

IS YOUR RELIGION REALLY YOURS? #2

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

- A. Religion involves: one's relation to God, love of God, hope of eternal life, moral standards, and the like.
- B. We studied in our last lesson
 - 1. One's religion should not be organizational
 - 2. It should not be based on family loyalty
 - 3. It should not be founded upon social relationships
- C. In this lesson we want to study the positive side, and answer the questions, "How can I make my religion mine?"
- D. This is a broad subject, but we will look at a few passages which show that religion must indeed be a personal thing.

DISCUSSION:

I. Gen 48:15 HE FED "ME" - NOT "US"

- A. His own personal God - Remember, too, that Jacob was a third-generation believer
- B. "Their God." Heb 11:13-16
 - 1. Over & over, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob Ex 3:6,15
 - 2. This can be said of us 2Cor 6:16-18
 - 3. God must be my God - my Father. Acts 17:28; Heb 12:9-11

II. Psalm 23 THE LORD MUST BE "MY" SHEPHERD

- A. It's not enough that the Lord is my parents' shepherd or brother so and so's shepherd, the Lord must be my shepherd
- B. Why does the 23rd Psalm have such an appeal to people?
 - 1. It is acclaimed to be the most favorite piece of literature ever written. Why is that so? What's the special appeal?
 - 2. Is it not the personal nature of the Psalm. If it had said, "The Lord is our shepherd. We shall not want" it would not have had its marvelous appeal.

III. Matt 22:35-38 LOVE THE LORD "THY" GOD

- A. The word "thy" (you) here is singular in the Greek
 - 1. It must be my love for my God.
 - 2. I can't go to heaven on someone else's love for God
- B. From a Greek interlinear: "Thou shalt love the Lord the God of thee, with all the heart of thee, with all the soul of thee, and with all the mind of thee."
- C. My own personal relationship to God is what counts.

IV. 1Pet 3:15 GIVE ANSWER FOR HOPE IN "YOU"

- A. Text didn't say be ready to give a defense for what your church believes, or why brother so and so has hope.
- B. Each one must have this hope. You have hope. I have hope and Each one must be ready to explain why we have this hope
 - 1. Some will ask: "Why are you suffering these things?"
 - 2. Look at the context - verses 14, 16

- 3. Difference in: What is your faith? And, Why do you believe?
- C. Each one must have personal convictions, and our hope must be built upon those convictions. 1Pet 1:3-4

V. Gen 39:7-9 "HOW CAN I DO THIS GREAT WICKEDNESS..."

- A. Joseph's brothers hated him and sold him as slave into Egypt
- B. Yet, he had his own moral standards, not his father's.
 - 1. Depending on how long he had been in Potiphar's house, he was 17 to 19 years old. Gen 37:2
 - 2. How many this age stand firm when tempted like this?
- C. Parents must set bounds and restrictions. However, within time, children must come to see that these are God's restrictions 2Tim 1:5
 - 1. Parents allowing children to make own decisions far too early
 - 2. Very young children allowed to choose type of clothing

VI. 2Tim 2:15 "SHEW THYSELF APPROVED."

- A. Concerned about what God thinks of us, not man
- B. For salvation must take heed to ourselves first. 1Tim 4:16; Acts 2:40; Phil 2:12
 - 1. Each person must personally strive to enter in Lk 13:23-24
 - 2. "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God 2Tim 2:15

VII. Phil. 3:13-15 PAUL'S USE OF PERSONAL PRONOUN "I"

- A. This was Paul's own personal goal
 - 1. It does me no good just because it is the goal of the church or my family to go to heaven, it must be my own personal goal
 - 2. We must patiently continue to do good. Rom 2:7
 - 3. Eventually, we will reap, if we follow our goal Gal 6:9
- B. Let's work so the day of death is better than the day of our birth Eccl 7:1
 - 1. When you were born, you cried, and the world rejoiced. Live so when you die, the world cries, and you rejoice
 - 2. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord Rev 14:13

CONCLUSION:

- A. Again, we ask, "Is your religion really yours?"
 - 1. God must be my God; He must be my Shepherd
 - 2. It must be my love for God, with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my mind
 - 3. There must be a hope within me that is mine
 - 4. I must have my own moral standards
 - 5. I must show myself approved to God
 - 6. It must have my own personal goal
- B. In being and doing this I begin to understand and experience what religion is all about.