

MEN'S SAYINGS VS. GOD'S WORD (1)

BY KEITH GREER

“Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.” {Colossians 2:8} Over and over in the Scriptures God placed warnings about ways in which men would use vain philosophy, deceit, lies, and human reasoning to rob us of our eternal reward. Jesus faced this same problem among the religious people in the first century: *“These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.” {Matthew 15:8,9}* Paul told the Corinthians their faith should be *“in the power of God and not the wisdom of men.” {1 Corinthians 2:5}* Today, we examine some of mankind's more familiar sayings and compare them with the truth revealed in God's word.

“One Church Is As Good As Another.” We are told that it doesn't matter which church one belongs to—or even if he attends one! Having many churches just means we have more options from which to choose. Then we mix into the fray the mega and community churches—many different faiths under one roof. Sadly, these large churches are changing the makeup of the religious landscape in our country. Just last week the Christian Church across the way had a “Trunk or Treat” night for Halloween. So many people came the police were directing the traffic around the building! Imagine, our Lord died on the cross so we could give candy to our children on Halloween and call it a religious gathering! Unbelievable! Can so many of these churches be wrong in their thinking? Some even believe we can be saved outside the church. God's book says, *“And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” {Matthew 16:18}* Jesus promised to build ONE church. *“For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.” {Ephesians 5:23}* He is the Savior of ONE body *{Ephesians 4:4}*. *“Praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.” {Acts 2:47}* The Lord only adds to HIS church. Once again, man's human reasoning fails the test of the Scriptures.

“All Folks Are Trying to Go to Heaven.” I wouldn't debate this point—in their own minds, all people want to go to heaven. The bigger question is: do all paths lead to the same destination? Will a person's honesty and sincerity blot out the fact that he may be on the wrong route to get to heaven? Good consciences and intentions do not make God's truth void. Funeral preachers often preach irreligious folks right through the pearly gates. Sadly, they make no mention of the need for God's righteousness in

their lives. Solomon reminded us that all things may not be as they appear {*Proverbs 14:12*}. Jesus said, “*Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'*” {*Matthew 7:21-23*} Why do people acknowledge Him as Lord and then disregard His teachings? {*Luke 6:46*} God instructs us to test the teachings of men {*1 John 4:1*}.

The Bible also states that it is equally important for each man to strive in a lawful way. “*And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.*” {*2 Timothy 2:5*} Does the authority of God’s word have any meaning in the thinking of these people whatsoever? “*And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.*” {*Colossians 3:17*}

Unfortunately, many people seem to think they can write their own rules as they go along. It is possible to be wrong about religion. Remember the apostle Paul. He was sincere, very religious, and full of zeal; yet he had to change. Why? He discovered that he was travelling in the wrong direction {*1 Timothy 1:15; Acts 26:9-11; Galatians 1:13-15*}. An honest person will not continue down the same path once he learns that it’s the wrong path. It’s difficult to correct this problem if one thinks ALL paths are the right ones! ***