/23/07	9/30/07
<i>Greeter</i>	Mark Welte	Jonathan H.	David Price	Randy White	Harold Frazier
<i>Announcements</i>	Kevin B.	Matt Eller	Randy White	Anthony Rece	Michael Fl.
<i>Reading</i>	Sam Gardner	Ben Trute	Michael Fl.	Micah Eller	Anthony Rece
	Mark 1	Mark 2	Mark 3	Mark 4	Mark 5
<i>Song Leader</i>	Harold Frazier	David Price	Mark Eller	Kevin B.	Chad Sims
<i>Opening Prayer</i>	Randy White	Randy White	Sam Gardner	Michael Fl.	David Price
<i>Lord's Supper Lead</i>	Jonathan H.	Harold Frazier	Harold Frazier	David Price	Randy White
<i>Lord's Supper Assist</i>	Chad Sims	Jack Stafford	Ralph Sims	Ben Trute	Sam Gardner
	Jack Stafford	Micah Eller	Ben Trute	Jack Stafford	Ben Trute
	Ralph Sims	Anthony Rece	Chad Sims	Harold Frazier	Ralph Sims
<i>Closing Prayer</i>	Matt Eller	Ralph Sims	Micah Eller	Matt Eller	Jerry Taylor

SUNDAY-EVENING	9/2/07	9/9/07	9/16/07	9/23/07	9/30/07
<i>Opening Prayer</i>	Michael Fl.	Mark Welte	Adam F.	Jonathan H.	Kevin B.
<i>Song Leader</i>	Adam F.	Mark Eller	Chad Sims	Sam Gardner	
<i>Closing Prayer</i>	Mark Eller	Jerry Taylor	Jack Stafford	Jerry Taylor	Ralph Sims
<i>Lord's Supper Lead</i>	David Price	Michael Fl.	Kevin B.	Mark Eller	Mark Welte
<i>Speaker / Invitation</i>		Randy White			Randy White
<i>Group</i>	1	2	3	4	1

WEDNESDAY-EVENING	9/5/07	9/12/07	9/19/07	9/26/07
<i>Opening Prayer</i>	Adam F.	Jonathan H.	Doug Hill	Doug Hill
<i>Song Leader</i>	Sam Gardner	Mark Welte	Adam F.	Mark Eller
<i>Closing Prayer</i>	Micah Eller	Anthony Rece	Jerry Taylor	Matt Eller
<i>Invitation</i>	Doug Hill	Doug Hill	Mark Welte	Adam F.