

unspotted from the world.

What kind of religion are you embracing?

BAD RELIGION

© 2015 by Tom Boynton
(editing by Kathy Boynton)

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There are two kinds of religion. Some religion is bad and “vain.” Some religion is good and “pure.”

“If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man’s religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world” (James 1:26-27).

Neither kind of religion can save you. If that were possible then salvation would result from doing a sufficient quantity of good works. But God tells us that a person cannot earn salvation by being righteous. Rather a saved person has been made righteous by grace through faith in Christ’s finished work at Calvary.

“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of

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faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: ...” (Galatians 3:10-13).

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Bad or “vain” religion is embraced by people who think they can eventually earn eternal life by doing enough good deeds to outweigh their bad ones. However, they have very little desire to forsake their bad ones. The passage in James, quoted above, shows that one evidence of such “vain” religion is unrighteous speech emanating from an un-bridled tongue.

Pure religion, however, is a religion in which God, Himself, Christ Jesus, does the work. He has breathed eternal life into the heart of a sinner. Such a person trusts in Christ’s completed blood sacrifice for total deliverance from sin. Out of great thankfulness, this individual strives to do good deeds and remain

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