

Kiss the Calves

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The prophet Hosea describes those who offer human sacrifices as saying "kiss the calves" in the excitement and fervor of their spiritual experience. (13:1-2) Nearly all peoples worshiped in this manner. The serious, simple, and lesser adorned style of worship designed by God in the writings of Moses paled in comparison.

Yet, the stylish worship experience of their Gentile neighbors somehow failed to make them live righteously. The Lord had a controversy with them because there was no faithfulness, no steadfast love or knowledge of God in the land. (4:1-2) Instead, there was lying, murder, stealing, and adultery apparently without the restraints of a conscience trained by their righteous God. Their goodness or mercy was as a mourning cloud that disappears as soon as the sun rises in the sky. (6:4-6) They were sick or inflamed with the heat of intoxicating wines and the words of scoffers. (7:4-5)

When churches abandon the weekly Lord's Supper for a more "meaningful worship experience" they call on us to "kiss the calves" and thus setting aside the pattern for the church, they remove all legal restraints to setting aside other patterns as well. The church can be changed into a gym, a fitness center, a worship center, a social service center, and whatever other activity we might value more highly than the Bible fellowship written about in the letters to the churches in the New Testament.

Next we can set aside the pattern for the home. Who needs the hassle of "one man for one woman for life raising a family together."? What need do we have for daddies if they are going to fight all of the time and we just don't love each other anymore? If we are "under grace not law" then of course what sin can there be in fornication if the two of us love each other? (homo or hetero?) What if our faithfulness is as a mourning cloud and we make lies our refuge? Are you going to be legalistic and judge me?

Yes, there are many ways to "kiss the calves" like the Israelites did. See how we have set aside baptism as it is ordained in the Bible. Peter preached repentance and baptism for the remission of sins in Acts 2:37-41. It is now fashionable to kneel in prayer at an altar or pray the "sinner's prayer" and ask Jesus to "come into your heart." What is wrong with just quoting Peter? Or is that too judgmental? Don't kiss the calf! tp