

Improve your participation in the assembly & Bible classes!

Intro:

- ➔ **Good to study God's word about things, when they're not a problem in the congregation**
 - may keep from having a problem
 - helps us not slide into bad habits, etc.
- ➔ **This lesson:** improve your participation in the assembly & Bible classes — 1-2 lessons
 - many things we do while assembled **help or hinder** our assembly
 - we can **all change (improve)**, resulting in a more edifying worship
 - **Title:** Improve your participation in the assembly & Bible classes!
 - **saying:** the only person who can improve your worship, is you
 - **note:** some things I'll mentioned more for the benefit of young people, some for the benefit of all
- **#1 Fact: to please God, you must participate in the service - worship in spirit and truth (Jn. 4:24)**
 - ➔ **You must worship in spirit and truth, to obey God.**
 - **Story - Jn. 4** Samaritan woman at well: living water (salvation), springing up to eternal life
 - **Read - Jn. 4:23-26** church (Messiah teach all things), worship spirit and truth; not animal sacrifice, etc.
 - **rf. Jn. 4:23** God wants our worship
 - **rf. Jn. 4:24** we must worship in spirit and truth
 - **rf. Jn. 17:17** God's word = truth
 - ➔ **To worship in spirit (concentrate), our service must be orderly.**
 - **1 Cor. 11; 14** 1 = disorder; 5 = immorality; 11 = L.S.; 14 = behavior
 - **Read - 1 Cor. 14:40** service, everything done properly, orderly manner
 - ➔ **Your responsibility in the service: worship in spirit and truth.**
 - **worship in spirit (with your mind)** — concentrating on the things said and done, not allow self to get distracted (e.g., prayer, study, L.S., correct attitude contribution)
 - **saying:** you only get out of something, what you put in it
 - **to worship in truth: must maintain proper behavior, conduct yourself in an orderly manner — or can't concentrate**
 - e.g., **CMS assembly** sometimes folks think church doesn't even have to be as orderly as an elementary school assembly — God deserves more respect than a school assembly, not less
 - **application / saying:** a person who does not act properly and maintain order, makes it impossible for him to worship in spirit and truth, and makes it difficult for everyone else
 - **compliment** everyone, esp. young people - rf. Dad's comments
 - **illus.: story, young family visited church**, young people immediately made friends with children (that Sunday), took to meet Bible class teacher and see Bible class room - family stayed, still there to this day

- #2 To worship God in spirit, you must be prepared.
 - e.g., Israel meets with God
 - **Review - Ex. 19:1-9** God's commitment, Israel's commitment
 - **Read - Ex. 19:10-11** 3 days of preparation, wash garments, set boundaries
 - **application:** we must be prepared, even with clean clothes, to worship
 - **Read - Ex. 19:16-20** coming of the Lord — fear, reverence, respect
 - **Review - Ex. 20:1-17** giving of Ten Commandments
 - **Read - Ex. 20:18-20** people's reaction to being in God's presence
 - **application:** we must be dignified and reverent when we come together to worship
 - e.g., audience w/President US vs. go to church Sunday
 - → e.g., Israel's tabernacle worship:
 - **Review - Ex. 25-31; 35-40** one year to prepare
 - place, furnishings, consecration, clothes, order
 - **Review / Read - Ex. 40:1-33** first worship in tabernacle — **read vs. 16**
 - **application:** do you put a great deal of energy, effort, and work into preparing for worship, or do you view your worship paramount to going to the movies (or other recreational event)? — little preparation, little effort
 - → You must prepare yourself, to effectively worship God!
 - **What is the most important thing we do all week? — assemble, as God has called us to do - must be prepared**
 - **Read - Matt. 22:1-14** e.g., Jesus' parable of the wedding feast
 - those who were originally called were not ready, not respond
 - **application:** must be ready, if we are to respond properly
 - e.g., Saddam Husane, wedding feast, kill those who refuse to come
 - **Read - vs. 13** one tried to enter unprepared, without wedding garment — rejected, punished
 - we'll be punished for disobedience, not worshiping in spirit and truth
 - **cf. Mk. 7:6-8** Jews worship was vain, worshiped according to human tradition rather than obey God
 - **Read - vs. 14** many called, few chosen — those who obey the Lord, come to Him, are chosen
 - **Secular e.g.: we innately know that preparation is necessary**
 - **saying:** Preparation is the key to success.
 - **saying:** The #1 reason for failure is lack of preparation — laziness.
 - **saying:** Without preparing himself, the smartest man in the world is stupid.
 - **illus., book: The 100 Absolutely Unbreakable Laws of Business Success, by Brian Tracy — we know secularly that preparation is the key to success**
 - **Law #14: The Law of Preparation**
 - **chapter subtitle:** Effective performance is preceded by **painstaking preparation.**
 - **excerpts:**
 - ● **Religious e.g., parable of 10 virgins** Jesus uses our innate ability to understand the need for preparation in everything we do, to teach that preparation in spiritual things is also necessary
 - **Read - Matt. 25:1-13** parable teaching preparation — **vs. 13 be alert, prepared**
 - **difference** between 5 foolish and 5 prudent — preparation
 - **difference** between 5 rewarded and other 5 — preparation
 - **difference** between saved and lost after judgment — preparation (obedience)
 - **application:** to worship God in spirit and truth requires preparation
 - **preparation begins before Sunday morning at 9:00 am — e.g., 5 prudent virgins**

- → **Suggestions to prepare for assembly and Bible class: What can you do to be better prepared, get more out of. . . .**
 - **days before:**
 - **prep for Bible class** - read Scriptures, class book, answer questions, think about participation
 - e.g., **college student prepare** for class, read, study
 - **illus.: one of our neighbors visiting**, VSU, finally learned how to get good grades — prep. for class, study 3-4 hours a day
 - **get adequate rest** - so can be alert, not be sleepy
 - e.g., **taking standardized test at school** - no homework, get to bed early, eat breakfast, be positive, don't try to get distracted
 - e.g., Pam's camp friend that attends Temple Terrace, dad wouldn't let him be out past 10:30 pm Sat. night because was leading singing Sun. morning
 - ● **evening before:**
 - **make sure everything is ready:** Bible, materials you may need, clothes are ready
 - e.g., **Israel before meeting with God**
 - e.g., **Israel before tabernacle worship**
 - e.g., **wedding party** (bride, groom, etc.) great care taken in getting clothes ready - expound on process
 - e.g., **funeral for your mother**
 - **get in bed early, if possible**
 - **families with children** — younger they are, the more important preparation is — more important it is to get in bed early
 - ● **morning of:**
 - **get up early enough** to have time to do something but hurriedly get up, eat, dress, run out the door
 - **dress (groom self) in a respectful manner:** e.g., Israel meet God, priests who worked in the temple (we are all priests in Christ), mother's funeral, high school graduation
 - sometimes we become lax in our attitudes, believe we can be less respectful to God at the assemble than to high school grads in a gymnasium
 - **pray before leaving** home and coming to the assembly: help you worship in spirit, help everyone leading the service
 - self, brethren, teachers, men leading the service
 - **Heb. 10:24-25 consider** your brethren, how to encourage them, before leaving home
 - **arrive early**, have time to get your seat and be ready
 - e.g., **Pres. Bush and reporters**
 - **if you're late**, distracting to yourself and everyone else
 - **accident's happen:** everyone has things can't control (esp. families with young children), but try to anticipate and eliminate
 - ● **when you arrive:**
 - **enter prepared**, know what you're going to do, be ready
 - e.g., **get bulletin:** read at least the prayer list on the back, prepare for worship
 - e.g., **Allan manager:** if not start work prepared, get run over, never catch up, terrible day
 - **greet and encourage your brethren**, remember why you're here, stay focused on the worship that will begin in a few minutes
 - **take your seat a little early:** pray and meditate
 - **don't waste the first few minutes of class or assembly** to get ready — miss important parts of worship

➤ → **Application:**

- **to please God**, you must participate in the service - worship in spirit and truth (Jn. 4:24)
- **to worship God**, you must be prepared
 - **saying:** No one can worship God for you. / You're the only one who can get yourself prepared for worship.
- **encourage** you to think about the things you can change, so that your worship is more effective, you glorify God more in your life — make changes now
- **inv.:** prepare for eternity, judgment: What has Jesus commanded us to do to be prepared (e.g., 5 prudent virgins)

➤ → **Summary:**

- **Fact:** to please God, you must participate in the service - worship in spirit and truth (Jn. 4:24)
 - **rf. Jn. 4:23** God wants our worship
 - **rf. Jn. 4:24** we must worship in spirit and truth
- To worship God in spirit, you must be prepared.
- **inv.**

Audio sermon notes:

- ➤ denotes where to proceed to the next slide PowerPoint slide.
- All Scriptures are NASB, unless otherwise noted.
- Sermon recorded 12/04/2005, Church of Christ, South Livingston Ave. In Lutz, FL, Allan McNabb, BibleGuide.org.