

faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (Heb. 11:6). The key for our point is “diligently.” That is, we need concerted, focused service.

Go through the rest of Psalm 119 and reflect on these kinds of things; it will do you good.

- Steven F. Deaton

Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty!
Just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints!
Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name?
For You alone are holy.
For all nations shall come and worship before You,
For Your judgments have been manifested.

- Rev. 15:3, 4

Assemblies

Sunday Morning	9:00 a.m.
Sunday Evening	5:00 p.m.
Wednesday	7:30 p.m.

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Latin, Please

A recent issue of *TIME* magazine (July 30), carried an article from “a young, progressive-minded American Catholic.” The title, “I Confess, I Want Latin,” (by Lisa Takeuchi Cullen) gives a hint, but the inserted quote at the bottom explains why she wants Latin.

I want to hear Mass sung in a language I don't understand
because too often I don't like what I hear in English

How's that for honesty?

The article by Ms. Cullen is in the form of a confession to a priest. She wrote, “I attend Mass for reasons familiar to any good Roman Catholic: habit and guilt.” Thus, she confesses her worship is not in spirit and truth, but in vain (Jn. 4:24; Matt. 15:7-9).

She went on to explain that as a child she did not understand the Mass. Her father told her to pray. She spent the time thinking about the crucifix and those around her. It “became for me an hour-long meditation in the community of the faithful, reaffirming ancient beliefs in familiar if inscrutable chant. I'm not so sure that isn't what the

But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.

- Jn. 4:23, 24

Apostles intended.” The apostles did not intend men and women, or even children, to be passive in worship. In fact, passivity in worship is really no worship at all. Worship is an engaged activity. Paul wrote to the Ephesians and told them they could understand the “mystery of Christ” (gospel) when they read his words (Eph. 3:3-5). Understanding the Word is key to being a disciple—to being truly faithful to the Lord

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(Jn. 8:32; Eph. 5:17). Note also that Paul wrote to the saints in the language they understood, not some language that had been dead for hundreds of years.

Ms. Cullen explains that the reason she does not want to understand the Mass is because they teach such things as abortion and divorce being sinful. All she wants is the tradition.

Whatever our issues with the tenets of Catholicism the religion, we still cling to what unites us in Catholicism the faith: our devotion to the celebration of the Eucharist. I confess I adore the rich minutiae of the Mass: the frankincense, the Kyrie, the droning of creeds in a sacred space. It comforts me to know that my family around the globe takes part in the same weekly rites.

How noble.

Do you suppose she tithes mint, anise, and cummin? Ritualism, man-made traditions, creeds, burning of incenses, are all an abomination to God (Mk. 7:1-8). God's commands are rejected in order to adhere to the ideas of man (Mk. 7:9).

What about us? Are we any better? Do we go to worship and hear, but do not hear. Do we see, but not see? Are the things said from the pulpit unsettling to us? Would we rather the preacher speak in a language we cannot understand so we are not disturbed in our spiritual slumber?

Again, worship is a personal participation activity. We give of our means (1 Cor. 16: 1, 2). We observe the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:23-26). We sing (Eph. 5:19). We pray (Acts 2:42). We study (Acts 20:7). Yes, in prayer and preaching there is one man that leads us, but we are nonetheless to participate by listening, meditating, and giving an amen (aloud or silently).

Let us not be guilty of worship by rote, of leaving our first love (Rev. 2:4). Rather, let us worship in spirit and truth.

- Steven F. Deaton

22 Days To A Greater Appreciation of God's Word

It is imperative to know the Word of God. Why? Because it has all things that pertain to life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3). It tells us about our family relationships, professions, businesses, dealings with neighbors, troubles, trials, and, most importantly, our relationship to God. No book is so thorough in its coverage of our needs, hopes, and fears. Yet, it is also relatively brief. There are 66 books, but compare that to an encyclopedia or an ordinary dictionary.

Paul said, "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). To rightly divide the word, we must study it. In so doing, we will know the difference between the Old and New Testaments, as well as right and wrong, good and evil, truth and error. We will be able to rightly apply it in our lives and help others understand it too.

Let me encourage you to take the next 22 days to read through Psalm 119. It is a Psalm that extols the commandments of God. It is broken down into 22 paragraphs of eight verses each. It will be an easy read each day. The reason I suggest taking one paragraph per day is to give you time to reflect on each one. Read each paragraph two or three times. Let it sink into your mind. Meditate on what is being said and think of the blessing of having an all-sufficient guide to life.

Look at the first verse now.

Blessed are the undefiled in the way, Who walk in the law of the LORD!

What does this teach you?

First, "the way" is the path of purity. There is one way, the Lord's way—the way revealed in His Word. For us, it is the New Testament. If we are not in "the way" we are defiled and damned. See several passages in the New Testament that address "the way"—in fact just look at Acts (9:2; 16:17; 18:25, 26; 19:9, 23; 24:14, 22).

Second, we must "walk" in the law. This necessitates action. Fellowship with God is not passive. It takes effort on man's part to live in righteousness. We are to grow (2 Pet. 3:18). If we are not growing, we are dying. The Hebrew writer said, "But without