

BE REAL

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“If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man’s religion is vain. 27 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.” (James 1:26-27)

INTRODUCTION

Three Truths about Religion

- 1. The word *religion* focuses on the external.**
- 2. The Bible teaches that we are not saved by “religion” or good works, but by having a relationship with God through faith in His Son Jesus Christ.**

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;” (Titus 3:5)

- 3. Religion marked by formality and tradition without power is useless.**

“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.” (2 Timothy 3:5)

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:10)

1. False Religion Is

A. A Form of _____

Definition: *seems*—to suppose, to appear, to be reputed

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness. 28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.”
(Matthew 23:27–28)

Quote: “Religion is us trying to prove to God how important we are—spirituality is being humble enough to allow God prove to us how important He is.”

Quote: “Religion today is not transforming the people – it is being transformed by the people. It is not raising the moral level of society—it is descending to society’s own level and congratulating itself that it has scored a victory because society is smiling, accepting its surrender.”—**A.W. Tozer**

B. An Uncontrolled _____

“Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!” (James 3:5)

Five Evil Tongues Listed in the Bible

1. Lying—*not telling the truth*

“Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.”
(Ephesians 4:25)

Quote: “He who tells little lies, will soon think nothing of great ones, for the principle is the same.”

—**C.H. Spurgeon**

2. Slander—*whispering, defamation*

“And the men, which Moses sent to search the land, who returned, and made all the congregation to murmur against him, by bringing up a slander upon the land,”
(Numbers 14:36)

3. Talebearing—*gossiping, meddling in others’ secrets*

“He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.” (Proverbs 20:19)

4. Sowing Discord—*creating arguments and conflict*

“These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: 17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, 18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, 19 A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.” (Proverbs 6:16–19)

5. Corrupt Speech—*profanity, sinful topics, crude speech*

“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.” (Ephesians 4:29)

- T** Is It True?
- H** Is It Helpful?
- I** Is It Inspiring?
- N** Is It Necessary?
- K** Is It Kind?

2. False Religion Is _____

A. Deceives the _____

Quote: “Any response to the gospel that chooses not to include obedience is self-deception.”

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” (1 John 1:8)

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? 10 I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.” (Jeremiah 17:9–10)

B. It Is _____

NO REST IN FALSE RELIGION

“For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:30)

NO REWARD IN FALSE RELIGION

“Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.” (Matthew 6:1)

3. Real Religion Is Lived in _____

A. _____ Service

“What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, 16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? 17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.” (James 2:14–17)

“But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? 18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.” (1 John 3:17–18)

B. _____ Service

“As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: 15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;” (1 Peter 1:14–15)

Quote: “I don’t have to worry about keeping the light shining, I just have to keep the lamp clean.”—**Bobby Roberson**

CONCLUSION _____

Quote: “You can have tons of religion without an ounce of salvation.”



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