

What the Apostle James Would Say to This Misguided Religious Quip

One of the great blessings of living in the time that we do is the availability of social media. With the advance of technology, what might have been a small, unheard voice in a small town somewhere now has the ability to be heard globally in a moment. Blogs, Facebook posts, tweets and now videos can easily be written or recorded and, once posted, have the ability to go viral and be viewed by millions.

While the advantage of being able to reach so many so quickly has provided a platform to spread the gospel around the world almost instantly. People also now have the ability to misinform and mislead people like never before.

New apps have been programmed that allow the novice with limited skills and artistic talent to produce memes with witty slogans or words of encouragement that can be shared over and over with the pressing of a “share button.”

The trouble with this is that too often, pretty gets confused with insight, and bold is assumed to be accurate.

Case in point: the often-quoted phrase “It’s not about religion, it’s about relationship.” I can’t tell you how many times I have seen that statement come across my news feed or heard a preacher on a video boldly proclaim that what they have is relationship not religion.

What’s wrong with this you might ask? After all, it sounds great! After all, we all want a relationship with the Messiah, don’t we? And everyone knows religion is evil, right? Wrong.

Religion is not bad, bad religion is bad. As a matter of

truth, Yeshua (Jesus) said the following; in James 1:27

“Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unstained by the world” (James 1:27).

Notice: Yeshua is not anti-religion He is against impure religion. The truth is that Yeshua is extremely pro-religion. Because pure religion causes us to be relational. When we have right religion, we establish relationships with orphans, we build relationships with widows. Religion is the glue that holds communities together and accountable to God. It is religion that, according to Yeshua, keeps one unstained by the world.

So we see it isn't religion vs. relationship that we should promote. It is religion plus relationship we should proclaim. In a world that is increasingly stained with sin, we need “Pure Religion” more than ever before. {eo}

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