

Church

PRAISES FROM VICTORY MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

.. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:1

There is a direct relationship between the recurring themes of "OLD TIME RELIGION" and "LET US GO BCK TO THE OLD LANDMARK" and the growing emphasis we are seeing of today's Praise Ser-



vices in the Order of Worship in the churches. The suggestion that we have strayed from the gospel of the old days, bears witness in these themes and speaks of what the church can be for the living of

these days.

Shedding spiritual light on the powerful nature of praise, Pastor Thompson teaches that this offering to the Lord brings us not only His pleasure, but His presence to the actual place where His praises are ringing out, setting the stage for receiving the intended benefits of worship (the "mountain-top" experience) and empowering us as disciples of Christ to fulfill the Church's mission of telling the Christ Story through our daily deeds and works (the "valley" experience).

The "mountain-top" experience (for the Worship Service) as once shared by sage, J. Raymond Henderson, can be measured in terms of what it does for us as Christians. Dr. Henderson noted four benefits that should result from the Worship Service:

1. We ought to get a *vision of God*;
2. We ought to get a *vision of ourselves*;
3. We ought to get a *sense of cleansing*;
4. We ought to get a *sense of dedication* (... here am I, Lord send me ...)

The process of taking the "mountain-top" experience that we get on Sunday, into the "valley" during the week and throughout our daily life experiences, is the true measure of the meaning of the Church

and the responsibility of discipleship.

As Christians, are we not disciples for Christ? Can we truly leave the "mountain-top" with a *sense of dedication* that propels us to demonstrate Jesus's ways and His works day to day? This is what God wants us to do ... this is what we must do, as disciples for Christ.

God has given us His Word to empower us in the performance of the Church's mission, as his disciples. We are no more Christian or Disciple than we have knowledge of His Word. Therefore, our first responsibility is to *study* — our Bible says: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Timothy 2:15.

A thought provoking note from the teachings of "Thompsonology": "There is a bumble bee, a drone bee and a honey bee; but there is a bee that ought not to be — and that is a Christian trying to be." That is to say that if we, as Christians, pursued our work as diligently as the bee, then we would be found continually hungering for the Word, seeking and studying the Word, becoming skillful in using the Word. Like the bee, we would be doing what the Lord wants us to do — for the Word will empower us to become as God. "If we want to be filled with the spirit, we must be filled with the Word."



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