

PLEASING
GOD
NOT MEN

Giving Not Getting

By: Clay Barnes

Not long ago I saw an ad advertising the theme, "Design your worship to meet the worshipper's needs!" I thought, "That's exactly where the religious world goes wrong. Worship should not be planned around PEOPLE'S needs, but around GOD'S WILL." The more you try to please people the less you will succeed, because the whims of the public shift from week to week and from day to day. The Word of the Lord, however, endures forever.

Actually, it would rightly be said that one of the goals of worship is to free us from a self-imposed religion (which some translations call "will worship") and focus our minds on worship in SPIRIT and in TRUTH.

How upsetting to hear folks say, "I didn't get anything out of worship today." as if worship were done for them. Or folks will say, "I didn't like the songs today." Well, they were not sung so you would like them, but to offer praise and devotion to God. We are offering a

sacrifice to God, not staging a presentation for an audience of people. Worship God! The terms "worship" and "selfishness" are mutually exclusive. Worship is giving the Lord His due, not having our senses titillated by entertainment.

Worship involves and includes fellowship. We are God's family and, as such, as sinners all, saved only by God's mercy, we are all "FELLOWS in the same SHIP." We meet together to encourage pme another. So many of our associations in life necessarily are negative and discouraging, and we are, on the job, on the highway, and even in our own homes, too often provoked into destructive thoughts and damaging deeds. Thus, the Lord commanded us to be regular in our assembling together as His children, to get our minds off the mundane occurences of life, and to be provoked to love and good works (Hebrews 10:24-24).

Peter Drucker once said that if a committee had worked on the design of the horse, you would have an animal that could operate its knee joints in both directions but it could not have stood up. So it is when people are determined

to invent their own worship. They invest it with all the gimmicks they find amusing and satisfying to themselves. But it is no longer worship. It is entertainment. (And most of the time it's not even very good entertainment). And it's no longer directed toward God, but to our own jaded tastes.

Worship, my friend, is not getting, but giving. It is for the purpose of enabling us to reach out and touch the heart of God and to reach out and touch the hearts of those who share a like precious faith and to reach out and offer the lost and wandering the reassuring hand of love.