

Luke

See Jesus

The Danger of Man-Made Religion

Luke 11:37-54; Romans 9:30-10:4

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / March 6, 2022

Man-made religion—far more than atheism, persecution, or any political structure—will keep you from seeing yourself and Jesus the way you should.

If you're caught up in man-made religion:

I. You'll Be Shocked and Offended by A Lot of What Jesus Does and Says

Luke 11:38 “The Pharisee was astonished to see that He did not first wash before dinner.”

Luke 11:45 “One of the lawyers answered Him, ‘Teacher, in saying these things You insult us also.’”

This word “lawyer” refers to someone who’s an expert in the Old Testament Scriptures. These were the scholars and theologians of the day who studied more than anyone else.

II. You'll Be Missing the Key to Real Wisdom and Life

Luke 11:52 “Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter yourselves, and you hindered those who were entering.”

Jesus is referring to Himself as the key to unlocking Scripture. If you miss Jesus, you'll miss the whole point of the Bible – both the Old and New Testaments.

John 5:39-40 “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about Me, ⁴⁰ yet you refuse to come to Me that you may have life.”

You can read the Bible and still miss Jesus. It was happening then and is still happening today.

See Romans 9:30-10:4

III. You'll Be Busy and Zealous for All the Wrong Things

Romans 10:2 “For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.”

They were so busy doing God stuff that they missed God’s Son when He arrived in the flesh!

Zeal for God is a good thing, but can still be a dangerous place to be if it's not connected to knowledge of God. In other words, you could be zealous and sincerely wrong about who God really is and it'll land you in hell.

As you read through the Gospels, you'll see how the Jews—who fought with Jesus so much—weren't living like there's *no* God, but they still didn't *know* God! They were so consumed with their own religious fervor, activity, and service to God, thinking it would win them favor with God.

There's no human being who has ever earned any grace points and there's nothing another human being could ever do for you or give to you that will help you in your standing before God! We're all equally bankrupt before God and must flee to Christ!

IV. You'll Be Guilty of Trying to Stay in Control

Romans 10:3 “For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness.”

This free offer of the Gospel cuts the very feet out from under our biggest sin, which is pride! You have to swallow your pride because you can't embrace the Gospel without trampling across your pride and self-righteousness.

The human heart does not want to be helpless and submit to the righteousness of God because we crave a system of works that can be tracked, measured, qualified, and compared to others.

You cannot submit to the righteousness of God while at the same time seeking to establish your own. The two are mutually exclusive; one rules out the other.

People who are busy trying to establish their own righteousness cannot stop, drop to their knees, lift their hands and say, “God give me what I could never come up with on my own: Your righteousness, because of Your Son, Jesus Christ!”

Romans 9:30 “What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is **by faith...**”

Romans 9:32 “Why? Because they did not pursue it **by faith**, but as if it were based on works...”

“If you slip; if you do more than stumble but in fact fall flat on your face, then you can be certain that pretty soon your enemy will submit a bill to heaven for your failure. Don't worry. Go immediately to Christ as your advocate, and He will plead for you before God your judge against the devil your adversary. Don't worry about how bad your failure was; instead, let it move you to humility and the realization of your own weakness, but then stop thinking about it, for Christ will use it for glory. In fact, the angels will shout out loud to see Him prove your innocence. After all, this is Christ's job: He is our advocate, and He takes joy in winning His people's freedom from Satan's charges.”

~ Paul Bunyan, *The Riches of Bunyan*, p. 117