

Coming Just for the Show

Word

Scripture Reference

Ezekiel 33:30-33

Discussion Questions

1. What makes sports, current events, news, and showbiz gossips entertaining? Why do you think people look at church the same way (as something with entertainment value)?
2. Read Ezekiel 33:30-33. In this passage, the Israelites were in exile in Babylon because of their disobedience to God. Ezekiel, a prophet, was a captivating messenger of God's Word. The people were amazed and attracted to how he speaks, and so they come to listen to him and even brought others with them (v. 30). However, something was wrong. The people listened to Ezekiel with curiosity, but continued to live as they pleased. In short, they did not put into practice what they heard. It is sad that many people today see church as entertainment, coming just for the "show." Three things make worship become spiritual entertainment, and therefore a waste of time. First is when there is an action of inaction (v. 31a). It is when you decide to do nothing about what you hear. Discuss how this is manifested in many Christians' lives, especially outside church. As a follower of Jesus Christ, how can you actively live out God's Word when you hear it during worship?
3. Second, church becomes spiritual entertainment when the motivation is of self (v. 31b). When you pray for other people to change but you yourself do not change; when you say, "I'll change when it's convenient for me (when my circumstances are better);" when it becomes *my* schedule, *my* time, *my* desire, *my* convenience—these are all manifestations of what is truly in one's

heart. Discuss the possible spiritual dangers when you start to think that church is for self-satisfaction. What's your personal attitude and motivation in coming to church? Is church for you about the body of Christ, or is it about your personal gain and convenience?

4. Lastly, church becomes spiritual entertainment when the messenger becomes the entertainer and the message becomes the entertainment (v. 32). When does this danger happen? What do you think is the role of your pastor in the church? What does the Bible say is his role? What kind of message do you think should your pastor be preaching? Does it simply make you feel good, or does it challenge you to transform your life? Discuss how you can develop a right attitude towards church (as an individual or as a group of believers) so that being part of a church community will truly have an impact in your life.

Walk

The call to accountability and responsibility in verse 33 is very clear. You must have the innate desire to complete what God wants you to do. Examine your heart. Do you only enjoy the music, the people and the activities of the church, without taking the messages to heart? Have you reduced church services to the level of entertainment? Or do you ask the question, "What does God want me to do with what I just heard?"

Worship & Prayer

Father, thank You for Your Word that reminds me not to take You lightly. You're not there to entertain me, but to transform me. My pastor is not there to make me feel good, but to challenge me to obey. My fellow believers aren't there to make me feel important, but to encourage me to be relevant. Forgive me, Lord, for making church about me, and for making personal convenience and gain my priority instead of pleasing You. Give me the courage to give up self and own up to my responsibility in the body of Christ. Teach me to be humble and allow me to serve You and to serve other people. In Christ's name I pray. Amen.