

THE KIND OF RELIGION WE DO NOT NEED

2 Peter 2:17-18

Intro: Many people want what they do not need. Our wants often get us into big trouble. One of the reasons that Mississippi is the most obese state in America is because we eat what we want, not what we need.

Folks, today, want a kind of religion that they do not need. They want a feel good experience when what they need is conviction of sin. They want story telling when what they need is expository Bible preaching.

What kind of religion is it that we do not need?

1. We do not need a religion that cannot not satisfy the spiritual thirst of our soul.
2. We do not need a religion that has not words of spiritual life.
3. We do not need a religion that does not give freedom from sin.
4. We do not need religion that does not change us within.

I. Vs. 17, WE DO NOT NEED A RELIGION THAT CANNOT SATISFY THE SPIRITUAL THIRST OF OUR SOUL

A. Peter describes these false teachers as “wells without water.” A dry well has nothing to offer the thirsty, sin-sick soul. Imagine a traveler who is thirsty. He has been made aware of a spring up ahead; and with anticipation, heads toward it only to be disappointed when he finds the spring has dried up.

1. Weary, sin-sick and spiritually thirsty souls need an Oasis in the desert world of sin. May God help us to be an Oasis in a dry and thirsty land. May we be Palm Trees that gather together to be a blessing and a help to the weary (Psalm 92:12-14).

2. The false teachers of this world may be giving people what they want, but they are not giving them what they need. They have nothing to offer the sin-sick thirsty soul. False religion may fill an emotional and social need, but it can never give living water. “They promise a gospel and in the end have nothing to offer the thirsty soul.” (Barclay 334)

3. Only Jesus can satisfy the thirsty soul.
 - a. When we drink from the water that Jesus gives, we have everlasting life (John 4:14).

- b. The false religions of the world have only broken cisterns that can never bring spiritual satisfaction. God said of Israel in Jeremiah 2:13: “For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and have hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that cannot hold water.”

c. Jesus invites thirsty sinners to come and drink from wells of living water. (Isaiah 55:1; John 7:37).

“The world may try to satisfy
That longing in your soul.
You may search the world over
But you’ll be just like before.
You’ll never find true satisfaction
Until you’ve found the Lord,
For only Jesus can satisfy your soul.

Chorus:

Only Jesus can satisfy your soul.
Yes only He can change your heart
and make you whole.
He’ll give you peace you never knew,
Sweet joy and love and heaven, too.
Only Jesus can satisfy your soul. Lanny Wolfe

B. “Clouds that are carried with a tempest.” This speaks of disappointment. False teaching and the resultant false religion bring emptiness and discontent. Many are discouraged by easy believism and sacerdotalism. Only the gospel message of Christ death, burial and resurrection can give hope of eternal life.

1. False teachers are clouds without water. Jude 12 says: “...clouds they are without water, carried about by winds.” They are squalls that do not materialize.

a. They have a lot of noise, a lot of emotion and drama, yet they are empty clouds. They are not showers of spiritual blessings, just thunder and lightning. The farmer who needs the rain is saddened when the showers pass him by.

b. Not only are the lost disappointed; the sheep who desire to be fed from the Word go away empty. John Milton (1608-1674) wrote:

“The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But swoln with wind, and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread:
Besides the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said,
But that two handed engine at the door,
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more.”

(1639)

c. There are a number of clouds about us in the

religious world today: “Tempestuous clouds that raise storms and trouble the peace of the air. Black clouds that turn day into night by their errors. Wandering clouds that never keep any station. Dissembling clouds, that promise moisture and have none. Malicious clouds, that intend nothing but mischief.” (Adams 528)

2. Thankfully, there are clouds that bring showers of blessing. There are shadowing clouds and there are showering clouds. We are to thank God for the ones that bring showers of blessing.

C. “To whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever.” The heretics are to be sent to hell and destruction. Hell is reserved for such as live for the flesh, bilking the guidable.

1. Jude describes these false teachers and their doom; “Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.” (Jude 13)

2. Like the false teachers, the man who rejects the Gospel message and rejects the Christ of the Gospel will spend eternity in hell.

3. We not need a religion that cannot satisfy the thirsty soul.

II. Vs. 18, WE DO NOT NEED A RELIGION WITH EMPTY WORDS

A. “For when they speak great swelling words of vanity.” These swelling words are inflated with hot air. With oratorical skills and expressive arrogance, they impress and sway the people.

1. The preacher of the Gospel is to communicate, not manipulate.

2. The man of God is to preach the cross of Christ (1 Cor. 18-26).

B. “They allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness.” The Greek word for allure is *deleazo* meaning “to catch by bait, to beguile by blandishments, to entice.”

1. False teachers allure people by appealing to the cravings of the flesh. That is why there is no such thing as Christian Rock Music!

2. False teachers appeal to the human ego. I am all for a good healthy self-esteem. Yet, we must understand that we are sinful men and women in need of God’s help. Psalm 8:4 says: “What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man that thou visitest him?” Isaiah 64:6 says: “But we are all as an unclean thing, and all of our righteousnesses are as filthy rags...”

3. We need messages that appeal to the heart not the head and the flesh.

a. Folks need to be told that there is a hell to shun and

a heaven to gain. False prophets do not want to put anyone on a guilt trip. We need to be confronted with our sin and repent.

b. Total depravity is hardly mentioned in churches today, but that does not do away with the fact that man is dead in trespasses and sin until he is regenerated (Eph. 2:1; Titus 3:5).

4. "Wantonness" means "unbridled lust, outrageousness, shamelessness." Much of what takes place in the many modern churches today falls into this category.

C. "Allure . . . those that were clean escaped from them who live in error."

1. Cults are like parasites; they live off of someone else. Every new convert is in danger of being taken in by false religion.

2. "Like carnivorous animals that prey on the weakest numbers of a herd, so the false teachers focus their attention on the recent converts" (Kistemaker 308)

a. "Those who live in error" speaks of the unsaved. These converts who have just escaped the enticement of the world are now being enticed by the false prophets to go back into fleshly practices.

b. Every new convert needs to get grounded in the faith.

D. We do not need a religion with empty words; we need the words of life.

Conclusion: Steer clear of the false prophets and their fleshly appeals.

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