

(remember that I said *little* in the audience distracts me). We need to concentrate on the reverence God not only demands, but also deserves. In our lives, *and in our worship services*.

The Carriage Drive Messenger



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NEWSWORTHY NOTES:

This section removed to preserve member's privacy

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Sunday: Bible Study 10:00am
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Wednesday: Bible Study 7:30pm

DAILY LESSONS PUSHED ASIDE

by Bob Pulliam

When it comes to the most sober aspects of life, people have a tendency to ignore the lessons seen around us. We want life to go on as it has been going on. We want to be comfortable, happy, content... with the least amount of effort, or personal change. It is the old plea, "Do not try to change me. I like myself the way I am." And, some may not always like who they have become; but they have learned to live with themselves. So, even if I do not like myself, leave me alone. This is the easy way. It is the lazy way. But it is not the Lord's way.

Take, for example, the recent tragedy in New York. What may we learn from a plane crashing into a house. Many times, people only see applications that they want to see. Some will learn that it is better to drive than fly. The hundreds of thousands of people who fly safely each day has



no bearing on the lesson they *want* to learn. They certainly did not learn that it's better not to be in your house between ten and eleven at night! Why don't they take that lesson away from this situation? Because they do not believe that lesson. They are believing what they want to believe. And if they already believe that it is not safe to fly, they will make that a lesson to learn in this tragic situation. So people usually learn what they want to learn.

One lesson that many people do not want to learn is that their life is fragile, and may end at any moment. People want to believe that they will live to a ripe old age, and then die peacefully in their sleep. The younger we are, the more firmly we believe that. So when a plane crashes, we like to think that such tragedies cannot happen to us. Especially if we never fly. But you are in your house at night. You don't have to get in a plane to die. All you have to do is go to bed at night. And it doesn't have to be a plane. Meteors have crashed into cars and houses. The grim reaper doesn't care if it was a technological wonder, or a chunk of debris that hit you. He will take you either way!

So, what is the lesson here? Prepare to meet thy God! Don't live as if you will have time to make your life right before coming before God. Make your life right, and keep it right. A lot of people don't really have that many changes to make in their lives to repent. So why don't they just make the change and start living in the joy of the sons of God? Why?... Because they push aside the lessons that should otherwise convince them of their need.

Are you pushing aside daily lessons that call you to repentance and obedience? Wake up to the brevity of life, and your obligations to God!

REVERENCE AND GODLY FEAR

by Bob Pulliam

"Wherefore, receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire." (Hebrews 12:28f)

To "serve God acceptably" is to do so with "reverence and godly fear". The Bible speaks often of showing reverence to God. "Reverence" is the ultimate respect. It is a recognition of one as being higher than self. This is why it is wrong to call a man "reverend". Such is reserved

for God alone in scripture (found only in Psalm 111:9). We all recognize how God should be revered among us, and how such should be displayed during our worship services. But sometimes what we know is not always fully practiced.

Consider for a moment the end of our worship services. There is one needing to obey the gospel, and the sermon has been aimed straight to his heart. The moment of truth arrives when the preacher strives to prompt that individual out into the aisle with the invitation. Songbooks scrape the racks in the pews... Pages rustle... Coats and purses are collected... Toys are gathered... *It is almost time to leave!* Have I missed something here? I thought that this was a great moment of truth when decisions were being made? Yet it has become so trite as to be *the signal* that time is about up.

I am one of the fortunate preachers who does not notice such things. I concentrate on my job to the point that little in the audience disturbs me. Yet I know these things occur in various places. Years ago, a young lady asked me if I didn't wish the invitation came first to avoid such distraction. With such a question I admonish the few who distract the many (including those who may be contemplating a response to the invitation), let your reverence be clear. Take care with the songbook's removal, and turning to the page. Wait until worship is over to gather your nest. Give thought to the visitor who may wonder whether we really were glad to be here, when he sees us rush to prepare a hasty retreat.

The Remainder of Services...

Perhaps this is a good place to admonish this same reverence in the rest of our services as well. It is tempting to smile and play with the baby in front of you, or beside you. You can delude yourself into believing you must play (or give the infant a complex), but only you have been fooled. Children love attention during services; but such is the best time to teach them reverence for God. Let the parent care for the child. The child *will* recover if you do not pay attention to it. Worship services are so important because God is the object of our worship. When the reverence is removed, the service becomes nothing more than a glorified "club meeting". Children can learn this at an early age, and we adults are their only teachers at this point. Making points with kids isn't nearly as important as teaching them that God is our first priority in worship.

Conclusion...

I don't know how much of a problem we have with this here at Carriage Drive. I do know that some of it does go on at the back