



ISSUE

24.16

April 17, 2022

Faithful Sayings

BULLETIN OF
THE OL-
SEN PARK
CHURCH OF
CHRIST

Services

Sunday: 9:00 AM

9:30 AM

10:30 AM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Patrick Ledbetter

Brady McAlister

Jeff Nunn

Deacons:

Ben Hight

Blake McAlister

Walker McAnear

Sam Nunn

Lance Purcell

Justin Smiley

Trevor Yontz

Evangelist:

Kyle Pope

Faithfulness in Worship

By Kyle Pope

Luke 4:16 gives us a beautiful glimpse into the religious practice of Jesus during His earthly ministry. It reads, **“So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And AS HIS CUSTOM WAS, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read”** (NKJV, emphasis mine). At the time of the event described Jesus was about thirty years of age (Luke 3:23). That tells us that during the years of His early adulthood He had already established the **“custom”** of regular worship. This should be no surprise to us for even as a boy Jesus had told His parents when they found Him discussing Scripture with the teachers of the Law, **“Did you not know that I MUST be about My Father’s business?”** (Luke 2:49, emphasis mine).

This is far different from the image that our culture tries to paint of Jesus. In our world He is characterized as One who rebelled against established religion and rejected any notion of formal worship. While it is true that Jesus rebuked and criticized the religious leaders of His day for their hypocrisy and binding of traditions that violated divine law, at the same time He accepted His personal responsibility to worship God. In the life of the Master we see Him always taking the time to observe both the regular occasions of group worship and private times of prayer and meditation.

If there was ever a soul who could have considered Himself exempt from any of the obligations of regular religious service, it would have been Jesus Christ. As God in the flesh (1 Tim. 3:16), He was in constant fellowship with Deity. The Lord could have easily rationalized that worship to God was simply worship of that which was within Himself and thus unnecessary. Yet, we never see Him employing such a rationale.

Consider the record: The gospels record the three-year ministry of Jesus that began in His thirtieth year. We know it lasted three years primarily because of the Jewish feasts recorded. *Passover*

Number One: John 2:23—“**Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover**”—Jesus was there. *Passover Number Two:* John 6:4-5a—“**Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near. Then Jesus lifted up His eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him**”—Jesus was planning to be there. *Passover Number Three:* Luke 22:1, 8—“**Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called Passover. . . . And He sent Peter and John saying, ‘Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat’**”—He was there and prepared to worship with His disciple. That means for these three years Jesus made the eighty mile journey from Galilee to Jerusalem (likely on foot) to worship God. Was this a reflection of His upbringing? It certainly had an influence. Luke records, “**His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover**” (Luke 2:41).

We are not under the Law of Moses, so our obligations in worship to God are different than Christ’s. Yet we would do well to learn from Him some things about setting proper priorities:

1. Jesus put worship to God ahead of personal convenience. Can we imagine Jesus accepting a job that would have hindered Him from worship? Would Jesus ever neglect the assembly of the church because it was inconvenient? Absolutely not! Neither should we. Jesus taught we



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should, “seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness” (Matt. 6:33a).

2. Jesus didn’t allow the hypocrisy of religious leaders to hinder His service. How often do people reject religion because of the hypocrisy of others? Jesus saw the problems and yet tried to help correct them through His involvement. He did not forsake worshipping God because of the shortcomings He saw in others. Concerning the scribes and Pharisees, He told His followers, “**whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do**” (Matt. 23:3). When we see those who “**say and do not do**” the answer is not to imitate their example by neglecting worship but to “**observe and do**” what is pleasing to God.

3. The faithfulness of parents affects the faithfulness of children. Paul praised Timothy’s family, speaking of “**the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also**” (2 Tim. 1:5). Would Timothy have been as faithful to the Lord if His mother and grandmother hadn’t taught Him by their example? In the example of Jesus, would God have chosen a family to raise the Messiah if they had not set the proper example of faithfulness in worship? Parents are to raise children “**in the training and admonition of the Lord**” (Eph. 6:4b)—this includes training them to be faithful in worship. Sadly, even the children of parents faithful in worship can grow up to abandon the faith. But almost invariably parents who are unfaithful in worship produce children who grow up to be unfaithful in worship or abandon faith altogether.

4. Jesus sought occasions to worship rather than exemptions from worship. I wonder if Jesus would have stayed at home on Wednesday nights thinking to Himself “only Sunday is required”? Would Jesus have said, “that early service on Sunday morning is too early”? Would He have thought two services on Sunday was just too much? Would he have skipped Bible class if it was a topic of little interest to Him? If He wouldn’t, should we? The Holy Spirit teaches members of a local congregation to, “**Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you**” (Heb. 13:17). When elders set times of worship and Bible study it is disobedient for members to neglect and forsake these times. As those who are watching out for our souls, when they choose topics and issues for



Bible classes, it is insubordinate, disrespectful, a cause of **“grief”** to them, and **“unprofitable”** to us, to disregard their oversight of our souls.

5. If Deity has given us an example of faithfulness in worship, we should imitate it. Why was Jesus faithful in worship? First, because it was the right thing to do. He had no sin

from which to repent under John’s baptism, but He did do so **“to fulfill all righteousness”** (Matt. 3:15). We should be faithful in worship because it is the right thing to do. Second, by His faithfulness in worship Jesus undoubtedly kept Himself in closer contact with God the Father in the midst of a wicked world. James taught, **“Draw near to**

God and He will draw near to you” (Jas. 4:8a). We should be faithful in worship because it will help us stay closer to God in the midst of the wicked world in which we live. Finally, Jesus was faithful in worship to set an example for us. When He washed the disciples’ feet, He told them, **“I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you”** (John 13:15). Paul told the Ephesians, **“be imitators of God as dear children”** (Eph. 5:1). We should be faithful in worship because in doing so, we imitate the example of Jesus. The question is, will we follow His example or not?



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