

EAST CAMBRIDGE CHURCH OF CHRIST

"A first century church in the 21st century"

Bible Reading Plan

Week 41

- Jer 24, 27-29; *Jam 4*
- Jer 37, 21; Ps 79; *Jam 5*
- Jer 30-34; *1 Pet 1*
- Jer 38-39, 52; *1 Pet 2*
- 2Kg 24-25; 2Chr 36;
Ps 126; *1 Pet 3*

Leading Services

Announcements: Ron V.

Morning:

Song Leader: Bill G.

Opening Prayer: Tony Y.

Lord's Table: Zack V.

Asst By:

Closing Prayer: Ben V.

Evening:

Song Leader: Mike V.

Opening Prayer: Zack V.

Closing Prayer: Richard L.

Scripture Reading: Larry L.
(Malachi 2:10-16)

Sermons

AM: Guest Speaker Danny Allen



Profanity

Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the Lord, which he had not commanded them. So fire went out from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord. Then Moses said to Aaron, 'This is what the Lord spoke saying: By those who come near Me I must be regarded as Holy; And before all the people, I must be glorified.' So Aaron held his peace" (Leviticus 10:1-3).

I am interested in the word "profane" in the above passage. It means irreverence for sacred things. Profanity is sinful because it bespeaks of a lack of regard for God. It may occur in either language or conduct, mind you, and is often seen in our age in the presumptuous undertaking of religious projects without duly constituted precedent. The profane actions of the sons of Aaron in the above narrative are the result of their taking the liberty to do as they pleased, without regard for God.

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The problem with profanity

Such presumptive supposition caused them to commit their act of effrontery, and thereby bring the wrath of God upon them.

Seemingly man just can't seem to content himself with doing what God has commanded in the way He commanded it. He presumes upon God's commands just as did Nadab and Abihu. He wants to do it his way—and he far too often does. Without shame, he writes creeds, alters Scripture, changes authorized worship, and makes his own rules superior to the rules of God. I suppose there to be no more repugnant sight to God than the visage of the skillful religionist, adorned in the trappings of his own innovations, bowing in his own self-righteousness before the altar of his own making, and worshipping God in the way that he has himself concocted. Presumptuous!

Any sort of man-made creed is presumptuous. Any statement of belief that is more or less than Scripture cannot be pure Scripture, and is therefore odious to God. Any effort to add some new thing to what God has said must be met with immediate opposition by all God-fearing persons, since such innovations presume against the authority of the divine directive (II John 9). Conversely, we must studiously avoid any doctrine which would seek to please God with less than His word stipulates, for we simply don't have any assurance that He is pleased with less than what He has said (James 4:17). To substitute any human standard for the divine one is to invite sure spiritual disaster (Galatians 1:6-9), for no matter how much "another gospel" seems to resemble the original, even the smallest change presumes upon the omniscient wisdom of the Most High God.

"Seek the Lord while He may be found. Call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts. Let him return to the Lord and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. 'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are My ways your ways,' says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts higher than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:6-9).

There's a principle in that passage that cannot be ignored. It plainly states that we have no method high enough that when implemented will result in our return to God. Nor is there any inventive genius in man potent enough to bring about his salvation. Truly, "the way of man is not in himself" (Jeremiah 10:23). Only as he turns to God and allows Him to direct his life can he have the hope of redemption and eternal life. Any less is presumptive and will surely bring about his eventual doom.

Jesus is the true and living way (John 14:6); no man can return to the Father by his own creed, no matter how pious he may seem to be. Jesus gave man the teaching he needs (II Timothy 3:16-17), and we must follow it, not his own inventions. Let us cast off the shackles of human reasoning; let us do away with the councils and synods, conventions and associations, and return to New Testament Christianity. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God..." (I Peter 4:11).

- Dee Bowman