

SERMON: THE ALTAR CALL IN CHURCHES

[2] The title of the sermon today is "THE ALTAR CALL IN CHURCHES."

What In The World Is An Altar Call?

- What is an altar call? Well, most churches around here will have altar calls.
- And they typically happen at the end of a church service.
- The preacher will stand up and everyone will be asked to bow their head and close their eyes.
- What else do they do? They start playing music to create this dramatic effect.
- They're playing on your emotions and getting you worked up emotionally.
- They'll say things like, "If you have a problem in your life, come here to the altar."
- "If you want to be saved today, come on down here to the altar."

And what are they calling the altar? They're calling some stairs an altar or a bench.

- They'll have Kleenex tissues ready for you to cry on the so-called altar.
- They'll tell you a sad story on purpose to play on your emotions.
- You have to walk down in front of everyone, get on your knees, and cry on the altar.
- It's an emotional time for you to come forward and put on a show for the church.

The preacher puts a lot of pressure on people. If no one comes up, "What's wrong with you all."

- "Why aren't you coming to the altar? Why don't you want to do BUSINESS with God today?"
- After church the preacher might even say, "Oh, I noticed you haven't been to the altar in a while."
- "What's going on? Are you having trouble? Why aren't you coming to the altar?"
- The song gets longer and longer. Minute upon minute. No one comes forward. We'll play longer.
- More sob stories. More sadness until you start crying.
- People begin to believe they must come forward at an altar call to be saved.

If you read the Bible front to back over and over again, you won't find altar calls.

- So if you rely on the Bible or God's word, you might be confused when you hear an altar call in the church.
- What in the world is an altar call? The phrase "ALTAR CALL" isn't in the Bible.
- The closest phrases are 1) "ALTAR AND CALLED" and 2) "ALTAR THERE AND CALLED."
- So, let's look at these phrases within the Bible. There's 4 verses with these 2 phrases.

[3] Genesis 26:25 And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well.

- This is talking about Isaac. He built. He didn't need an altar to call upon the name of the Lord.
- You can do that anywhere and any time. The altar is there for another reason. We'll look at that later.

[4] Genesis 33:20 And he erected there an altar, and called it El-elohe-Israel.

- This one is talking about Jacob. He built an altar and called it The God of Israel.

[5] Genesis 35:6-7 *So Jacob came to Luz, which is in the land of Canaan, that is, Beth-el, he and all the people that were with him. 7 And he built there an altar, and called the place El-beth-el: because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother.*

- We see Jacob build another altar in a different place. He CALLS IT by a different name.
- These men aren't building altars and then preaching, playing on emotions, putting on a show, and then saying "COME TO THE ALTAR."
- The altar wasn't for you to come to. You didn't want to be on the altar. That's for sure.

[6] Exodus 17:15 *And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi:*

- Those are the only 4 Scriptures in the Bible with something similar to the phrase "ALTAR CALL."
- Remember, the exact phrase "ALTAR CALL" is not in the Bible.
- If preachers are to know and follow the Bible, why did a preacher start this new thing of altar calls?
- You won't get the idea of an altar call from the Bible. Where did it come from?

Altar Calls Do Not Equal Old Fashioned Or The Old Paths!!!

Who knows when it originally started, but many believe it became popular in the United States in the 1830's.

- That means there are no records of the early church doing any of these altar calls.
- There's no record within the Bible of anyone doing these altar calls.
- During the earliest altar calls, people would go forward to these altar rails where you get on your knees.
- They look like this, and you might have seen them before:

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- Or the altar was called an anxious seat or a mourner's bench. It looks like this.

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- You can come up there at talk with the preacher alone while everyone else watches. It's a show.
- It's a tactic used by preachers to put on a show for the church. I don't care what anyone else says.
- It's a show. You don't need to put on a show in front of the church. God knows your thoughts.
- If you want to be saved, you can sit right there in your chair and ask God to save you.
- You don't need to come to the altar like the showman preacher says. It's a show.

Most people believe the ALTAR CALL originated with a preacher named Charles Finney.

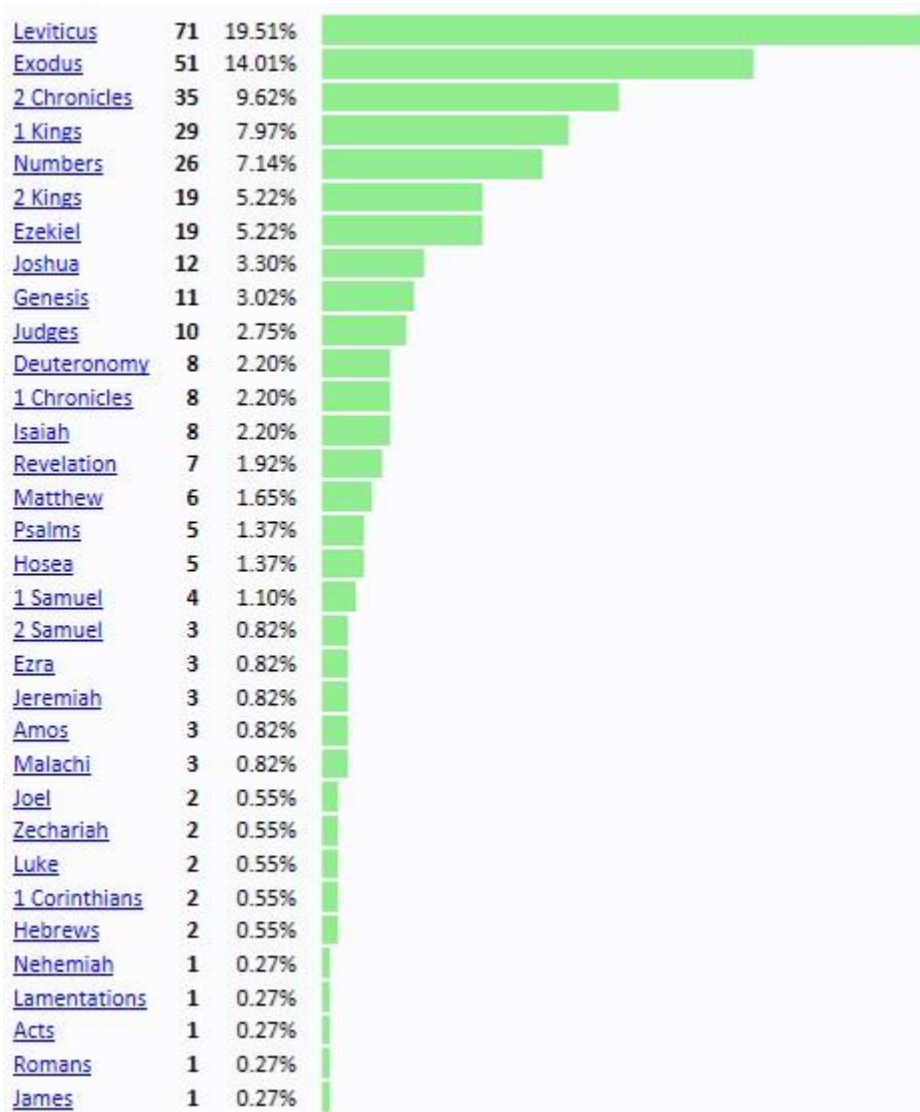
- When he started doing in the 1830's, the altar call became very popular.
- Charles Finney probably wasn't the originator, but he did make it popular.
- Billy Sunday used them. D.L. Moody used them. And of course, Billy Graham used them.
- Sometimes altar calls are called INVITATIONS at the end of the service.
- "We invite you to come up to the altar and re-dedicate your life to Jesus Christ."
- Hey, that's not in the Bible. Altar calls and invitations are not Biblical at all.
- I know what they are. They are a big show. They are a production. They are entertainment.

There Are No Altar Calls Within The Bible At All

If altar calls or invitations were Biblical, wouldn't we find some proof of them in the Bible.

- So, let's look to the Bible. Let's see what God says. That's what we MUST do with everything.
- The words altar and altars are found in the Bible 433 times in 364 verses.
- Here's a plot showing the instances of the words altar and altars in the King James Bible.

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- I know that's difficult to see because there are 364 verses in 33 of 66 books in the Bible.
- Leviticus is number one with 71 verses or about 1/5 of all verses in the Bible.
- Then we see Exodus with 51 verses. 2 Chronicles with 35 verses. 1 Kings with 29 verses.
- The first book on the list from the New Testament is the Book of Revelation with 7 verses.
- We're finishing up the Book of Revelation verse by verse. Do you remember altar calls in that book?
- I sure don't because it's not there. The altar is there in heaven in the Book of Revelation.
- Obviously, we can't look at 364 verses today due to the amount of time we have.

- But we are going to look at enough to understand what the altar is within the Bible.

[10] Genesis 8:20-21 *And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. 21 And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.*

- This is the first time the word ALTAR is used within the Bible.
- And notice, the altar is built by Noah and it's used to offer BURNT OFFERINGS to the Lord.
- The burnt offerings upon the altar are pleasing to the Lord.
- An animal was placed upon the altar and was given as an offering to the Lord.
- When altar calls are done at the churches, I hope you aren't coming forward to be burned upon the altar.
- You know? When you take something that isn't in the Bible, you can go down the wrong path easily.

[11] 2 Kings 17:31 *And the Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites burnt their children in fire to Adramelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim.*

- When people take something in the Bible like the altar and start using it for some other reason, I don't think God is happy with that AT ALL.
- I especially don't think he's happy when the ALTAR is turned into a show in church.
- What is the picture there? Are you coming to offer yourself a sacrifice to God?
- God doesn't ask us to come up to some fake altar, bow down, and offer ourselves as a burnt offering.
- That's what the altar was for according to the Bible.

[12] Exodus 20:24 *An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.*

- Yes, I understand the churches don't mean you should burn yourself as an offering.
- But, hey, it could head that way. Corrupting God's word leads to more corruption.
- All these churches do is confuse people with these altar calls. It's not in the Bible.
- Stairs are stairs. Benches are benches. Altars are altars. And we don't need an altar today.
- We do not need to offer burnt offerings to God. Jesus is the burnt offering NOW.
- Up to the point Jesus died, YES, they were to have an altar and sacrifice burnt offerings to God.
- God says in Exodus right there that he wants them to build them an altar of earth.
- He wants them to sacrifice burnt offerings on the altar. Watch what he says next in the next verses.

[13] Exodus 20:25 *And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it.*

- The altar is a tool for the people to offer sacrifices to God. God said to build it of earth or dirt.
- If not dirt, he says you can make it of stone. But don't change the stone. Just build it of natural stones.
- If you build it with any tools, you have polluted the altar. You don't want to do that.
- These churches are calling all of these man-made things the altar. Come to the altar.
- God says, "DON'T MAKE IT OUT OF ANYTHING OTHER THAN EARTH OR NATURAL STONES."
- Don't cut the stone. Don't change the stone. That's what God said. Don't use any tools on it.

- God doesn't want a man changing the natural altar that God wants. Earth or dirt and natural stone.

[14] Exodus 20:26 *Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon.*

- So, many churches like to use the stairs as the altar. God says, "I don't want stairs on the altar."
- Why? So your nakedness is not seen on the altar. The higher you go up, your nakedness might be seen.
- God says, "Don't take a chance with that. NO STAIRS ON MY ALTAR."
- And yes, I understand the churches aren't trying to make an Old Testament altar.
- THEN WHY ARE YOU CALLING IT AN ALTAR? Don't call it an altar, and stop putting on a show in church.

People Are Bowing Down To What At Altar Calls?

What do people typically do when they go to these altar calls?

- They usually get down on their knees or bow down.
- And there's always one or more people standing there in front of them.
- Or, there's a graven image of the cross that they are bowing down before.
- In other words, bowing down or getting on your knees is worshipping.
- That is the definition of worship. And who is there in front of you? The preachers.
- "Well, I don't mean that I'm bowing down to the preachers."
- Well to me, that's what it looks like. It appears that you're worshipping humans or images.

[15] Romans 12:17 *Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.*

- You don't want someone to think you're bowing down to a man, woman, or graven image.
- You might say, "Well, Josh, you're being too difficult again. That's not what they're doing."

[16] Joshua 5:14 *And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant?*

- Jesus is standing there in front of Joshua. He falls on his face to worship. That's the definition of worship.
- People are falling down on their knees and there are men and women standing there in front of them.
- To me, that's very offensive. Or they are bowing down to statues or wooden crosses.

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- Does that look right to you? It's the same thing as this next picture.

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- That sure doesn't look good to me. It sure looks like they are worshipping a statue.
- The other sure looked like they're worshipping the man up there in front of them.
- And you might say, "Well, that's not what it is." Well, that's what it can become for many people.

[19] 1 Kings 12:30 *And this thing became a sin: for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan.*

- Jeroboam made two calves of gold. The people began to worship them.
- That's what happens with preachers and pastors. People start to worship them.
- People begin to listen to the preacher or pastor over the word of God.
- The preacher says, "Oh yeah, the altar call is great. That's why we do the altar call."

[20] Jeremiah 2:8 The priests said not, Where is the LORD? and they that handle the law knew me not: the pastors also transgressed against me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit.

- The altar call doesn't profit anyone. It's a show, and I guarantee you God hates it.
- You don't have to show yourself worthy in front of a church by crying at the altar.
- God never says anything like that. Here's what he does say, though.

[21] Jeremiah 23:1-2 Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD. 2 Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD.

- We do not bow down and worship any man or graven image here. We will not do that.
- We will not even come close to making it look that way either.

[22] Exodus 20:4-6 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: 5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; 6 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

- We are not to SERVE the Pastors of the churches like they are God.
- We are not to bow down in front of them. We are not to bow down in front of a cross or a statue.

You Are Not To Bow Down To Any Image

[23] Leviticus 26:1 Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the LORD your God.

- Do you see this verse? The altar was made out of stone. We saw that earlier, right?
- You are not to bow down to any image of stone. You aren't to bow down at an altar.
- The altar wasn't for people to bow down in front of and worship.
- That's called OFFERING something strange in front of the altar. God doesn't like that at all.
- God created the altar for burnt offerings. He sets the rules.
- When you say you have an altar and you do something strange like ALTAR CALLS, that's wicked.

[24] Leviticus 9:24 And there came a fire out from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces.

[25] Leviticus 10:1-2 And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. 2 And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.

- God gives examples of people doing strange things before THE ALTAR. He doesn't like it at all.
- He commands us directly to NOT do these things. Do not make strange offerings before the Lord.
- And yes, bowing down to a man standing up in front of you is called worshipping that man.
- Bowing down before an image of a cross is called worshipping that cross.
- God never said to use a cross to represent him. NEVER does he say that. Not once.
- And yeah, after you stick to just the Bible, all of these things should be strange to you.
- Altar calls should be strange to you because they are.

[26] 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. 22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

- That's a commandment from God. PROVE ALL THINGS. But preachers don't like to be questioned.
- They might actually have to change something and admit they were wrong.
- I don't have a problem admitting when I'm wrong. I'm going to submit to God.
- If God said altar calls are good, then I wouldn't be preaching this right now.
- I would shut up and say I was wrong. GOD IS RIGHT. I'm wrong. But God doesn't approve of altar calls.
- If he did, he would have put them in the Bible. He already knew this would be happening.

[27] Exodus 28:42-43 And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness; from the loins even unto the thighs they shall reach: 43 And they shall be upon Aaron, and upon his sons, when they come in unto the tabernacle of the congregation, or when they come near unto the altar to minister in the holy place; that they bear not iniquity, and die: it shall be a statute for ever unto him and his seed after him.

- You'll see how serious God is about the altar when you read the Bible.
- Only the Levites, the priests could offer upon the altar. King Saul was not a priest.
- King Saul decided he would build an altar and offer sacrifices himself.

[28] 1 Samuel 15:22-23 And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. 23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

- King Saul rejected the word of the Lord. He knew he wasn't supposed to do that.
- Don't take the altar and just do whatever you want with it. That's called rejecting the word of the Lord.
- Do you know what happened to King Saul?

[29] 1 Chronicles 10:13-14 So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the LORD, even against the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire of it; 14 And inquired not of the LORD: therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.

- That's how angry God was with Saul because of Saul offering sacrifices upon the altar on his own.
- The Lord slew King Saul because of his transgression. That had to do with the altar.

[30] Exodus 29:37 *Seven days thou shalt make an atonement for the altar, and sanctify it; and it shall be an altar most holy: whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy.*

- God gave specific rules for the altar. The altar is MOST HOLY. Do you not see that?
- THE ALTAR IS MOST HOLY. Don't mess it. Don't call a wooden bench the altar.
- Don't call some steps the altar. I don't want to mess with God. I fear him.
- If you have any fear of God AT ALL, you'll stop the altar calls. They are not Biblical at all.
- Hey, if you want some fear of God, study the word ALTAR. Read all the verses in the Bible.

Study The Word Altar In The Bible And You'll Be Scared Of Altar Calls

[31] Exodus 34:12-14 *Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee: 13 But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves: 14 For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:*

- These other people were using altars for false gods. God said to destroy those altars. Why?
- So you don't go the wrong way and turn unto some false god. And yes, it's possible with these altar calls.
- We don't go against God's word and then think it's going to turn into something good.
- Billy Graham, a false gospel teacher, sure liked those altar calls. "Repent of your sin to be saved."
- That's a lie that's sending people to hell and causing confusion in the churches today.
- People still listen to that serpent Billy Graham today over Jesus Christ himself.
- They'll fight you over Billy Graham. They could care less about Jesus Christ.
- God said to destroy those altars. Watch what he says next.

[32] Exodus 34:15-16 *Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice; 16 And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods.*

- That's what happened with Billy Graham and his altar calls. He was slick just like that slippery serpent.
- He changed the TRUE GOSPEL just enough to make people believe the false gospel. Great deceiver.
- In the Book of Exodus, you'll see the altars for the tabernacle are given exact instructions.
- And they were to be made exactly as God commanded.
- And the altars weren't to be used different than what he commanded.

[33] Exodus 40:10 *And thou shalt anoint the altar of the burnt offering, and all his vessels, and sanctify the altar: and it shall be an altar most holy.*

- God says the altar shall be sanctified and it shall be MOST HOLY. He repeats this over and over.
- And then these evil men want to take the altar and use it for their gain. It's a show.
- The people who are constantly participating in the altar calls love the show.

- The people who don't are like outcasts within that church. It's a joke.

[34] Matthew 6:1 Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

- Do those people not see those words right there? Oh, does that not apply to altar calls?
- Are altar calls exempt from the words of Jesus Christ? Oh, did I twist that Scripture right there?
- No, I didn't. The people who approve of altar calls will say that they're giving themselves an offering.
- They are the sacrifice they are bringing to the altar. They want to sacrifice their life to God.
- Okay, that's great! But you aren't to do that before men every time there's an ALTAR CALL!!!
- "Oh, look at that great man. He's always bowing down at the altar calls. He's so great."
- That's the opposite of what the Bible says we should be doing.

[35] Matthew 6:5-6 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. 6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

- If you want to bow down and pray to God, go into your closet in secret. Not to be seen by others.
- Bow down to God in the shower and pray. There is no man standing in front of you.
- There's no one else to see you there. You don't need to participate in altar calls.
- When you NEVER participate in an altar call, the other people will think bad about you.
- They'll say, "If you're a sinner today, come down to the altar and get right with God."
- And then when you don't, you're seen in a bad light. "Oh, so you think you don't sin."
- NO!!! I'm just not participating in your non-Biblical fake altar calls.

Do Not Participate In Altar Calls

[36] Exodus 40:29-30 And he put the altar of burnt offering by the door of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation, and offered upon it the burnt offering and the meat offering; as the LORD commanded Moses. 30 And he set the laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, and put water there, to wash withal.

[37] Exodus 40:31-32 And Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet thereat: 32 When they went into the tent of the congregation, and when they came near unto the altar, they washed; as the LORD commanded Moses.

- Study the altar in the Bible, and you'll see that God gives highly specific instructions.
- Build it like this. Put it right there. Only the priests can touch it. Don't show any nakedness.
- Wash your hands and your feet before you come even close to this altar. No stairs.
- That's why God got so angry with King Saul. He slew him over it. Why?
- He gives exact instructions for the altar. Now, do you want to mess around with the ALTAR?
- Hey, if it's not an altar, don't call it God's altar. It makes me angry.
- If it makes me angry, you've seen nothing when it comes to God's anger.

[38] Leviticus 6:9 *Command Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the law of the burnt offering: It is the burnt offering, because of the burning upon the altar all night unto the morning, and the fire of the altar shall be burning in it.*

- The altar has a fire burning. The burnt offering fire should burn all night.
- Aaron and his sons were to make sure that fire was burning ALL NIGHT.
- It takes work to keep a fire going all night. And God is serious about that commandment.

[39] Leviticus 6:10-11 *And the priest shall put on his linen garment, and his linen breeches shall he put upon his flesh, and take up the ashes which the fire hath consumed with the burnt offering on the altar, and he shall put them beside the altar. 11 And he shall put off his garments, and put on other garments, and carry forth the ashes without the camp unto a clean place.*

[40] Leviticus 6:12-13 *And the fire upon the altar shall be burning in it; it shall not be put out: and the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt offering in order upon it; and he shall burn thereon the fat of the peace offerings. 13 The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out.*

- Now, after you start to see just some of these instructions for the altar, do you think God is serious?
- Do you think he's playing games with HIS ALTAR?
- The preachers act as if they represent God, but then they're using the altar for showmanship.
- I wouldn't go there, and I wouldn't touch an altar call with a 10-foot pole. I'm going way over there.

[41] Leviticus 8:10-11 *And Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that was therein, and sanctified them. 11 And he sprinkled thereof upon the altar seven times, and anointed the altar and all his vessels, both the laver and his foot, to sanctify them.*

- He sprinkled blood upon the altar SEVEN TIMES to anoint the altar and sanctify the altar.

[42] Numbers 16:35 *And there came out a fire from the LORD, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense.*

[43] Numbers 16:38 *The censers of these sinners against their own souls, let them make them broad plates for a covering of the altar: for they offered them before the LORD, therefore they are hallowed: and they shall be a sign unto the children of Israel.*

[44] Numbers 16:40 *To be a memorial unto the children of Israel, that no stranger, which is not of the seed of Aaron, come near to offer incense before the LORD; that he be not as Korah, and as his company: as the LORD said to him by the hand of Moses.*

- Anyone not of the seed of AARON could come and offer incense on the altar before the LORD.

[45] Deuteronomy 16:21 *Thou shalt not plant thee a grove of any trees near unto the altar of the LORD thy God, which thou shalt make thee.*

- God doesn't want any GROVES of trees near his altar. Groves of trees were used to worship false gods.
- That would give a bad appearance if they were doing things like the false god worshippers.

- In the Bible, there is an example of King Solomon bowing down and praying before the altar.

This Altar Was An Actual Biblical Altar Used The Way God Intended

[46] 1 Kings 8:54 And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven.

- But look, this was an ACTUAL ALTAR being used in the way God intended it to be used.
- They offered burnt offerings upon this ACTUAL BIBLICAL ALTAR.
- King Solomon didn't bow down to anything else but God.

[47] Isaiah 65:2-3 I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts; 3 A people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face; that sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense upon altars of brick;

- God doesn't like ALTARS made of brick. He already said so and he doesn't change his mind about that.

[48] Isaiah 65:4-5 Which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments, which eat swine's flesh, and broth of abominable things is in their vessels; 5 Which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou. These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day.

- These preachers who love their altar calls won't read the actual Bible and see what God says.
- They proclaim to represent God but they won't take a look at ALTARS within the Bible.
- They would rather just do what the other preachers are doing because it makes a good show.
- It pleases people. So they'll keep going. Question them about it, and they'll be just like verse 5 right there.
- "Come not near to me for I am holier than thou." Hey, don't question me. I am the great preacher.
- That's what they're like. That's why I love the Bible. It tells you right there.
- "Don't you question my altar calls." Well, yes, I will because they aren't Biblical at all.

[49] Jeremiah 17:2 Whilst their children remember their altars and their groves by the green trees upon the high hills.

- The children remember the altar calls. This is talking about worshipping false gods.
- When you get this tradition of altar calls going, it's like you can't stop. The children even remember it.
- When they look for a church, if the church doesn't have altar calls, they won't go there.
- They say, "Well, altar calls MUST be a part of church." Seriously, that's what people think.
- They get accustomed to the traditions of men, and they won't change.

[50] Colossians 2:8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

- Altar calls and invitations are not after CHRIST.
- When one decides to keep going with traditions of men over teaching from the Bible, that's a great sin.
- That's called idolatry. That's putting tradition over God, and God hates that.

- Do you want to hear a warning from God Almighty? These aren't my words. They're his words.

[51] Ezekiel 6:4-5 And your altars shall be desolate, and your images shall be broken: and I will cast down your slain men before your idols. 5 And I will lay the dead carcasses of the children of Israel before their idols; and I will scatter your bones round about your altars.

- They had false altars. They weren't altars to God. The altars in churches today are FALSE ALTARS!!!
- Do you see what happened to them in Ezekiel Chapter 6? God isn't playing around with his altar.

[52] Ezekiel 43:18-19 And he said unto me, Son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD; These are the ordinances of the altar in the day when they shall make it, to offer burnt offerings thereon, and to sprinkle blood thereon. 19 And thou shalt give to the priests the Levites that be of the seed of Zadok, which approach unto me, to minister unto me, saith the Lord GOD, a young bullock for a sin offering.

- If you keep reading in Ezekiel 43, God gives specific instructions for his altar.
- If you don't follow them, you're in trouble. He's going to be angry.

[53] Ezekiel 43:26-27 Seven days shall they purge the altar and purify it; and they shall consecrate themselves. 27 And when these days are expired, it shall be, that upon the eighth day, and so forward, the priests shall make your burnt offerings upon the altar, and your peace offerings; and I will accept you, saith the Lord GOD.

- God didn't accept them until they did what he said. It wasn't God's altar until they did what he wanted.

[54] Hosea 8:11-13 Because Ephraim hath made many altars to sin, altars shall be unto him to sin. 12 I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing. 13 They sacrifice flesh for the sacrifices of mine offerings, and eat it; but the LORD accepteth them not; now will he remember their iniquity, and visit their sins: they shall return to Egypt.

- Are the commandments of God a strange thing to these altar call people?
- He's making it pretty clear to me. He says, "Oh, you want to act like you represent me and act like my laws are a strange thing."
- For example, question the altar call and they preachers will act like you're the strange one.
- No, they are the ones doing the strange altar calls. Not you. "The Lord accepteth them not."

God's Altars Were Used For Burnt Offerings

The altar is used for burnt offerings within the Bible. It's used to burn things as offerings to God.

- This was a picture of things to come.
- The burnt offerings were a picture of the Lamb of God being sacrificed.
- We don't do burnt offerings any more because JESUS IS THE BURNT OFFERING.
- Jesus is the Lamb of God. His soul went to hell as a burnt offering for our sins.

[55] Hebrews 9:8-9 The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: 9 Which was a figure for the time then present, in

which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;

[56] Hebrews 9:10-11 *Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. 11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;*

[57] Hebrews 9:12-13 *Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. 13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:*

[58] Hebrews 9:14 *How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*

- We don't need to do altar calls. We don't need to put on a show to get more people. We will not do that.
- We don't even need an altar any more. We can offer up ourselves to God any time and any day.
- I want you to see one last set of Scripture from the book of Malachi before we close.

[59] Malachi 1:6-7 *A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name? 7 Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the LORD is contemptible.*

- This area up here isn't an altar. We need to stop calling it an altar. It's not.
- God says, "Where's my honor? Where's my fear? You despise my name and my words."

[60] Malachi 1:10 *Who is there even among you that would shut the doors for nought? neither do ye kindle fire on mine altar for nought. I have no pleasure in you, saith the LORD of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand.*

- God is very serious about HIS ALTAR.
- Don't call your fake altars the altar of God where you can do business with God.
- And I read you that Scripture because it leads up to this right here.

Don't Cry On God's Altar

[61] Malachi 2:13 *And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth it with good will at your hand.*

- What do the churches have up at the altars? The tissues for crying.
- But yet GOD DOESN'T WANT TEARS ON HIS ALTAR. He doesn't want tears, weeping, and crying out.
- He even says, "You've done it again. You've covered the altar of the Lord with tears."
- "You've covered it with weeping and with crying out." God said, "DON'T DO THAT."
- Is that not clear enough? To me, it doesn't get any more clear than that.

- I hope you see the truth about the altar today. We could do 10 sermons with all the verses in the Bible.
- If you think I'm wrong today, get your Bible out and start searching the Scriptures. You'll see.

Question everything that's being done in churches. Why has the church turned into rock concerts?

- Why has the church turned into entertainment? Why are you doing altar calls?
- Why are you splitting people up into Sunday School classes? CHURCH IS CONGREGATION.
- That means you're supposed to stay together. No division.
- No teaching different doctrines in different classes. No sending children out so they can play.
- They need to hear the word of God. Question everything in churches. Compare it to the Bible.

Let's pray.