

Man's Made Religion: Cont.

By Greg Rangel

In Matthew 23 Jesus deals with the truth behind man's made religion. Speaking to the Pharisees, Jesus boldly and bluntly tells the Scribes and Pharisees why they act the way they do. Due to that, these religious Jews hated Jesus. That in itself is a common reaction from religious people when you speak the truth to them. The truth exposes them and they hate it.

Matthew 24:4 Jesus tells His disciples that *"they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers."* Jesus once again is describing religion at its best. Religion will tell you to do this and that. They say that you have to observe all of the doctrines and the sacraments of the church. By doing that, they are placing such heavy burdens on their faithful.

Jesus had already rebuked these religious men for their false doctrine. In Matthew 15: 7-9 Jesus said, *"Ye hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."* Man's religion is such. They bind heavy burdens on their faithful. It is a bunch of "thou shalt not do this, and thou shalt not do that..." It is a bunch of man made commandments that they placed on the shoulders of others so that they might observe them.

Have you ever asked religious people why they do what they do? And why they believe what they believe? The majority of them do not know why they believe what they believe. They will say things like, "because my parents taught me like this," or, "because this is our tradition." But they will not be able to give a clear biblical explanation of why they believe what they believe. Most people only believe because that is the religion that they received from their parents. Even though they believe with all their heart, and might be very sincere about their religious beliefs, they do not know if their religious views go in accordance with what the Word of God teaches because they have never taken the time to study the Bible for themselves.

I always say though, why be religious and believe in tradition when it is not found in Scripture? If we are to believe in something and place our eternal destiny in that, let us believe in what the Bible says. Don't you think that makes sense?

1 Peter 1:18-19 says; *"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:"* Peter understood that a person will believe in the traditions that was handed down to them by their parents. But he also understood that those traditions do not save us. It is the precious blood of Jesus that was shed that saves us.

Peter wrote that years after the death of Jesus Christ. But why do people still not believe that it is only by the precious blood of Christ? Why do people still believe that it is by the religious

traditions that was handed down by parents? Well, unfortunately they believe such things because they fail to read the Bible for themselves as noted previously.

Jesus Christ came to save us from our sins through His precious blood, and not through religion and its traditions. In order to go to heaven immediately after death, a person must repent of his/her sins, confess Jesus as Lord and Savior, and believe in his/her heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, and not through some religious traditions or being a member of some religious organization as man teaches. Paul clearly explained that in the book of Romans. Paul wrote; *“But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation”* Romans 10:8-9).