

Welcome to New Life !

We are very pleased you are here. We sincerely hope you will be especially aware of God's presence as we worship. If this is your first time to worship with us, here is what you can expect:

Worship in Singing & Giving

- We leave how to worship up to you as an individual. During **singing** worship, you are free to connect with God in whatever biblical way that expresses your heart's adoration. Some may remain seated, others stand, kneel, clap or lift their hands.
- If you would like to receive personal **prayer** during worship with singing, you may go to one of the Prayer Teams located at the back of the sanctuary.
- Invitation is given for **tithes and offerings**. If you are our guest, please do not feel obligated to contribute when God's tithes and offerings are received.

Worship in Sharing God's Love

Expressions of greeting and God's love are extended to all, especially to our guests.

Worship in Meditating on God's Word

Teaching from the Bible for about 35 minutes.

We encourage you to use our **staffed Nursery** [which has a private nursing room] and **Children's Churches** during the service. Please ask an usher for assistance in locating the various rooms.

{over for sermon notes}

April 13, 2008

Pastor Bob Wine

THE REAL AND THE COUNTERFEIT

"Faith is related to the intensity of your passion for Christ"

2 Chronicles 1:4-5

Matthew 7:21-23 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. **Many will say to me on that day**, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles? Then I will tell them plainly, '**I never knew you. Away from me**, you evildoers!'

- The difference between the real and the counterfeit faith has nothing to do with your involvement in a church.
- Its defining factor is strictly related to the **intensity of passion** you have for Christ. **Luke 14:26; John 5:44; Matthew 6:24**

DISCERNING THE REAL FROM THE COUNTERFEIT

1. NUGGETS FROM HISTORY

- In early days, people worshipped at a mobile tabernacle.
- In the back of the tent enclosure -- called the Holiest of Holies -- is where the Ark of God, His very Presence dwelt.
- David had such a **passion** for God's heart he wanted to be close to Him. So he had the Ark brought to a tent in Jerusalem so he could worship in God's presence on a regular basis.
- **Spirit is hard to see**. Solomon saw all that, but to him, worshipping God was more of a tradition than a deep love relationship.

1 Chronicles 28:9 "And Solomon, my son, learn to know the God of your ancestors **intimately**. Worship and serve him with your **whole heart** and a **willing mind**. For the Lord sees every **heart** and knows every plan and thought. If you seek him, you will find him. But if you forsake him, he will reject you forever." NLT

2. YOU'RE ON THE BUBBLE

- What was Solomon's first recorded approach to worship?

2 Chronicles 1:4-5 "David had already moved the **Ark** of God ... to the tent he had prepared for it in Jerusalem. **But** the bronze **altar** ... was there at Gibeon in front of the Tabernacle of the Lord. So **Solomon and the people gathered in front of it** [the altar] **to consult the Lord**." NLT

“DIGGING DEEPER”

For personal or small group study

Week of April 13, 2008

• Solomon chose to keep God at a distance and tried to impress Him at the altar with his many animal sacrifices, instead of focusing on a close relationship with God by risking all by giving all of himself in humble adoration to God.

Exodus 20:19 “Speak to us yourself and we will listen. But do not have God speak to us or we will die.”

Matthew 15:8-9 “These people honor me with their lips, but their **hearts are far from me**. Their worship is a farce ...” NLT

• Most people still today, many who are in church, are willing to do just enough religion to relieve their guilt, but **refuse** to seek to be close with God.

2 Timothy 3:1-2, 4-5 “You should know this ... that in the last days there will be very difficult times. For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be ... puffed up with pride, and love pleasure **rather than God**. They will **act religious**, but they will reject the power that could make them godly. Stay away from people like that!” NLT

Please notice: Paul was referring to church people who were only going through the motions!

3. AUTHENTIC FAITH IS A JOY, NOT A LABOR

• Do you still joyfully volunteer to serve, or have you lost your passion and feel like you’re being pressured to perform?

• If you feel serving God is more of a painful obligation than a joy, that is as serious as having chest pains that lead to a heart attack.

• Please take those symptoms seriously. They are God’s flashing warning lights to you.

Jeremiah 29:13 “when you search for me with all your heart, you **will** find me!”

Psalms 27:8 “When you said, “Seek my face,” my heart said to you, “O Lord, I will seek your face.” God’s Word

How do you best put this into practice?

You have a choice. If you sense warning lights are flashing within you, please decide to take immediate action to invest time and energy to reconnect with the heart of God. Take advantage of what God’s still small voice is prompting you to do today. If you don’t, that voice will only become more and more faint.

• The best all-around thing you can do to facilitate a turnaround is to find another person who also wants to learn to better hear the voice of God and become mutual spiritual life coaches for each other.

• **Don’t wait!** Begin plans before the sun sets today.!

QUICK REVIEW: Which point or scripture passage most challenged, confused, or caught your attention in this week’s message? Why?

TODAY’S FOCUS

1. How would you define the difference between real faith and counterfeit faith?
2. Jesus shared a very strong statement in Matthew 7:21-23. How does this statement help reveal a religious heart -- a spiritual self-fulfillment heart -- over a heart that desires relationship with God? What does this, and other scripture, teach us about the nature of our own hearts? [Luke 14:26; John 5:38-44]

GETTING THE POINT

1. If the defining factor between real and counterfeit faith is directly related to the intensity of our passion for Jesus, how important is it to check our own hearts? [2 Corinthians 13:5; Psalm 139:1-4] What is the key to having an intense passion? [Romans 8:14; James 4:7-8; Jeremiah 29:13]
2. There are many things that consume our thoughts, our words and our actions. We need to be aware of what things consume our lives.

What do your thought life, your words and your deeds reveal about your passion for God? How do these help you identify whether your faith is real or counterfeit (just going through the motions)? [2 Timothy 3:1-5; Philippians 4:8; James 1:26; Colossians 3:17; Romans 12:1-2]

A LOOK INSIDE

1. Have you had warning lights flashing at you about the intensity of your passion for Christ? Is your faith journey a joy -- or a labor?

What choices **can** you make to reconnect with the heart of God and what choices **are** you making? [Psalm 27:8; Hebrews 10:24-25]
2. How do you feel being involved in a mutual spiritual life coaching relationship could help you rekindle your passion? [Matthew 15:8-9; Hebrews 10:24-25]