

# Wednesday's Wisdom

a weekly short note from Mike Minear

## Why Worship Must Be God-Centered

By Mike Wilson

Much of modern American "worship" is focused on the worshippers themselves, rather than on the one, true and living God. Worship experiences are measured by whether the people in the pew like it or not, or whether it fulfills their personal longings and expectations. There is no shortage of churchgoers who judge a worship assembly solely by what they "get out of it."

We have no quarrel with the idea per se that worship is beneficial. The One who created all things is not "served by men's hands as though He needed anything" (Acts 17:25). True worship, as given by God, not only praises the Fount of every blessing but is edifying to those who offer it. Our hearts swell with gratitude and awe when we lift up our voices in praise, when we humbly bow in prayer, when we partake of the body and blood in memory of our Savior, or when we prostrate our hearts at the preaching of Truth. These things are good for us! We identify with the longings of the Psalmist who said, "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the LORD'" (Psalms 122:1). There is no question that we have an innate need to worship a Higher Being.

When this need is not fulfilled in legitimate expressions of adoration, however, the void is filled with man-centered perversions. Jesus had a discussion on this very issue with the Samaritan woman at the well in Sychar. She argued, "Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship" (John 4:20). Jesus replied, **"Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall you worship the Father. You worship that which you do not know; we worship that which we know, for salvation, is from the Jews. But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshippers. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:21-24)**