



"The measure of a man is not the number of his servants, but the number of people whom he serves."
—Paul D. Moody

08-Mar-02

Fast Food

A number of recent articles have brought to light a disturbing new facet of schoolwork at both the high school and college levels. It is not the schoolwork itself that is troubling—except maybe for the students—but rather the students' "resourcefulness" in fulfilling it. What is disturbing is that it is now possible for students to purchase and download term papers, research papers, essays, and almost any other written work, from the Internet and turn in the material as their own. Rather than going through the process of thinking, exploring, and learning, young people can now use their "networking skills" to accomplish their tasks.

But even more troubling is that now this trend is beginning to extend into religion as well. This week I received an advertisement from ChristianityToday.com that alerted me to a new service they are offering through an affiliated website:

As a church leader, your time is at a premium. That's exactly why the editors of *Christianity Today* and *Leadership Journal* designed the "little to no prep time" Building Church Leader materials specifically for pastors, board members, committee members, small

group leaders, and teachers! With the new BuildingChurchLeaders.com you can choose from dozens of training topics to use with your team. Each topic includes multiple formats such as interviews, case studies, personal assessments, devotionals, and more.

A quick check of their website confirmed my suspicions. Now pastors can download kits and PowerPoint presentations on various ways and means to worship. There are interviews with well-known mainstream evangelists, assessment tests to see how churches are measuring up, case studies, devotionals, and various how-to manuals on a variety of topics—all for a reasonable price.

The book of Malachi contains a cutting rebuke of priests because of the "food" they offer on the altar. The food here is symbolic of true teaching and doctrine, while the general idea of sacrifice represents acts of personal sacrifice and service done by the priests:

"You offer defiled food on My altar. But you say, 'In what way have we defiled You?' By saying, 'The table of the LORD is contemptible.' And when you offer the blind as a sacrifice, is it not evil? And when you offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? Offer it then to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you favorably?" says the LORD of hosts. . . . "But you profane it, in that you say, 'The table of the LORD is defiled; and its fruit, its food, is contemptible.' You also say, 'Oh, what a weariness!' And you sneer at it," says the LORD of hosts. "And you bring the *stolen* , the lame, and the sick; thus you bring an offering! Should I accept this from your hand?" says the LORD. ([Malachi 1:7-8](#), 12-13)

What kind of sacrifice is BuildingChurchLeaders.com helping pastors and other church leaders to prepare? What kind of spiritual food will the sheep be ingesting if it is simply downloaded off the Internet (for a small fee)? Is this not the spiritual equivalent of our culture's pervasive "fast food," which is devoid of any real nutritive value?

Under the New Covenant, sacrifices are still required! We do not now offer animals ([Hebrews 10:1-9](#)), but we offer sacrifices to [God](#) in praise, thanksgiving, doing good to others, sharing ([Hebrews 13:15-16](#)), as well

laying down our lives and "dying" on a daily basis by subjugating our desires and preferences to serve others. These offerings require forethought and preparation.

As we draw near to the [Passover](#) season, let us examine the various offerings that we are making—whether they are the best we have to offer, or whether they are metaphorically blemished, crippled, stolen, or in other ways second-rate. We desire God to say of us: "Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on My altar" ([Isaiah 56:7](#)).

- David C. Grabbe

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

[The Sacrifices of Leviticus \(Part 1\)](#)

by John W. Ritenbaugh

Compared to the multi-faceted, infinite, marvelously complex and perfect works of God, the words of man are limited and flawed. Like geodes, hiding magnificent structural and aesthetic designs, the biblical types, emblems, or allegories are deceptively simple on the surface, but deep, complex, and awesome as one begins to scrutinize. Sometimes the least favorite scriptures yield the most profound lessons. As Christ is represented in the sacrificial types of Leviticus, we must apply these principles, examples, and lessons to our own lives, applying intense effort and diligence to extract the meaning that these densely packed types have for us.

From the Archives: Featured Article

[The Sacrifice of Praise](#)

by Martin G. Collins

I Peter 2:5 says that we are to offer up spiritual sacrifices. Martin Collins tells what that means and how to do it acceptably before God.

If you would like to subscribe to the C.G.G. Weekly newsletter, please visit our [Email Subscriptions page](#).
