

Pleasant Valley
Church of Christ

3317 Amidon
Wichita KS 67204
(316) 838-4195
www.letjesusleadus.org

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Classes 9:30 am
Worship 10:30 am
Evening 6:00 pm

Wednesday

Classes 7:30 pm

The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is a non-denominational group of believers who are committed to following Jesus in our attitudes, our relationships, and our worship. If you want the same thing in your life, please contact us. We'd like to help.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Wings



*"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31)*

July 13, 2008

"Honor me" . . . not God?

by David King

"I have sinned; yet honor me now, please, before the elders of my people and before Israel, and return with me, that I may worship the Lord your God" (1 Sam. 15:30).

In the early years of his reign as the first king of Israel, Saul proved to be a capable ruler. But over time, a character flaw emerged that seriously weakened his effectiveness. It was first displayed prior to a skirmish with the Philistines, when Saul presumed to offer a sacrifice to God—a role that only a priest could perform. It showed again when Saul was commissioned by God to destroy the Amalekites. Saul completed the mission, with only two "minor" exceptions: he allowed the people to keep the best of the flocks to offer as sacrifices, and he spared the life of the Amalekite king. Upon his return from the battle, Saul was confronted by the prophet Samuel with his failure to obey God's command: "Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams" (1 Sam. 15:22). It was in response to this public rebuke that Saul pleaded with Samuel, "Yet honor me now before . . . my people."

In that candid moment, Saul revealed his real motivation in this affair. Above all else, he was hungry for the adulation and approval of his subjects. Honoring God was only of secondary importance. Oh, he was quite willing to obey God, but only insofar as God's instructions happened to support his quest for personal glory in the eyes of his people.

This story teaches us a vital principle that is often lost in modern religion: "Obedience" that is first filtered by one's personal agenda is not obedience at all. Many people today claim allegiance to God, and in fact **do** obey Him—up to a point. But that obedience is limited to whatever is convenient, or happens to align with their personal biases. They sort through God's word and, in cafeteria fashion, pick and choose the details they like, ignore the others, toss in some additional elements from other sources, and call the resulting package their religion. It may be religion, but it's not God's.

True religion is first and foremost a matter of attitude toward God and the Word He has revealed to us. It is grounded in a deep respect for who God is, and the subservient role we occupy with Him. "It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves" (Psa. 100:3), so He makes the rules, not us. It is our job to learn those rules and obey them, not pass judgment on them.

The chaos that characterizes modern Christianity is the result of a failure to respect this fundamental principle. People honor God in name only, while openly flouting the law He has given us. Predictably, they head off in a thousand different directions, while the unbelieving world looks on with disgust.

If we're really intent on honoring God, we must first arm ourselves with a determination to learn everything we can about God's Word, and obey it to the best of our ability, regardless of the cost. Anything short of this is honoring ourselves, not God.