

Which Church Is Right? - 02/03/19

TEXT – Matt. 13:24-30 *Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed . . .*

INTRO – What religion is right?

Approximately 95% of the world's population is categorized under seven world religions.

Christianity is listed as the world's largest religion when including Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Baptist, Pentecostal, Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopal, Lutheran, independent and non-denominational churches.

Islam is the world's second-largest religion with statistics citing between 1.3 billion and 1.6 billion Muslims worldwide.

Hinduism is considered the world's third-largest religion, with more than 900 million adherents. The vast majority of Hindus live in India.

Buddhism is the world's fourth-largest religion and includes approximately 360 million adherents. Originating in India, Buddhism is the dominant religion in many Asian countries, such as Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia.

Sikhism is considered the world's fifth-largest religion with approximately 30 million followers. It was founded in India in the fifteenth century.

Judaism includes approximately 15 million religious Jews around the world.

Baha'i ranks seventh in the list of most common religions. Originating in Iran, this religion claims more than five million adherents in 200 nations.

All religion can be divided into merely two categories:

1. Man must do something to attain eternal life.

2. Christ has already done all that is necessary for eternal life.

It's either do or done – Grace or works – My doing or God's doing

Only Christianity and Judaism base their beliefs on the Bible.

Muslim's claim to believe in the Torah, the writings of David, and the Gospel, however, when it comes to the Bible they consider it corrupted. God gave the restored truth to Mohammed which is written in the Qur'an.

The other religions base their beliefs on tradition and superstition.

These eastern religions closely resemble the pagan worship condemned in the Old Testament.

- Does it really matter what you believe as long as you believe something?
- Should all religions come together and cooperate?

I. Truth Is Found Only In The Bible

A. What is truth?

John 18:37-38 *Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this*

cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?

B. The Bible claims infallibility and that every word is inspired by God.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

2 Peter 1:20-21 *Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

John 17:17 *Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*

C. Some will turn away from the truth

2 Ti 4:3-4 *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.*

Rom 1:24-28 *Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:*

II. The Bible Reveals The Gospel

A. Bible terms

1. Salvation – 45 times in 43 verses

Acts 4:12 *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*

Romans 1:16 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

2. Save or (Saved) – 57 times in 57 verses)

Mat 18:11 *For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.*

1 Ti 1:15 *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.*

1 Ti 2:3-4 *For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.*

3. Born again – 3 times in 3 verses

John 3:3 *Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

John 3:7 *Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.*

1 Peter 1:23 *Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.*

4. Born of God – 7 times in 6 verses

1 Jn 5:1 *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.*

John 1:12-13 *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

John and Charles Wesley and a number of friends formed a “Holy Club.” They covenanted with each other to live disciplined Christian lives given to serious study of the Bible, prayer, fasting, and charitable works. Charles was the first of the group to be derisively labeled “Methodist” by fellow students. John Wesley wrote of his experience in Georgia, “I went to America to convert the Indians; but, oh, who shall convert me?”

The disappointing ‘missionary’ attempt by the Wesley brothers to serve God in America made them realize they themselves were in real need of salvation. Through the influence of Moravian believers and the teaching from Martin Luther on Galatians and Romans they realized salvation came only from Christ alone and by His grace.

5. Eternal life

John 3:15-16 *That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

6. Many other words describe salvation

Justification – regeneration – adoption - sanctification

B. God’s plan of salvation is clear in the Bible

Romans 10:9-13

III. Every Human Being Can Be Saved

A. God wants all men to be saved

1 Ti 2:4 *Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.*

B. You can know you are saved

1 John 5:11-13 *And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.*

C. By Grace Through Faith

Eph 2:8-9 *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

D. Faith in the substitutionary death of Christ produces salvation

John 5:24 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*

2 Co 5:17 *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature:*

CONCL – The last parable of Matthew 13 is the “dragnet” The angels will separate the wicked from the just!

Sailors were not noted for the refinement of their manners, but John Newton had a reputation for profanity, coarseness, and debauchery which even shocked many a sailor. John Newton was known as “The Great Blasphemer.” On the slave ship *The Greyhound* it had been thrashing about in the north Atlantic storm for over a week. Its canvas sails were ripped, and the wood on one side of the ship had been torn away and splintered. The sailors had little hope of survival, but they mechanically worked the pumps, trying to keep the vessel afloat. On the eleventh day of the storm, sailor John Newton was too exhausted to pump, so he was tied to the helm and tried to hold the ship to its course. From one o’clock until midnight he was at the helm.

His mother had prayed he would become a minister and had early taught him the Scriptures and Isaac Watts’ *Divine Songs for Children*.

Pro 1:24-31 *Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; 25 But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: 26 I also will laugh at your calamity; . . .*

That day at the helm, March 21, 1748, was a day Newton remembered ever after, for “On that day the Lord sent from on high and delivered me out of deep waters.” Many years later, as an old man, Newton wrote in his diary of March 21, 1805: “Not well able to write; but I endeavor to observe the return of this day with humiliation, prayer, and praise.” Only God’s amazing grace could and would take a rude, profane, slave-trading sailor and transform him into a child of God. Newton never ceased to stand in awe of God’s work in his life.

Newton lived to be eighty-two years old and continued to preach and have an active ministry until beset by fading health in the last two or three years of his life. Even then, Newton never ceased to be amazed by God’s grace and told his friends, “My memory is nearly gone; but I remember two things: That I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great Savior.”