

Just Enough Religion to Be Miserable

Some people have just enough religion to make themselves absolutely miserable. They know the truth but they don't live in conformity with it. So, guilt gnaws at their souls. Since ordinary folks don't like experiencing that distressing feeling, they'll do just about anything to get rid of it. For some, this means giving up on Christ and going back to the old life of sin. They sear their consciences (cf. 1 Tim. 4:1-2). Others realize the danger they are in and this leads them to repent (cf. Rom. 2:4).

God gave man a conscience for this very reason. Godly sorrow leads to repentance while worldly sorrow leads to death (cf. 2 Cor. 7:10). When a person is convicted of sin, his/her heart will be pricked either for the better or worse.

Tragically, there are too many today who try the path of compromise with one foot in the world and the other in the church. James speaks of the "double-minded" man in James 4:8. He wants the pleasures of the world while at the same time seeking to feel acceptable to God. This person is "unstable in all his ways" (James 1:8). Undivided loyalty to Jesus and His word keeps the Christian stable (cf. 2 Tim. 1:7,13).

In order to know the joy of the Christian life, one must have more than just a little religion. It requires growing "in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). God's word has great power for those who want to do what is right (cf. Heb. 4:12; 1 Thess. 2:13).

What direction are you headed spiritually? Are you fully dedicated to serving God or are you trying to serve two masters? "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon" (Matt. 6:24; cf. 16:24-27).

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