

Messenger of Truth

"Holding forth the Word of Life" (Phil. 2:16)

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Routine

"Too many would-be executives are slaves of routine." – James Cash Penney

"I grew up a Catholic and I don't want to talk badly about the Catholic Church but there's a lot of routine stuff going on. You say the same prayers, you sit, you kneel, whatever." – Bernhard Langer

"Habit and routine have an unbelievable power to waste and destroy." – Henri de Lubac

"Running through things because you are familiar with them, breeds routine and this is the seed of boredom" – James Galway

One of the grave concerns with religion today has to be that people are so accustomed to doing things a certain way that it has become routine to them. For instance, in Churches of Christ, there are two songs, a prayer, a song, the Lord's Supper and contribution, a song, a sermon, and an invitation song. And some add a song at the end followed by a closing prayer.

On one occasion, to show the humor that follows with a routine, one congregation mixed up the order of things in a worship service. Having been accustomed to taking up the contribution before the partaking of the Lord's Supper, when they switched it, people were putting money on the tray that contained the unleavened bread, despite the fact that it was announced that they were changing the order of things that day.

Someone will probably say, but didn't Paul admonish the early church to do things decently and in order? True, he did (1 Cor. 14:40). But because things are done in an orderly fashion does not mean that they become so common place that they lose their significance.

Mr. Langer, a noted pro golfer, made the point above that many things done in the Catholic Church of which he was very familiar, seemed to him to be routine. Someone might point a finger and speak of their rituals, but don't we have our own in the church where we worship?

The concern is that because we do things in a certain way, we tend to not pay attention. We simply find ourselves going through the motions.

Here is a test: when the congregation sings, do you pay attention to the words you are singing. When a prayer is led, are you intently listening to what is said? When the Lord's Supper is eaten, do you concentrate on our Lord's sacrifice? Do you thank God for what you are able to contribute? Do you listen to the words of the sermon and see where you can make application in your own life? Be careful that your worship does not become just another routine.