

IS YOUR RELIGION REALLY YOURS? #1

INTRODUCTION: Acts 26:1-5; Gal 1:10-14

- A. Religion has to do with faith in God, love of God, hope of eternal life, conviction, moral standards, etc.
- B. Our religion has a tremendous bearing on our lives. It affects what we do on the Lord's day, and every other day of the week.
- C. Everyone's religion is founded on some basis. So we ask: "Is your religion really yours?" "On what basis is your religion founded?"
- D. In this lesson look at wrong things on which people's religion is based.
- E. Next lesson considers passages teaching our religion must be ours.

DISCUSSION:

I. MANY PEOPLE'S RELIGION IS ORGANIZATIONAL.

- A. People act and believe as their church wants them to
 - 1. Don't drink because their church doesn't allow or vice-a-versa
 - 2. Their moral standards are what their church teaches.
 - 3. Their faith in doctrinal realm, is what their church teaches.
 - a. If their church baptizes infants, that's what they hold to, but never stop to ask, "Why are we doing this?"
 - b. If another says, "You shouldn't do that?" they say, "My church teaches it and that's what I'm a member of." They say, "If you can get my church to change, I'll change."
 - 4. Even presence for worship might be because church requires it, not because of their own convictions or real love for God.
 - 5. If change churches - change to what churches it teaches.
 - a. If the church to which they have changed has a loose standard, or a strict standard, they just adapt to it.
 - b. If it has different doctrines, they just adopt them.
 - c. The whole basis of their religion is organizational.
- B. Some churches seek to convert people to their organization.
- C. The New Testament converts people to the Lord.
 - 1. Personal belief in personal Being Jhn 20:30-31; 1Jhn 1:1-4
 - 2. Personal confession with one's own mouth Rom. 10:9-10
 - 3. Personal acceptance of personal atonement of Christ for personal sins. (Its individual) Acts 2:38; 3:26..

II. MANY PEOPLE'S RELIGION IS FOUNDED ON FAMILY.

- A. Based on one member of family - father or mother other relative.
 - 1. All done based on that family member's faith & love for God
 - 2. He/She does studying for all. For a question or help on Bible lesson, or some spiritual problem, they go to that member.
 - 3. Therefore they do not have their own religion.
 - a. After young people leave home, they become unfaithful.
 - b. Have no root themselves. Lk 8:13
 - c. When problems in church arise who will these young people follow? Not capable of making own decisions since they simply adopted the religion of someone else.

- B. Problem of "third generation Christian." Young couple converted out of denominationalism and suffer for their stand for the truth.
 - 1. Their children's religion handed to them - haven't paid the price for truth, and so are weaker than their parents.
 - 2. Third generation who had weak parents usually weaker than parents. So, third generation are very weak Jud 2:8-12
- C. In religion of Christ, one must follow Lord Himself, not family.
 - 1. Religion based on family, worthless Matt 10:37-38; Lk 14:26-27
 - 2. Accepting truth may cause loss or family Mk 10:29-30

III. MANY PEOPLE'S RELIGION BASED ON SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

- A. Their religion leans upon the faith, hope, and love of some person.
- B. People build friendships and social ties in churches. They follow outward requirements because they don't want fellow members to think unfavorably of them
- C. Churches use social ties to pressure people into submission.
 - 1. Cults use social pressure to bring members into subjection
 - 2. First, establish strong friendship & social tie to new convert.
 - 3. Later, brow-beat, use guilt trips, etc., on members
- D. Some people, through social pressures, are half-converted.
 - 1. Converted on a few doctrinal points, but not to "Word"
 - 2. Went thru motions of obeying but not converted to the Lord
 - 3. Paul said "follow me" but it was as he followed the Lord 1Cor 4:15-17; 11:1
 - 4. Work is not out of true love and devotion for the Lord. Matt 23:5; 2Cor 10:12; Jhn 12:42-43
 - b. Many will never have the proper faith because of their undue regard from their fellow men. John 5:44
 - c. Remember, Lord knows those who are His 2Tim 2:19

CONCLUSION:

- A. What about you? Is your religion really yours? You cannot depend on someone else's faith, conviction, hope, love, or whatever.
- B. It's time for personal examination by each of us 2Cor 13:5
- C. Each of us must ask regarding our religion.
 - 1. Is the faith that I have really my faith?
 - 2. Do I have my own love for God that will see me through trials?
 - 3. Are my moral standards my own personal conviction?
 - 4. With problems in the church, can I honestly and fairly look at both sides and make my own decision on the basis of the Scriptures?
- D. If you are not a Christian, we urge you to personally make up your own mind regarding it. We urge you, personally, to repent of your sins, to confess Jesus as your Lord, and be baptized for the remission of your sins.
- E. Next time we will look at this from the positive side, looking at scriptures which show our religion must be our own.