

IT IS NOT ENOUGH

There are many people in the religious world who have a very narrow concept of Christianity and what it takes to get to heaven. We find a similar attitude among members of the church. In the denominations there are people who think God is not very strict and to just believe in His existence promises them salvation. In a survey of several thousand persons it was revealed that 67% of those interviewed believed in heaven and 88% of those who believed in heaven were sure they were going there. We also have members of the church who seem to think that just because they have been baptized and as long as they stay out of trouble and get the communion every Lord's day (or at least most of the time), the Lord will surely save them. These expect to be saved by the bare stint of duty.

In this article we hope to show by the Bible that God has a plan of salvation which requires more than some believe it takes to get to heaven. Hence, the title of the lesson is "It Is Not Enough".

First, it is not enough to just be morally good. It is true that Christians are to be good moral people if they hope to get to heaven, but morality alone will not save. In the scriptures (Matt. 19:16-22) we have an example of one of the most moral and basically good young men anyone could ever hope to find. He kept all the commandments of the Lord from his childhood up, but failed to be saved when told by Jesus there was one other thing he needed to do. The Bible says, "he went away sorrowful." His morality was not enough.

Some seem to think that regardless of what they believe, if they are just religious they will surely get to heaven. However, we are told in Acts chapter 17 when the apostle Paul went to Athens, Greece he found a city steeped in religious error. The people even had an altar with the inscription, "To the unknown God", whom they ignorantly worshipped. When Paul was given the opportunity to speak to the people he referred to that altar and then said he was going to tell them about this God. In his speech he told them that there was a time when God winked at ignorance, but He now commands all men everywhere to repent, because there is going to be a resurrection and all people everywhere are going to be judged by Jesus in that day (Acts 17:30,31). Just being religious is not enough. Many people throughout the world claim to worship God in one way or another. They think it makes no difference to the Lord how, as long as we worship. But is this the teaching of the Bible, and is that all it takes to please the Lord? Jesus says in (John 4:23,24), "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

In Acts chapter eight we are told of a man who traveled over a thousand miles to worship God, only to find he was wrong, and his worship unacceptable to the Lord. When he learned the truth he accepted it immediately. When he obeyed the gospel "he went on his way rejoicing" (Acts 8:26-39). Just to worship the Lord is not enough regardless of how honest one may be. We must worship "in spirit and in truth".

We can see by the scriptures to worship the Lord is important. But to worship only occasionally is not enough. The scriptures indicate that it was the practice of faithful Christians to assemble each first day of the week (on the Lord's day) to worship God (Acts 20:7). And in Hebrews 10:25-29 we are informed that we are not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together. The writer lets us know that it is a willful sin for one to make this mistake. Jesus says to His disciples, "...Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness" (Matt. 6:33). Which simply means to put God first in our lives before everything else. Christians need to learn this important lesson. It is not enough to worship occasionally.

How important is it that we be sincere and diligent in serving the Lord? James informs us in James 2:10,11, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." It would be awful to come up short in the day of judgment thinking that we are going to heaven, only to be renounced by the Lord, and lost forever. It is not enough to keep most of the will of God. He wants complete submission to Him and His will. He demands faithfulness.

Finally, it is not enough for a person to just have good intentions and plan some day to do better — to plan some day to obey the gospel, or to become more sincere and more dedicated to serving the Lord. Many a person has died unprepared to meet God simply because he put his salvation off for a more convenient time. The Bible says, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2). It is not enough to just plan to do better.