

Let Christ be Seen

What has society come to know about salvation? When looking through the frosted glass of the facilities erected to conduct religious rituals or functions, what does the world see?

As a passerby comes through the door, what will they find? A group of people worshipping God in spirit and truth, as Jesus affirmed in John 4:23, of which Jesus says are the characteristic of “true worshippers”? Will the passerby find a group of people “speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord”? (Eph. 5:19) Would the passerby be greeted with an attitude of, “Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God; for to draw nigh to hear is better than to give sacrifice of fools: for they know not that they do evil. 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 earth; therefore let thy words be few” (Ecclesiastes 5:1-2). Or will the passerby be greeted with dainties to satisfy the flesh, of which the Apostle Paul said, “If any man is hungry, let him eat at home; that your coming together be not unto judgment”? (1 Cor. 11:34) Will the passerby be greeted with music, arranged by the devices of man, to satisfy the hearing, of which Amos said, “Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols...that sing idle songs to the sound of the instruments of music, like David” (Amos 5:23; 6:5)? What is it the passerby is being taught about worship, reverence for and to God, and the true nature of the purpose of the church? Are they taught to “offer service well-pleasing to God with reverence and awe: for our God is a consuming fire” (Hebrews 12:28 29).

The dumbing-down of religion will eventually be utilized as a tool to undermine the foundation upon which the church was built, i.e., Jesus said, “I will build my church” (Matthew 16:18), and when that happens, so will go the freedom to exercise one’s religion. When “going to church” floods the mind with food and drink, good times and fun, there is a serious breakdown in spiritual concepts. It is said of the church in the first century, “And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers” (Acts 2:42): scholars and translators recognize this “breaking of bread” to be in connection with, and the observance of, the Lord’s Supper. In contrast to these spiritual duties and opportunities, i.e., “day by day, continuing stedfastly with one accord in the temple” they also engaged in the “breaking of bread at home, they took their food with gladness and

singleness of heart, praising God...” (Acts 2:46-47). This “food,” or “meat” (Vine’s), references their daily sustenance.

Nowhere in the scriptures was the church instructed to provide for a soup kitchen, a breakfast bar, or lunch buffet, as is evident from Paul’s admonition, “If any man is hungry, let him eat at home; that your coming together be not unto judgment” (1 Corinthians 11:34).

“Jehovah is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before Him” (Habakkuk 2:20). Ross Triplett, Sr.