



Calvary of Albuquerque

Follow Jesus But Don't Be Religious - John 7:14-24

From the Series, Believe:879

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MESSAGE SUMMARY

Jesus clashed with religious leaders more than any other group of people. He went against their spiritual grain and challenged their legalistic ideas. Christ made it clear that He hadn't come to establish a new religion but rather to show the way to God His Father. He didn't give people another "system of beliefs and practices"; instead He said that He Himself was the way, truth, and life. In this public confrontation, we learn how to follow Christ in truth and not be religious.

OUTLINE

- I. Doctrine is Essential (vv. 14-16)
 - A. Jesus Teaches
 - B. The Jews Marvel
- II. Discernment is Crucial (vv. 17-18, 24)
 - A. Commanded
 - B. Explained
- III. Religion Can be Harmful (vv. 19-24)
 - A. It Justifies Evil
 - B. It Minimizes Good



Making it more than a Sermon:

1. Why do you think that most people are more comfortable being part of a religious system rather than following Christ personally?
2. What was the source of confusion among the people concerning Jesus? Are there any parallels with our modern time?
3. Can you think of an example of how lack of discernment has hurt someone?

DETAILED NOTES

Religion is typically about doing certain things or believing a conformed set of ideals, rather than having a relationship with God through His Son. Religion is a set of beliefs and practices usually involving devotional and ritual observances. Following Jesus may involve those things, but they aren't the core. Jesus Christ is God's refreshing solution to man's failed religious attempts. According to E. Stanley Jones, Christianity has creeds, but is not a creed; it has rites, but is not a rite; it has institutions, is not an institution. Christianity is Christ and Our response to Him.

86% of the world population is religious. There isn't anything God hates more than religion. Religion is my coming to God on my own terms. Christianity is my coming to God on His terms, or rather God coming to us. Karl Marx said religion is the opiate of the masses. Jesus is the Savior of the world. God gave only one religion to man: Judaism. Jesus fulfilled that system - Matthew 5:17.

In this text, there is a clash between Jesus Christ and the religious elite about truth itself. It is the Feast of Tabernacles (one of three annual convocation feasts, males within 20 miles had to be there, celebration of God's provision during their 40 years in the desert).

- I. Doctrine is Essential (vv. 14-16)
 - A. Jesus Teaches
 1. First thing Jesus does when he goes to the temple (not heal, not present Himself as a political king, not feed the multitude).
 2. Teaches doctrine (didasko - instruct, teach; didache - doctrine)
 - a. Jesus said to teach 36 times in the Gospels.
 - b. Jesus called Teacher 47 times. (didaskalos - teacher)

- c. "Doctrine" is mentioned 33 times in the New Testament
 - 3. Doctrine is important - Hosea 4:6; Acts 2:42; 1 Timothy 4:1
 - 4. People live without consulting the "manual" until something is broken.
 - 5. When truth is sidelined, it's often replaced by religion.
 - 6. Many people aren't interested in teaching - 2 Timothy 4:3
- B. The Jews Marvel
 - 1. "How does this man know letters" derogatory
 - 2. Letters-grammata-rabbinical study of Old Testament writings
 - 3. Hung up on letters, looking at the Word
- II. Discernment is Crucial (vv. 17-18, 24)
 - A. Commanded
 - 1. Judge a righteous judgment
 - 2. Don't harshly judge another person's motive - Matthew 7:1
 - 3. Evaluate what you hear; a spiritual man makes judgments about everything
1 Corinthians 2:15
 - 4. Voicing the truth can get you called "judgmental" (i.e., Elijah, Paul, John, Jude)
 - 5. Discernment is necessary; False prophets will come to you in sheep's clothing Matthew 7:15
 - a. You don't have to look for them
 - b. They will be disguised as sheep
 - B. Explained - Deuteronomy 4:29; 1 Chronicles 28:9
 - 1. Willing mind
"95% of knowing the will of God consists in being willing to do it before you know what it is" - Donald Grey Barnhouse
 - 2. Worshipful heart
- III. Religion Can be Harmful (vv. 19-24)
 - A. It Justifies Evil
 - 1. The Pharisees and Sadducees prided themselves on keeping the Law, but they were willing to kill Jesus in the name of religion
 - 2. Crusades- Christians killed in the name of religion
 - 3. September 11, 2001- radical Islam destroy Americans in the name of religion
 - B. It Minimizes Good
 - 1. Jesus said "I did one work" referring to healing the man at the Pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath
 - 2. Argument from lesser to greater "mutilate babies on the 8th day, I heal on the Sabbath"
 - 3. "We have just *enough* religion to *make us hate*, but not *enough to make us* love one another," Jonathan Swift.

Comparison of Religion to the Gospel

- 1. Religion emphasizes the outward; the gospel emphasizes the inward- Matthew 6:5-13
- 2. Religion emphasizes prohibition; the gospel emphasizes freedom - John 8:32
- 3. Religion sets up barriers; the gospel breaks barriers down- Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:11; Matthew 11:38
- 4. Religion says, "work your way"; Jesus says, "I am the way" John 14:6

Greek Terms: didasko - instruct, teach; didache - doctrine; didaskalos - teacher; grammata - rabbinical study of the Old Testament writings

Figures Referenced: E. Stanley Jones; Karl Marx, Donald Grey Barnhouse, Pope Urban II, Jonathan Swift

Cross References: Deuteronomy 4:29; 1 Chronicles 28:9; Hosea 4:6; Matthew 5:17; Matthew 6:5-13; Matthew 7:1; Matthew 7:15; Matthew 11:38; John 8:32; John 14:6; Acts 2:42; 1 Corinthians 2:15; Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3: 11; 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 4:3