

THE DANGERS OF A DIFFERENT AUTHORITY (Mark 7:7-9)

I. Man's subjective standards.

- A. If we are to ever have the type unity for which Jesus prayed, there has to be a common ground on which we can all agree.
- B. The problem is, though that common ground exists in the New Testament, we can't get everyone on the same page.
- C. Men have devised or follow several different standards, most of them being very subjective in nature.
- D. For instance, many go by their feelings.
 - 1. We've heard, "I feel it in my heart..." from many different people.
 - 2. "If it feels good do it" used to be popular phrase.
 - a. While the phrase has gone out of use, the sentiment expressed in the phrase is alive and well today.
 - b. Humanism preaches this message when it comes to worldliness.
 - c. It is alive and well in religious activities today.
 - 3. Take this to its logical end with a real illustration.
 - a. Joseph Stalin believed in communism deeply.
 - b. He believed in his right to rule and he felt that it was right to eliminate those who might be a threat to his rule.
 - c. It felt right to murder thousands of people.
 - d. These were strong feelings, but don't we all agree they were wrong ones?
 - e. The same illustration could be used in regards to Hitler.
 - f. He felt that the German race was superior and the Jewish race inferior, so he felt that it was right to murder six and half million Jews.
 - g. Feelings can be wrong.
 - 4. Saul of Tarsus persecuted the church unmercifully.
 - a. He believed that the church was harmful to the Jewish way of life he so deeply loved and anyone involved with the church should be punished.
 - b. Why did he think it was okay to act on those feelings in a violent way?
 - c. Acts 26:9.
 - (1) Saul did what he felt was right at the time.
 - (2) His actions were wrong.
 - 5. Feelings are not a good guide in religious matters.
- E. Some follow the wisdom of men.
 - 1. Man thinks he is really smart and in some things he is.
 - 2. However, man's wisdom, when it comes to religious matters, is not a proper guide.

3. There are many good people who do, religiously, what, to them, is wise and logical.
 4. The problem with this is that what man thinks is not always in line with what God thinks (Isaiah 55:8-9; Proverbs 16:25).
 5. Some things look right to us, but are not right to God.
 6. We need to remember what Paul wrote to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 3:19).
 7. If we are going to please God, it won't be done following that which man devises.
- F. Some follow man-made traditions.
1. So many today believe that if it was good enough for their parents, it is good enough for them.
 2. We can't blindly follow or imitate other human beings.
 3. The reason for this is that they make mistakes just like we do.
 4. Many times, the traditions of men are at odds with the Bible.
 5. We have to remember the words of Peter and John (Acts 5:29).
 6. Paul was one who had followed the traditions of his forefathers (Galatians 1:14).
 7. Paul followed the traditions of men but was in no way pleasing to God.
 - a. When the Lord confronted Saul on the road to Damascus, Jesus asked Saul why he was persecuting Him.
 - b. He was far from pleasing the Lord with his traditions.
 8. It was while he was following those traditions of his family that Ananias asked him...(Acts 22:16).
 - a. This shows us that Paul needed salvation at that time.
 - b. He was lost following the traditions of men and needed to follow God's commands.
 9. Jesus tells us that following the traditions of men leads us from salvation and not to it (Mark 7:7).
- G. Some follow the majority.
1. The old saying, "everybody is doing it" does not cut it in matters of religion.
 2. Long ago God told His people not to follow a multitude to do evil (Exodus 23:2).
 3. The truth is, the majority of people are going to be lost (Matthew 7:13-14).
 4. Only a few are going to enter in at the strait and narrow gate.
 5. Surely, we don't want to follow the majority into hell.
- H. Some follow what their preacher says.
1. A lot of people are like a newborn bird when it comes to spiritual nutrition.
 - a. A baby bird tilts its head back and opens up its mouth and the mother bird fills it up with whatever she found.

- b. Many are like that spiritually.
 - c. They open up their minds to whatever the preacher is saying and just take it in.
- 2. This is extremely dangerous because the preacher may be wrong.
- 3. Matthew 7:15.
- 4. Notice what the Holy Spirit inspired Peter to write (2 Peter 2:1-2).
- 5. Just because someone is in a pulpit somewhere doesn't mean they belong there.
- 6. We've got to compare what we hear with God's word to know whether or not it is truth.
- 7. If the message of the preacher is not in line with God's word, we must reject it.
- I. These are all subjective, false standards of authority that mankind follows in various ways.
- J. All of these have the potential to lead us from God and not to God, and in most cases, do just that.

II. The dangers of following the wrong standard.

- A. God's word is full of examples of people that followed the wrong standard and ended up on the wrong side of God's wrath.
- B. The first murder occurred because Cain followed his feelings instead of God's word.
 - 1. He was one who raised crops and he felt it was good enough to offer some of his harvest to God.
 - 2. We know that Abel offered his offering by faith (Hebrews 11:4).
 - 3. Faith comes only by hearing God's word (Romans 10:17), so God had revealed what He wanted offered.
 - 4. God rejected the sacrifice of Cain because it was not by faith, but by his feelings.
 - 5. A brother ended up murdered and Cain ended up separated from his family and God all because of following feelings.
- C. It felt right to Uzzah to reach out and steady the ark and it cost him his life.
 - 1. That happened all because it felt right to David to move the ark on a cart.
 - 2. God had told the Israelites how the ark was to be moved but David hadn't paid attention to it, and, apparently, the Levites hadn't either.
 - 3. By doing what he wanted to do, David cost a man his life.
- D. Following the traditions of men cost the Northern Kingdom didn't it.
 - 1. Jeroboam took the Northern Kingdom away from God by introducing the golden calves as their gods at Dan and Bethel.
 - 2. Multiple kings after him had the opportunity to bring the nation back to proper worship of God.
 - 3. None did and it was said of each of them that they followed in the sins of Jeroboam in leading the people away from God.

4. Because of that, they went into Assyrian captivity.
- E. Doing what they wanted in worship to God cost Nadab and Abihu their lives.
1. Leviticus 10:1-4.
 2. God had told them what He wanted and they did something different.
- F. Doing what he wanted cost Moses the opportunity to enter the Promised Land.
1. He had struck the rock the first time because that was what God had told him to do to get water out of it for the people.
 2. The second time water was needed, God told Moses to speak to the rock but he struck it.
 3. Because he did what he wanted and not what God wanted, the punishment of Moses was to not be able to enter Canaan.