***Nuggets From The Word*** page 1

Pastor Billy Burchfield

**Wednesday, November 2, 2022**

**“Living in the Power and Promise of God’s Word”**

**Worship God with All Your Heart**

**Matt. 15:7–9:** Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: 8 *‘These people* *draw near to Me with their mouth*, *and honor Me with their lips*, ***but their heart is far from Me****.* 9 *And in vain they worship Me*, ***teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.****’ ”*

Jesus quotes from Isa. 29:13 in charging the Pharisees with setting aside God’s Word by their ***traditions*.** Jesus dismisses their worship because ***their hearts were not aligned with their lips. Living faith*** is carried out through **true** worship and requires that the mouth and the heart be knit together in order to avoid Jesus’ charge of ***hypocrisy***.

In these ***words of rebuke***, Jesus is speaking to the heart of the question the Jewish leaders asked Him. These Pharisees specifically wanted to hear Jesus’ reply to their *accusation* that Jesus’ disciples were ***not keeping to the Jewish traditions***. The truth behind their question was related to the ***mechanics of control***. This is the ultimate goal of a ***religious spirit*** and system.

Jesus’ answer speaks to us **today** in relation to how we worship and honor God. Religion and tradition let us get away with going through the mechanical motions of worship and honor, but not participating in worship with our entire existence. ***Religious traditions emphasize the external expressions***, but ignore the internal commitments that let us worship God with our whole heart. Matthew 22:37, **“*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind***. 38 ***This is the first and great commandment.”***

Praises and true faith emanate from lips that draw from the depths of the heart. As a living principle, ***faith’s confession*** is not a ritual recitation of slogans**;** If so, it is only acting out a ***human tradition*** and, according to Jesus, it is potentially hypocritical.

We are called to genuine praise and worship, not as pretenders or ritual performers. Let our confessing of God’s promises be without hypocrisy. Let us ***speak what God’s Holy Spirit has truly birthed in our hearts***, thereby bringing us to faithfully speak with our lips. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we can be devoted to vibrant and wholehearted worship rather than mechanical repetition or mindless ritual.

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