

HYBRID RELIGION

2 KINGS 17:24-41

Text: 2 Kings 17:41

(2 Kings 17:41) "So these nations feared the LORD, and served their graven images, both their children, and their children's children: as did their fathers, so do they unto this day."

Introduction:

"So do they unto this day," said the writer of the Book of Kings, who has long passed away unto his fathers. Were he alive today he might say the same. The practice of fearing God and serving other gods is by no means obsolete. It is too common everywhere; even where you might least expect it.

From generation to generation there has been Mongrel or Hybrid Religionists who have tried to please both God and the devil, and have been on both sides, or on either side, as their interest led them.

Some of these wretched blenders are always hovering around every congregation, and my hope is that Word of God may convince the conscience and hearts of those that might be present today that they themselves are guilty, and that of them it might be

said, as of these Assyrian immigrants, “They feared the Lord, and served their own gods.”

This message is by no means directed upon the past generation, but could be placed in today’s paper because “so do they unto this day.”

Notice:

1. PRODUCT OF HYBRID RELIGION

A. It had its good and bad points

1. These people were not infidels, “They feared the Lord.”

2. They didn’t deny the existence or the power or the rights of God.

3. They didn’t have the pride of Pharaoh who said, “Who is the LORD that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go.”
Exodus 5:2

4. They were not like those who David called a fool, who said in their hearts, “There is no God.”

5. They had faith, though only enough to produce fear.

a. They feared His wrath, and tried to appease it.

b. It was better to dread God than to despise Him.

B. They were willing to be taught.

1. As soon as they found that they were not acting rightly towards the God of the land, they sent to the king of Assyria asking for a priest

a. The problem was that the priest worshipped god under the symbol of an ox. He was only a slight improvement upon a heathen.

2. We have people today who are glad to hear the gospel, and sit with pleasure under our ministry, and if the word be faithfully preached they commend the preacher and yet they are living in known sin.

a. They do not turn from sin and renounce the service of Satan, yet they are willing to bow with the righteous, to sing and pray.

b. They are teachable as far as hearing goes but there they stop.

C. They feared God, and were willing to learn of His worship, yet they were stuck to their old gods.

1. There are many gods today

a. Drinking

b. Entertainment

c. Sports

d. Lust & perversion

e. Theater

f. Gambling & lotteries

g. Employment

2. There are some who follow Jesus not because they love Him but for what they can get out of Him.

Illustration:

A deacon in a certain church who owned several drinking dens, making profits of the filthy trafficking of that which the Word says is mocker.

I can understand the man who honestly says “I am living for the world and have no time for religion or God.”

I can understand the man who cries, “I love the world and want to have my fill of it.”

I can understand the man who says, “I will not pretend to pray and sing songs, because I don't care about God or His ways”; but how can I comprehend those who are faithful to the outward part of religion and profess to receive the truth, and yet have no heart for the love of Jesus, no care for the service of God?

2. PROCESS OF HYBRID RELIGION

How did this hybrid come about? These people came to live where the people of God had lived.

A. Imitation

1. Worldly people come in the midst of Christian people, and they feel that they must take on the same characteristics.

a. They are not saved but look the part.

b. Have a form of godliness.

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

c. They simply drift along with the current, and they are as religious as the rest.

d. They may have had a godly father or mother and adopted the traditions of the family but have never really had a heart changing experience with God.

(Matthew 7:22-23) "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? {23} And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

(Luke 13:25-28) "When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: {26} Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. {27} But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. {28} There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out."

This Is a Poor Reason for Being Religious

B. Intimidation

(2 Kings 17:25-26) "And so it was at the beginning of their dwelling there, that they feared not the LORD: therefore the LORD sent lions among them, which slew some of them. {26} Wherefore they spake to the king of Assyria, saying, The nations which thou hast removed, and placed in the cities of Samaria, know not the manner of the God of the land: therefore he hath sent lions among them, and, behold, they slay them, because they know not the manner of the God of the land."

1. Matthew Henry says, "God can serve his own purposes by which he pleaseth,

little or big, lice or lions.” By the smaller means he plagued the Egyptians, and by the greater these invaders of His land.

These people didn't love the Lamb, but did fear the Lions.

2. Notice the root of this religion is fear and not love for God.

a. Their hearts go after idols, but to God they yield nothing but dread.

b. Many today has religion consisting in a fear of Hell, and a dread of the consequences of their sin.

c. If there were no Hell they would drink up sin as the ox stands knee deep in the stream and sucks in the water.

They dread God, and this is a gentler form of hating Him.

C. Indoctrination

1. They had a trimming teacher.

a. The priest taught them calf worship, and winked at their false deities.

(1 Kings 18:21) "And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word."

2. If I wink at your inconsistencies will you not soon be hardened in them?

a. Like preacher like people

b. A cowardly preacher suits hardened sinners.

They live among godly people, and God chastens them, and they therefore fear Him, but not enough to give their hearts to Him. They seek out a trimming teacher who is not too precise and plain spoken and they settle down comfortably to a Hybrid Faith, half truth, and half error, and half worship, half dead and half orthodoxy.

3. PRICE OF HYBRID RELIGION

A. Worthless

1. You cannot serve God and mammon

(Luke 16:13) "No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

2. One sucks the life out of the other

B. Useless

Illustration:

The hypocrisy of saying you love the Lord and living like the Devil.

4. PERSEVERANCE OF HYBRID RELIGION

(2 Kings 17:41) "So these nations feared the LORD, and served their graven images, both their children, and their children's children: as did their fathers, so do they unto this day."

A. Reason for its continuation

1. It yields a sense of comfort, in keeping the lions away.

They think that it must be the right thing, for now we are quiet. While they lived in sin without a pretense of religion, when the minister preached the word powerfully they went home trembling; now they do

not care what he preaches about; the lions roar no longer, not so much as a cub shows itself. Though they drink a little, thought they use strong language now and then, thought they are really unconverted, yet since they have taken a pew at the church they feel wonderfully easy in their minds. So they wrap themselves in this false security and go to Hell.

5. PRESCRIPTION FOR HYBRID RELIGION

- A. Trust Christ as your personal Saviour.

- B. Decide who it is that you will love, serve and follow.