

Mt. Lebanon Church

Sermon

5.7.2023

Please look up and read all verses in their entirety. I have only written partial verses.

Make your own notes, write down other scriptures that you run across while studying, write down questions that you may have or comments as well. Allow the Holy Spirit to reveal to you that he would have you to see through the study of God's word.

Do We Practice Salvation or Religion

Galatians 6: 7 – 10

Mankind believes that salvation is found in religion. There are many who claim to follow a Christian religion, but they are not really followers of Christ. Christ did not come to this world to be the founder of a religion; he came into this world to save sinners.

1 Timothy 1: 15,....this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners....

Humanity feels that their salvation comes through a religion that is based upon balancing good deeds against the so-called bad deeds in their lives. The word of God tells us that we are sinful, and that no good deeds of our own will save us from the wrath of God against sin.

Proverbs 11: 21,....be assured, an evil person will not go unpunished, but the offspring of the righteous will be delivered....

The popular notion of humanity is to try to do as many good deeds as possible, and by doing so, God will balance this against our sinfulness, and forgive us. Nothing could be farther from the truth. This false idea comes from mans failure to understand the truth of Gods holy word.

Titus 3: 4 – 7,....the kindness and love of God our savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us....which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our savior....being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life....

Worldly goodness, kindness, honesty, and morality that we have accumulated cannot be used to pay off our debt of sin. These things are a Christians obligation of service, commanded unto us by God. When we sin, we are simply showing our inability to live up to a standard of holiness that God requires of us. No matter how popular the notion of human merit and religious good deeds might seem, it is not a pathway to heaven, but a pathway to an eternal condemnation in hell. Every person is accountable to God, every person is responsible to make the choice of accepting or rejecting the saving grace of Christ Jesus. There is no excuse for blindly following the pathway to destruction.

Matthew 7: 13 – 14,....Enter ye in at the strait gate, for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat....because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it....

Religion is what man thinks that when he is practicing it, he is doing good in his service to God. Salvation is what God does for mankind through his mercy and his grace. Religion clothes us in our own self-righteousness, salvation clothes us in the righteousness of God. Religion depends upon whether or not we are well behaved in this world. Salvation depends upon whether or not we are believing in Christ. God has given unto us eternal life through his Son, Christ, all we must do is believe.

Galatians 6: 7 – 9,....be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap....he that soweth to his flesh shall....reap corruption....he that soweth to the spirit shall....reap life everlasting....let us not be weary in well doing....in due season we shall reap if we faint not....

It is only through salvation that we are made alive in Christ, by faith believing in work on the cross. We have been bought with a price, redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. Being renewed by the spirit of God, we have been given many spiritual blessings and privileges, with one of many being an inheritance reserved in heaven for us. But not all choose a spiritual life in Christ. There are those that live a carnal Christian lifestyle through various religious activities, which are the ways of the world that do not glorify God but dishonors the mercy and grace of his salvation. Our life in Christ must not be set in religious activities, but in the truth of God's word. We are to daily examine our own lives to see if we are glorifying the one who died for us, so that we might live to him. We are to resist temptation and walk in spirit and in truth, and we are to consider other people and their need to find the truth of salvation over the false opportunities of religious good deeds. What we choose to sow will bring forth the fruit of that choice.

2 Corinthians 3: 5 – 6,....not that we are sufficient of ourselves....but our sufficiency is of God....who....hath made us able ministers....not of letter, but of the spirit, for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life....

Keeping rules and regulations that are self-imposed through various religions will only continue to keep us dependent on our own abilities and insufficiencies. When we realize that we can do nothing of ourselves, it is then that we will stop relying on oneself and start living in total dependence upon God. Self-importance, self-reliance, and self-esteem is what the world sees as the truth, but our life should be one that is important to God, one that is totally relying upon God, and one that is totally sufficient in God.

Philippians 2: 13,....for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure....

How important is it that we do not seek after good works by our own strength. When we seek after good works on our own, rather than by God working through us, these are works of the flesh, works of the old nature, works that God will not accept. All the works that we produce on our own will be burned, for there is no one that can produce good works apart from God.

1 Corinthians 3: 13 – 15,....every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every mans work of what sort it is ...

Only believers can produce the good works that God has prepared for us to do. When we submit our lives completely to the Holy Spirit, we will do the good works that God has prepared for us to do, because it is God who is working within us himself. Our work in God is all about sharing the truth of the gospel, and our reward is that God will allow us to see the salvation of those who we have been an example too. The loss of reward would be that others did not receive salvation, because we did not accurately share the gospel of Gods saving grace.

2 John 1: 8,....look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward....

God's love, one that we love one another, is instilled within us, and is an essential part of our Christian faith. Therefore, spiritual discernment, which means to obtain spiritual guidance and understanding, on our part is very important, because to live our lives without spiritual discernment can cause a believer to become deceived through temptation.

2 John 1: 7,....many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh....

Where the truth exists you will always find those that oppose the truth. Deception within the body of Christ must be quickly recognized as a form of religion and should not be considered salvation. We should always speak the truth of Gods word, and we should not compromise the truth by allowing deceptive teachings and practices to enter into our thoughts and our hearts. This is because there are those who practice a lot of religion, but do not live in their salvation. We must contend earnestly for the faith that was given unto us, and we should be careful not to compromise this truth, so that God might be glorified through our lives. Therefore, let us ask ourselves this question, do we practice religion, or do we grow in pour salvation, the choice is up to us.

Let us Pray.

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