

Devotional Thoughts :: Religion Cannot Save Us - T. Austin Sparks

Religion Cannot Save Us - T. Austin Sparks - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2014/3/7 15:12

To become a Christian is not to become "religious", or to adopt a new "religion".

Among non-Christian peoples, a turning to Christ is often referred to as "accepting Christianity", and in what are called Christian countries conversion is frequently referred to as "becoming religious". Such expressions, with their associated ideas, are altogether inadequate and indeed fundamentally false. There was no more religious man on the earth, in his time, than Saul of Tarsus. Read what he says of himself in Acts 22 and 26, and Philippians 3. Here was a man who was just aflame with religious zeal and passion. No argument is necessary, with history before us, to prove how wide of the mark religion can be.

And that is true of "Christianity", when it is merely a matter of religion. To be a true Christian is not to accept a creed or statement of doctrine, to observe certain rites and ordinances, attend certain services and functions, and conform more or less diligently to a prescribed manner of life. All this may be carried very far, with very many good works; but those concerned may still be outside the true New Testament category of "Christian".

Herein lies the danger of an assumed acceptance with God, which may bring that bitter disillusionment foretold by our Lord Himself in those startling words: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me" (Matt. 7:23, 24).

No, religion is not Christianity, either more or less; it may be only a deception. So that when we seek that people should become Christians, we are not asking them to change their religion, nor are we asking them to become religious. Religion, as such, has never made this world happier or better.

Re: Religion Cannot Save Us - T. Austin Sparks - posted by wayneman (), on: 2014/3/8 18:12

"The apostasy from Christianity will not come about openly by everybody renouncing Christianity; no, but slyly, cunningly, knavishly, by everybody assuming the name of being Christian, thinking that in this way all were most securely secured against...Christianity, the Christianity of the New Testament, which people are afraid of, and therefore industrial priests have invented under the name of Christianity a sweetmeat which has a delicious taste, for which men hand out money with delight." Kierkegaard