DOES EVERYONE HAVE A RIGHT TO HIS OWN BELIEF?

Sermon by Donald Townsley

INTRODUCTION
1. We live in a society that provides religious freedom to its citizens. This freedom allows us to worship God in any manner we please.

2. Because we have religious tolerance as a civil right does not mean that God accepts one's belief that one's way of worship is as good as another.

3. Most people in the RELIGIOUS WORLD are in DENOMINATIONS, and they believe that God allows man to worship in any manner he pleases, and that God will accept the worship of each denomination.

4. Satan is the author of the concept that "God will accept every belief and practice".

5. God has never revealed that He will accept every man's worship just as long as he is "good", "honest" and "sincere".

6. God has revealed that man must go "to the law and to the testimony; If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" -- Isa. 8:20

I. REASONS WHY EVERY MAN DOES NOT HAVE A RIGHT TO HIS OWN BELIEF:

1. One does not have a right to his own belief because:
   (1) Christ has ALL AUTHORITY -- Matt. 28:18
   (2) Christ is GOD'S SPOKESMAN -- Heb. 1: 1 - 2
   (3) God wants man to HEAR CHRIST -- Mk. 9:7
   (4) All who fail to hear Christ WILL BE LOST -- Acts 3: 22 -23
   (5) Those that will be saved are those who OBEY the Lord -- Matt. 7:21; Heb. 5:9
   (6) The man who does not obey the Lord will not be saved, regardless of how SINCERE he might be.

2. The Lord has commanded that men NOT ADD TO THE REVELATION of God, or SUBTRACT from it -- I Cor. 4:6; II John 9; Rev. 22 :18 -19

3. We learn what God wants us to do in His service in the New Testament -- II Tim. 3: 16 - 17; II Pet. 1:3
   (1) The man who is NOT content to abide WITHIN that revelation has departed FROM GOD and is OUTSIDE His Grace -- Gal. 1: 6 -9; II John 9 - 11

II. EXAMPLES THAT DEMONSTRATE THAT MAN DOES NOT HAVE THE RIGHT TO HIS OWN BELIEF

1. The record of God's rejection of Cain's worship shows us that God will NOT accept any kind of worship -- Gen. 4: 3 - 5; Heb. 11:4; Rom. 10:17

2. God's rejection of the worship of Nadab and Abihu shows us that God will NOT accept any kind of worship -- Lev. 10:1 - 2; Lev. 16:12

3. When Jeroboam instituted a system of worship in Bethel and Dan he sinned against God -- I Kings 12: 28 - 30
   (1) He changed the OBJECT of worship FROM GOD TO CALVES (idols) -- I Kings 12: 28 - 30
   (2) He changed the PLACE from JERUSALEM to DAN AND BETHEL -- I Kings 12:29
   (3) He changed the GOD-ORDAINED feast to MAN-ORDAINED -- I Kings 12: 32; Lev. 23:34
   (4) He changed the priests from the LEVITES to NON-LEVITES -- I Kings 12:31
(5) God REJECTED the worship he instituted.

III. SOME THINGS IN WHICH WE HAVE NO PERSONAL RIGHT TO OUR OWN BELIEF:

1. WHAT WE THINK OF JESUS-- John 8: 24; Mk. 16:16
   (1) The man who rejects that Jesus was born of a virgin, performed miracles, shed His blood on the cross as the atonement for sins, and was raised from the dead CANNOT BE SAVED.
   (2) Regardless of how good, honest and sincere he might be.

2. TO CHOOSE WHICH CHURCH WE SHOULD BELONG TO.
   (1) Jesus DID NOT establish many different churches.
   (2) He promised to build ONE (His) -- Matt. 16:18
   (3) He BOUGHT ONE -- Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25
   (4) Paul said ALL men are RECONCILED unto God in ONE BODY -- Eph. 2:16
   (5) The saved are added to ONE -- Acts 2:47
   (6) People who tell you "one church is as good as another" REJECT NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING.
   (7) Denominations are religious "plants" which the Lord will "root up" -- Matt. 15:13 - 14

3. TO CHOOSE WHAT NAME WE SHALL WEAR IN RELIGION:
   (1) Paul shows the sinfulness of wearing human names -- I Cor. 1:10 -13
   (2) God promised to give His children a "new name" -- Isa. 62:2
   (3) That name is "CHRISTIAN" -- Acts 11:25
   (4) Salvation is ONLY in the name of Christ -- Acts 4:12

4. TO DETERMINE WHAT STANDARD OF HOLINESS TO FOLLOW:
   (1) Some imply that one's moral standards are a matter of personal preference.
   (2) One can choose to be "gay" or "straight", some say.
   (3) Some choose to drink and some choose not to drink.
   (4) Some say one can choose to dress immodestly, go mixed swimming, dance and pet.
   (5) But, the Lord has revealed the standard of holiness men are to follow if they want to go to heaven -- Gal. 5:19 -21; I Cor. 6:9 -11; I Tim. 2:9 -10

5. TO DETERMINE HOW TO WORSHIP GOD:
   (1) God has given man a PATTERN for WORSHIP
   (2) We must worship in SPIRIT and in TRUTH -- John 4:24
   (3) Five items of worship:
       1. Singing -- Eph. 5:19
       2. Prayer -- Acts 2:42
       3. Lord's Supper -- Acts 20:7
       4. Giving -- I Cor. 16:1 -2
       5. Teaching -- Acts 2:42; 20:7
(4) Some have the idea they can CHANGE the worship to make it more appealing to the public.

(5) Worship in many denominations include special singing groups to entertain; instrumental music is added.

(6) Worship designed by the WILL OF MEN is NOT PLEASING TO GOD -- Matt. 15:9; Col. 2: 21 - 23

6. TO DETERMINE HOW HE WILL BE SAVED:

(1) God has revealed the conditions which men must meet to be saved by the blood of Christ.

(2) Men must:
   1. Hear the gospel -- Rom. 10:17
   2. Believe -- Mk. 16:16
   3. Repent -- Acts 2:38
   4. Confess -- Rom. 10:10
   5. Be baptized -- Acts 2:38

(3) The Lord made the decision of HOW men would be saved.

(4) Those who are "SAVED" in some other way are NOT SAVED at all.
   1. "Faith only" -- James 2:24
   2. "Grace only" -- Eph. 2: 8

CONCLUSION

1. God made us creatures of free moral choice.
2. We can choose to obey or disobey.
3. If we choose to disobey the Lord, we cannot choose to escape the consequences of disobedience.
4. God has chosen to punish eternally those who disobey Him.
5. The man who teaches us the "Every man has a right to his own belief" is looking only at this world and one's civil rights.
6. Man does NOT have the right to his own belief.

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