

Man's Made Religion IV **By Greg Rangel**

In Matthew 23 Jesus deals with the true motives behind man's made religions. All the doctrines that they have, all the traditions that they create, the religious clothing that they wear, and even the "religious show" that they put on, is done for a few reasons and Jesus points them out. He said that they do these things to be seen by men (vs. 5), to have the best seats in their church (vs. 6), to be greeted as a religious person by people out in the public places (vs. 7), and to have a great religious title (vs. 8).

Man has always sought to exalt himself through religion above everyone else. Religious man will usually cause a division between them and the common people, and they show that division through their religious attitude and clothing. But, they have it all wrong. There should be no separation between those that are in ministry and the rest of the folk. People are all the same. Whether people are in ministry or not, we are all the same. The Pharisees were separate from the rest because the rest were sinful and they thought that they were so righteous. It is the same thing that is taking place today and has taken place throughout history.

I believe that all these things occur because people have a wrong understanding of what ministry is and should be. Unfortunately many go into the ministry so that they might have a great and mighty and exalted position. They also join the ministry to try to become rich and have great possessions. Apart from that, they join the ministry so that they might be served, that is, so that they might govern over people. But Jesus said in Matthew 23:10-11 *"Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant."*

The teachings of Jesus Christ go against man's made religion. Man exalts himself through ministry. But Jesus taught us otherwise. Jesus said in Mark 10:42-45; *"... Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."*

Ministry is not about building a name for yourself. It is not about getting to be known, or becoming famous. It is not about exalting oneself. It is not about coming out with a book once a month with a great title and cover so that man can think that you are such an awesome pastor. Ministry is not about that. All of that is based on man's pride, exaltation, and a false view on ministry. Ministry is about serving the Lord so that He and He alone can receive the glory for everything that is done. Ministry is about having a genuine care and concern for the lost and sharing the gospel with them. Ministry is about teaching the Word of God so that His people can be edified spiritually, that is, grow in knowledge of God their Savior. Ministry is about being there for those in need. Ministry is about being a servant. James 1:27

says; "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Ministry is a calling that one receives from the Lord. Paul wrote; *"And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;"* (1 Timothy 1:12).

I believe that those who have such a misunderstanding of what ministry is should leave the ministry and do something else because through their misunderstanding of ministry they are causing the body of Jesus much harm because they are not fulfilling their calling because they do not see it as a calling, but as a glorious career. And that is one of the reasons that they fail to teach the Word of God from cover to cover. Also, that is why their ministry is money motivated. They are always looking for new ways to get faithful to give more.

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