

## UNDEFINED RELIGION

Tonight I'd like to do a little something different. You all have been listening to me share my views for over 6 months. So by now, you should have a general idea of what I believe and where I stand on many issues. But I don't know where many of *you* stand on some of these issues. Therefore, I would like to engage you all in some conversation. I want to ask you a couple of simple questions, and I am interested to see what your answers will be.

Let's start by looking at the meaning of the term "*Perfection*", as it is defined in the Scripture. Whenever the issue of perfection comes up in Christian circles, the first thing people want to do is attach a much less threatening meaning to the term than what the Scripture actually states. People start talking about "spiritual maturity". Perfection, they say, simply means "to made mature, full, without lack in the thing that is perfected. That sounds good but it is not what the Scripture mean. That definition came from Dr. Vine, and other theologians and Bible scholars who *did not* believe it was possible for humans to come to a place of actual, sinless perfection in *this* life.

In order to see the true Scriptural definition of the term perfection is, you simply need to look at how the word "spot" is used in the New Testament, especially with regards to the kind of life Jesus lived. For instance, consider the following statements:

*How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself **without spot** to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*

*Hebrews 9:14*

*Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb **without blemish and without spot**:*

*I. Peter 1:18-19*

Now, what do the terms, "without blemish" and "without spot" speak of in these verses? Are they not references to the *sinless life* of Jesus? Aren't the writers of these verses emphasizing the point that because Jesus was *sinless*, His blood was able to forgive, cover, and purge those who would place their trust in Him, from their sins? It seems very clear to me that being without blemish and without spot is a not talking about some ethereal state of "spiritual maturity"—which by the way, people can define any way they want to define it—but instead is a clear reference to **SINLESS** perfection. So, if being without spot or blemish is talking about walking in **SINLESS** perfection with regards to the life of Jesus, why do people try to change the meaning of these terms when the apostles apply the same words to New Testament believers?

*Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that **ye may be found of him** in peace, **without spot**, and blameless.*

*II. Peter 3:13-14*

*That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,  
That he might present it to himself a glorious church, **not having spot, or  
wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.***

*Ephesians 5:26-27*

So according to the Scripture, believers are to allow the Holy Spirit to bring us to a place where we are *without spot* and *without blemish*. This means more than just coming to a place of spiritual maturity. It means more than simply being “without lack”. Many people are maturing spiritually, yet they are still allowing themselves to be spotted by the flesh, or by evil spirits, or by the world. Being spotless MEANS walking in sinless perfection!

*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 1:27*

The apostle James said that “*undefiled religion before God*” is to keep ourselves “*unspotted from the world*”. Let me rephrase that statement. If we are allowing ourselves to be spotted by the world, not only are we NOT moving towards sinless perfection, in God’s eyes, our religion has become *defiled*.

Of course, our religion won’t be defiled in our own eyes because we are constantly deceiving ourselves with regards to our true spiritual condition. In fact, we are experts at deceiving ourselves in this area. But in God’s eyes, if we allow ourselves to be spotted by the world, our religion has become defiled.

Not only are we warned not to defile our “religion”, we are also warned not to defile our BODY, for the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

*What? know ye not that **your body** is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in  
you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?*

*I. Corinthians 6:19*

*Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God  
dwelleth in you? **If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy;**  
for the temple of God **is holy**, which temple ye are.*

*I. Corinthians 3:16-17*

Since God says our religion and our very person—which *includes* the body—can become *defiled*, and since He warns that He will destroy those who allow themselves to become defiled, wouldn’t you think this matter of becoming defiled is a serious issue? Wouldn’t you think that in light of this truth, it’s pretty important that we know exactly what it is that defiles us, so we can try to stay away from it?

I want to give everyone who hears my voice, and who is aspiring to “go on to perfection”, a very solemn warning: don’t get caught up in the very dangerous practice of TALKING about death to self and going on to perfection, while you are indulging in the things and the

pleasures of this evil world! If you can't let go of this world, be *honest* with God and don't even try to reach for the prize of the High Calling. Find yourself a Christian fellowship that is still preaching the Word of God and forget about being a king and priest in the next age.

I've seen more than a few people get completely destroyed because they saw the vision of going on to perfection and embraced it, and they heard the message of death to self and embraced it, but they weren't willing to pay the price to walk in that truth. They continued to play around with the lusts of the flesh and/or the things of this world, and in the end, they were utterly consumed by Satan.

*And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For **unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required**: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.*

Luke 12:47-48

*Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for **whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap**. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh **reap corruption**; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.*

Galatians 6:7-8

It doesn't matter how much we know about God's plan for the overcoming remnant. It doesn't matter how good we are at preaching the vision of complete sanctification, or of the High Calling, or of death to self, or of going on to perfection, of being part of the manchild, company, or of being an overcomer. The only thing that matters to God is this: *Are we walking the walk?* Are we *doing* the things we telling others to so? We can talk about these things all day long, we can preach a magnificent word about them, and yet, not be *sowing* (doing) the things that will actually bring us into the reality of it. In fact, the warning Paul gave those blind, self-righteous Jews back in his day can just as easily be applied to many of us today, who are blind, self righteous Gentiles!

*Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, And knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?...Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, **thou condemnest thyself**; for **thou that judgest doest the same things**. But we are sure that the judgment of God*

*is according to truth against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, **and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?** Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds:*

*Romans 2:17-23 & 2:1-6*

If Paul saw how some of us live, he would say the same thing to us:

*“Behold, thou **art called a overcomer**, and retest in the understanding of going on to perfection, and makest thy boast of God, and say thou knowest His will and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed in **the way of the High Calling**; and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of those blind Christians in the Church System, a light of them which are in the darkness of apostasy, an instructor of foolish church people, a teacher of baby Christians, which know only the principles of the doctrine of Christ. Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that preachest a man should not give into the desires of the flesh, **dost thou give in to the desires of flesh?** Thou that sayest a man should not love the things of the world, **dost thou love the things of the world?** Thou that abhorrest idolatry, **dost thou walk in idolatry?** Thou that makest thy boast in the message of the Cross, by **not taking up thy cross daily, dishonourest thou God?**...Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest all those deceived, blind Christians in the Church System: for wherein thou judgest another, **thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things**”.*

Those who teach and preach death to self better make sure we are walking in that message ourselves, to the best of our ability. If we talk the talk but aren't walking the walk, we are in great danger. We are putting our hands of “flesh” to the holy things of God and in the end, we will be destroyed, just like Uzza was destroyed when he put his hand of flesh to the Ark of the Covenant when it was about to fall (*I. Chron. 13:9-12*).

When we publically proclaim that we are walking in death to self, yet we *continue* to indulge in those things we know are wrong, or that we know are displeasing to the Lord, we are walking on very dangerous ground. This is *the same* as trying to take our flesh behind the veil, into the Holy of Holies. If we don't stop it, one day God will send fire out from the Holy of Holies and it will *devour* us.

The Scripture is very clear in it's denunciation of the world, and the fact that we are to be separated from the world's ways, the world's pleasures, the world's entertainment, the world's thinking, etc. James said friendship with the world *equals* enmity with God. He said that whosoever is a “*friend*” of this world is “*the enemy*” of God (*James 4:4*). That's a pretty heavy statement, friends, when you really stop and think about it. Unfortunately, I don't think very many of us actually believe what brother James said. Many, many Christians spend hours every day in front of the idiot box, letting their minds feed on all kinds of

evil—lying, stealing, backbiting, gossip, envy, malice, violence and murder, fornication and adultery, homosexuality, etc.—all of which are definitely part of “the world”; and all of which defile our religion and our temple! Yet they would never think of themselves as God’s ENEMY, would they? But they are! They would never imagine that one day God is going to come and destroy them *because* they have defiled themselves with the things and the pleasures of this world, would they? But He is!

The same could be said of those who spend hours and hours on the Internet, entertaining themselves with things that are at best, of the world, and at worst, straight out of the bottomless pit! Yet they would never see themselves as God’s enemy; and they would never dream that God will one day destroy them! But I tell you by the Word of the Lord, they are His enemy, and very soon they are going to be destroyed.

The same could be said of those who spend hours playing worldly video games, whether at home on a computer, or down the street at the local game house. That’s the world, folks—and anyone who loves those things is a friend of the world.

*Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*

*1 John 2:15-17*

John said if we love the world or the things of the world, the love of the Father is NOT in us. How many of us really believe this is true? You can tell by what kind of life you live, whether or not you *actually* believe it. I guarantee you there are *millions* of Christians who don’t believe what John said because they love this world as much as any sinner does, yet they are convinced they love the Father in heaven.

That’s called religious delusion!

If you love the things of this world, even the *neutral* things, even the *moral* things, the love of the father is not in you.

*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And **be not conformed to this world:** but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

*Romans 12:1-2*

*Who gave himself for our sins, **that he might deliver us from this present evil world,** according to the will of God and our Father:*

*Galatians 1:4*

Jesus dies on an old rugged Cross to deliver us from this evil *world*. That means he died to deliver us from the way this world thinks and the way this world moves and the way this world behaves. He died to make us *different* from the people of the world. He died to give us another kind of life—a life that no longer desires to do the things the people of this world do; a life that no longer thinks the way the people of this world think; a life that no longer takes pleasure in the things the people of this world take pleasure in.

*If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*

*Colossians 3:1-2*

*For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:*

*Philippians 3:20*

*These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that **they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.***

*Hebrews 11:13*

Are our affections—that is, our *desires*—on things ABOVE. Are our thoughts on the things of God all day. Or are our thoughts and our desires on the things of this earth, which means the things of this world?

Is our conversation—which is more than just what we say with the mouth, but how we live our lives each day—in heaven, on heavenly things and realities? Or is our live all wrapped up in earthly realities?

Do we really feel like “strangers’ and “pilgrims” in this world? Or are we comfortable with this world as we go through our daily routines? Many believers love this world, but they are totally blind to their true spiritual condition!

So in light of all this, I have some questions to ask you who are in the room tonight. The first question is: *Do you know which things, or which desires, or which activities, or which past times, or which pleasures are of “the world”?* James told us to keep ourselves “unspotted” from the world. But how can we keep ourselves unspotted from the world if we don’t even know what things, or desires, or activities, or pleasures are “of the world” to begin with?

How about smoking? Is smoking a pleasure that belongs to the world?

How about drinking alcohol? Is that a pleasure that belongs to the world?

How about playing video games? Is that a pleasure that belongs to the world?

There are a lot of things that people allow in their lives that are wrong, but there is no verse of Scripture that specifically forbids it. And you can argue all with them about whether or not these things are actually “sins”. But if a person really wants to know the truth, the Spirit will show them the truth. If they don’t want to know the truth, then nothing in this world will ever change their minds.

Let me show you what the Scripture says about all these things that people fight back and forth over, which may not be specifically mentioned or forbidden in the Bible.

*For when we were **in the flesh, the motions of sins**, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death...For **they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh**; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then **they that are in the flesh cannot please God**...Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For **if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die**: but if ye through the Spirit **do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live**.*

*Romans 7:5; 8:5-8 & 12-13*

*The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: But chiefly them that **walk after the flesh** in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.*

*II. Peter 2:9-10*

Paul says those who are in the flesh cannot please God. Do you think a person is “in the flesh” when they are *smoking*? Do you think a person is in the flesh when they are *drinking* alcohol? Do you think they are in the flesh when they are *playing video games*? I do. And I see that many of you do too. So then, we cannot please God when we engage in these kinds of things! But maybe we don’t care if we are pleasing God. Maybe we are walking in a false sense of security that comes from the false gospel of “grace” that’s being preached everywhere. Maybe we assume that because we are “saved by grace”, it really doesn’t matter if we please God or not.

Well, Paul went on to say that if we live after the flesh we will die spiritually. Do you think that a person is living after the flesh when they are *smoking*? Do you think a person is living after the flesh when they are *drinking* alcohol? Do you think they are living after the flesh when they are *playing video games*? I do. So then, if we live after the flesh we will die spiritually. I assume you care whether or not you lose the eternal life God gave you.

Be not deceived, God is not mocked. Whatsoever you sow, the *same* shall you also reap.