



The King's Highway

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

VOL. XXXVIII.

MONCTON, N. B., OCTOBER 15TH, 1952

No. 306

The Stewardship of Public Worship

Rev. John Price

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." Psalm 122:1.

Most of us are accustomed to thinking of stewardship in terms of money and possessions. But we are also stewards of all of life and of all that God has entrusted us with.

God has always sought for those who will worship Him in spirit and in truth. Godly men and women in turn have sought for a place of worship ever since the day when we read that they began to call upon the name of the Lord. The first place of public worship was the altar, this was followed by the tabernacle and then the temple. During the life of our Saviour here on earth the synagogues were the established places of worship. On the day of Pentecost the church was born and since then the place of Christian worship has been called the church. From the very beginning God recognized and provided for man's need of a day for rest and worship and so He has called us to set aside a holy day, a day of rest and of public as well as private worship. The early church recognized the first day of the week as the day of worship.

1. **Blessings of Public Worship.** Among other things the Lord's day is a type of sanctification and is symbolic of the blessings of the sanctified life. First, there is rest from physical labor typifying the rest the surrendered soul finds in God. Then there is worship and communion with God; and holiness is a life of communion and companionship with God. God is especially near on His day if we will but take time to recognize and enjoy His presence.

David was glad to go to God's house for there he found help and blessings he could find nowhere else. He met God there, he found refreshment for his soul. He met God's people there and enjoyed fellowship with them. He was strengthened in the inner man and thus better able to face another week. Peace and joy filled his soul for he was conscious of obeying God. These blessings are still obtainable and may be enjoyed by every true worshipper in the House of the Lord.

II. **Neglect of Public Worship.** We are living in a day when God's house is sadly neglected and the crowds of worshippers are conspicuous because of their smallness. Many who do not attend church on Sunday fail to

realize that if it were not for those who attend church and worship God on that day there would be no Sunday for them to desecrate. Under the Mosaic covenant men were punished for failure to attend the services in the Tabernacle and were held responsible for truth they would have heard.

We are aware that there are many reasons why people cannot or do not attend church. Old age, sickness, caring for the sick and doing necessary works hinder some. But there are other reasons: Sunday business, Sunday papers, Sunday autos, Sunday headaches, Sunday visitors (it is said that George Washington never stayed home from church to entertain guests but rather invited them to attend

O BREATH OF LIFE

**Oh, Breath of Life, come sweeping through us,
Revive Thy Church with life and power.**

**Oh, Breath of Life, come, cleanse, renew us
And fit Thy Church to meet this hour.**

**Oh, Wind of God, come bend us, break us,
Till humbly we confess our need;
Then in Thy tenderness renew us,
Revive, restore, for this we plead.**

**Oh, Breath of Love, come berathe within us,
Renewing thought and will and heart;
Come, Love of Christ, afresh to win us,
Revive Thy Church in every part.**

**Oh, Heart of Christ, once broken for us,
'Tis here we find our strength and rest;
Our broken, contrite hearts now solace,
And let Thy waiting Church be blessed.**

**Revive us, Lord! Is zeal abating,
While harvest fields are vast and white?
Revive us, Lord, the world is waiting,
Equip Thy Church to send the light.**

—Bessie Porter Hood

with him) Sunday radios and television. Then some stay away because of laziness, indifference, moral and spiritual laxity and old grudges. Do you find your excuse among them?

Someone has said that you can worship God in your homes on Sunday, but you don't. You can worship God in the woods and fields, but you don't. You can worship God in a different church each Sunday, but you don't. You can worship God by sending the children to Sun-

day school and staying at home yourself, but you don't. You can worship God by coming to church on Sunday and bringing the family with you, but do you?

III. **What is Worship?** Many a person attends church regularly and yet fails to worship. In many churches the congregation sits and listens to a choir sing, to a minister pray, read and speak and otherwise go through the motions of worship, but the people fail to enter into the experience of worship and the blessings which accompany it. The story is told of a man who dreamed he attended a church service with an angel. Though the service was in progress he could hear nothing. When the service came to a close the people stood as though to pray. For a moment he heard and then the voice of a little child repeating the Lord's prayer reached his ears. He turned to his guide in amazement and was told, "You saw this service as God sees it. The only one who is really worshipping is the child you hear praying, he has put his mind and heart into the service."

Then again in many churches the services are ineffective and the Holy Spirit is hindered because of the talking in between and during services and the aimless and unnecessary running about. Well might we read again the words of Habakkuk, "The Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him." It is no wonder that a service is dry when we fill our minds with foolish and secular thoughts before coming to church. Chatter kills the Spirit, when we talk, laugh and let our minds wander out the window we are grieving God. Sometimes it seems that the call to prayer is a signal for talking to begin. When we do these things we are saying in effect, "This is not God's house, it is only a building!"

God has given us one day in seven to worship Him, let us be faithful stewards of this privilege of worship. What we have said may well be summed up in the following bit of verse:

Some go to church to take a walk;

Some go to church to laugh and talk;

Some go there to meet a friend;

Some go there their time to spend;

Some go there to meet a lover;

Some go there a fault to cover;

Some go there for speculation;

Some go there for observation;

Some go there to sit and nod;

But Christians go there to worship God.

—Pilgrim Holiness Advocate