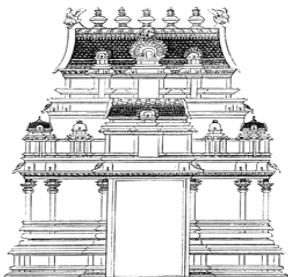


The
Problem
With
Religion



[A 7-minutes sermon preached by Pastor Alun McNabb (www.sermonfortoday.org).
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I want to speak to you about *the problem with religion*. Oh, religion is such a problem! You may say "I am surprised to hear a preacher talk about problems with religion! I thought you preachers are always pushing religion down people's throats." Well, it may sound like that to you, but really that is not true. Because we are like you -- we understand, we recognize and we deplore the problem with religion.

What is the problem with religion? Well, the answer is this: *It is man-made!* Everything that is man-made goes wrong. And when religion is man-made, it goes badly wrong. All kinds of people make religion. Wild savages make religion. So do ladies in nice hats. University professors go in for religion. And so do con men. Prehistoric man -- he went in for religion. And so does sophisticated 20th Century man. People have always been at it! Politicians sometimes use religion for gain. Nations adopt religion, people fight over religion. People who call themselves Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims, Christians . . . they give themselves all sorts of names . . . and they fight over religion. Now, this makes no difference to their lives. They may go to church, they may not. They believe in religion but there is no difference in their lives. They are as bad as anybody else. And sometimes we find that the morals of such people are even worse. People will say, "I know people who are religious and -- if that is what religion is, I want nothing to do with it!" We agree and answer, "You are quite right, you are quite right." So, what is different? Let me tell you: *Jesus is different!*

Some people say they believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior, but their belief is not genuine. However when a person genuinely comes to believe in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, that person's life is transformed. Seeing a transformed life is one of the most wonderful things in the world. So is

hearing stories of men and women who live lives far away from God and then one day, they meet something. What did they meet? Did they meet religion? No! They did not meet something, they met someone. They meet Jesus Christ. He is the difference! You see, you can be religious and throw stones and break people's windows in your cause. But Jesus never told anyone to throw stones. You can be religious and you can hate people. Muslims can hate people of other religions. Sikh can hate people of other religions. They can fight about it. Protestants and Catholics can fight over religion.

However, Jesus said, "*Love your enemies. Do good to them who spitefully use you.*" Well, you know that is different to the religion that you know about. And that is why not many people accept Jesus. People accept religion because they can be religious and they can also be vicious hypocrites. They can also live immoral lives. But you can not follow Jesus and live an immoral life. You can have one or the other. You can not follow Jesus and live for self. You can do one or the other. Listen to what Jesus said in **John 14**: *Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going and how can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No man comes to the Father but by Me."* Did you ever know a religious leader who said, "*I am the way*"?

You will notice that they point to somebody else. Almost always, they point to somebody who is dead. That somebody lived for a while and did a few religious things, but now he is dead. But Jesus is alive forever! As I speak to you now, Jesus Christ lives within me. He is merciful to me and I have set aside all those religions, all those concepts of religion which do not change me. I do not want to have anything to do with them. Instead, I want

to follow someone who changes me, who pardons all my sins, who fills me with His spirit and who enables me to live the life I know I should live. Only Jesus can do it. He says, "*I am the way, the truth and the life. No man comes to the Father but by Me.*"

It's not religion we need, it is Jesus! He gives a great feast for those who come to Him. Between Jesus and religion, there is all the difference in the world! I call you to Jesus Christ, the Son of God, so you may find Him to be your Lord and your Savior.

NEED TO SPEAK TO SOMEONE ABOUT JESUS CHRIST?

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