

God hates False Religion

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[0 : 00] The message tonight is God hates false religion.

Amos 5.21 Against the Philistines, against Moab, against Judah.

And then he started to preach against the northern kingdom of Israel. And they said, go away, don't preach here anymore. In effect, Amos 7.10-13.

They didn't want this message. It wasn't a very popular message. God was telling the people that their worship was sinful. It was sinful. Their sacrifices were an abomination to the Lord.

And their offerings were unacceptable. Their worship was an offence unto God. It was a corruption in their worship, a compromise in their worship. Even though they thought these outward acts of worship would bring God's acceptance and blessing, God hated it all.

[1 : 31] He hated it. Now this passage, this context, it shows the holiness of God. It shows the judgment of God against sin. As these people offered up their hymns of praise, God said, He didn't want it.

He hated it. Away with it. I will not hear it. It was compromise. It was hypocrisy. It was false worship. God said, I hate it.

I despise it. I will not accept them. Friends, God is interested in spiritual sacrifices. God is looking for pure hearts, for pure worship, for pure doctrine.

I read just recently, the more room you make in your hearts for idols, the less room you have in your heart for God. And that was true with these folk here in Amos' day.

God hated their worship. He rejected it. Why? Because it wasn't real. Would God say that to us today, to this church, to his church, to you, to me, to us?

[2 : 36] In Isaiah 29 verse 13, there's a similar statement from our Lord. He says, Even though people were going through the motions, saying all the right things, it looked like worship, it sounded like worship, but to God, it wasn't worship.

It wasn't the right thing. It wasn't real. It was just an appearance of worship. You know, we can go through the motions too, brothers and sisters, and miss the point.

We can go through lip service in our token acceptance or confession of God, and yet we might miss that heart substance, that reality of it. What have we put ahead of God?

Have we dishonoured Him? An evangelist, Vance Haffer, said the New Testament church was an intolerant church. Nowadays we're majoring on being broad-minded.

So broad-minded. So broad that we become pitifully shallow. It's true, isn't it? It can be so broad-minded that everything becomes just totally shallow.

[3 : 52] The New Testament church, he writes, was intolerant of sin in its midst. When serious trouble came in Ananias and Sapphira, it was dealt with in sudden and certain terms.

When immorality cropped up in Corinth, Paul delivered the offender to the devil for the destruction of his flesh. And this was all done in love and tenderness.

The brother overtaken in a fault, in a sin, was restored by the spiritual one. Sin was not glossed over as we condone it today. God hates false religion.

God hates it. But He loves true religion. True worship. In Isaiah 1, verses 10 to 18, there's a similar vein there. He says, Verse 13 of Isaiah 1, Bring no more vain oblations.

Don't bring these offerings their vain, he says. Incense is an abomination to me. The new moons and the Sabbaths, the calling of assemblies. I cannot away with it. It is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.

[5 : 03] Your new moons and your appointed feasts, my soul hateth. They are a trouble unto me. I am weary of them. And when you spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you.

Yea, when you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood. Verse 17, Learn to do well. Seek judgment. Relieve the oppressed. Judge the fatherless.

Plead for the widow. God didn't want the vain oblations, the vain offerings. He didn't want the spreading forth of hands, the prayers. He said, Your feasts my soul hates.

He says, Rather, learn to do well. Seek that which is right. God wanted no more of this. As Spence Havner put it again, The cause of Christ has been hurt more by Sunday morning benchwarmers who pretend to love Christ, who call Him Lord, but do not His commands, than by all the publicans and sinners.

God hates false religion. He says, It is iniquity. Even the solid meeting. Even that meeting which would be a reverential meeting.

[6 : 12] He says, Even that. It's sin. He says He hates it. He cannot stand it. Friends, These are strong words from the prophet Amos. The strong words from the prophet Isaiah.

God hates such things. He hates that worship that is false. He cannot stand it. And it's evident, as we see, that there is a neglect of God's Word.

As we see, I know I touched on it this morning, of the plumb line, of the straight and true, of the Word of God, of the old landmarks, abandoned. What is scriptural, is scorned, and mocked in many quarters.

In some pulpits, they mock the Word of God, and they deny its authority. They try to pick holes in it, and claim error. And yet, they are in gross neglect, of what God, would have us do.

There's a doctrine, it's called, the primacy of scripture. The primacy of scripture. It's an important doctrine. In other words, it means, that we place the ultimate importance, on the Bible.

[7 : 18] It's primal. It's prime. It's the prime thing. The primary thing. The primacy, of the scriptures. And yet, in God's church today, the primacy of scripture, is being replaced, by the primacy, of experience.

Experience dictates. It's what that, what that voice, in my head, is telling me. God's told me this. God's told me that. Oh, it's the warm, warm and fuzzy things.

Oh, I just got a sensation there. It must be God. It must be God. And yet, they're getting away, from the Word of God, when they rely on such things. Not to say, that God can't, make us have warm and fuzzy feelings.

But, we don't put our faith, in such things. Our faith must be, in the scriptures. As it says, in 1 Thessalonians 5, 21, God prove all things, hold fast, that which is good.

God isn't pleased, with a blending, with a merging, of Christ with the world, of the sacred, with the secular. There is a difference. God's put a difference. The Word of God, shows where, God says, I have put a difference, between the clean, and the unclean.

[8 : 32] There is a difference, that God marks, through His Word. And we need to get, the worship right. It has to be right, not compromised. Turn with me, to Ephesians 5, verse 11.

Ephesians 5, verse 11, it says, And have no fellowship, we're in, the unfruitful works, of darkness, but rather, reprove them. We shouldn't mess, with the unfruitful works, of darkness, let alone, how such works, in the church of God, but we should rather, reprove them.

And yet today, we're seeing, a conglomeration, an excusing of sin, even an applauding, an appraising of sin, a lauding of what is sin. What the Bible says, is abomination, is excused, and celebrated, in some churches today.

And God, is very sick of it. He's very sick of it. He hates, He hates it. We don't want to miss, the truth, and settle for some, shallow, gospel, that is a man-centered, thing, with all its trappings. And where the church, is becoming like a theatre, like a nightclub, like a performance. We've seen that, in many quarters, where the churches, are painted all black, and the stage, is filled, with musical instruments, and with some kind of, a performance of man.

[10 : 01] Rather, we need to worship, the Lord, in the spirit, of truth, and holiness, with reverence, with simplicity, with spiritual worship. We have, the churches in the Word of God, as we know, the Laodicean one, they were bragging on, about how, they had it all together, they had the latest, I suppose you could say, the latest technology, and all the latest gimmicks, and gadgets, and God says, you're, wretched, miserable, poor, blind, naked.

And I'm sick of you. The Laodicean church, the head of the church, says to them, that he was nauseated, that, they made him sick.

And God calls this, lukewarmness. It's a lukewarmness. Campbell Morgan, a preacher of old, said, the worst form of blasphemy, is lukewarmness. If there's anything, abhorrent, to the heart of Christ, it is, a tepid church.

This condition, of being tepid, is utterly repugnant, to him. No emotion, no enthusiasm, no urgency, no compassion. It's as if, in the church today, as someone put it, there's two extremes today. There's, either wildfire, where you've got people, grovelling on the floor, and making animal noises, and, and, having altered states of consciousness, flaying their arms, and, in some kind of euphoric trance, wildfire, or you've got no fire, where you've got the, the dead, the dormant, the stagnant, the, the, archaic, that is just a relic, and there's no life there.

[11 : 40] Wildfire, or no fire. We need, God's truth. We need to be rock solid, on God's truth, and not be swayed, in either extreme, a preacher said this, he said, that, the church has to rediscover, two things.

One, the majesty, and holiness of God, and the other, the sinfulness of sin. If we can realise, if we can, grasp the majesty, the holiness of God, we won't want the sinfulness of sin.

We won't want to have any bar of it. Just this last Friday night, I met with a couple, an older couple, who attend a large local church, just up the road, a large local church, where they have a traditional worship service, in the morning, and then it's followed by, a contemporary one, that features loud rock music, and clapping, and swaying, and dancing.

And they told me that, the genuine songs of worship, that means so much, are out of place, at the second service, they're not there. They wouldn't dare play, a song of worship, a song of meaningful, sound doctrine, and, and loving praise, to our God, at the second service, because it is, like a rock concert.

And yet, friends, they, they're still, in such a church. God hates, the noise, of their music. We read in, Amos 5, 23, he says it's noise.

[13 : 10] Now that could be said, even where, I know there's, there's churches today, in fact, even, the Mormon church, they sing, some of the songs we sing, they sing, oh Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder.

So, and yet, I would think that, of such a church as that, God would say, he hates the noise, of their music. Even, even a lovely song, because it's sung, in a context, of false doctrine, in a context, of, of an abomination, where they deny, the deity of Christ, they deny, the triunity, of the Godhead, they deny, the fundamentals, of salvation.

Friends, yet, we must, take, due regard, to our worship, music, music is important, music affects, the spirit, it affects, the spirit, as we saw, David playing for Saul, that was a, a soothing, an affecting of his spirit, as they played, that which was, soothing, in the music, and we too, we need to be guarded, about the music, that we choose, when we use good, Christ exalting music, or when we settle, for some compromised, substitute, with a worldly beat, and emphasis, I read, that apparently, the Greek philosopher, Plato, not that we follow him, but just as a source, of a quote, in 400 BC, he said this, he said, if one listens, to the wrong kind, of music, he will become, the wrong kind, of person, makes you wonder, doesn't it, the kind of music, that we adopt, can influence us, I know that, only too well, of loved ones, in my life, where I see, that when they got, a taste, for the worldly rock, they just, seem to just go, further and further away, from God, and it's a reality, today friends, God says, it's sin, he says, it's sin, he says, he hates, that noise, of their music, God says, it's iniquity, even, the solemn meeting, and we see, that today, in the church, there's sinful things, that are spreading, a plague, of black death, over the church, we see, lukewarm churches, that are worldly, where worldliness, has come in, and they can't recognise, the difference anymore, that difference, that God sets, between the clean, and the unclean, it's so blurred, and grey, and it can't be seen, clearly enough, by them anymore, they can't see, what is God, and what is not God, they can't see, that need to separate, from the world, and be holy, and really, worldliness, is basically, disobedience, it's disobedience, it says, when God says, separate from the world, man says no, that's what, that's what, worldliness is, and friends, the devil, would like nothing more, than to blur, this line of separation, to confuse, that line, between the whole, and the unholy, between the saved, and the unsaved, between the good, and the evil, so you've got churches today, where, anything goes, you can sign up, on the membership roll, it doesn't matter, about your salvation testimony, doesn't matter, about such matters, as that, anybody's welcome, it doesn't matter, what your moral condition is, what your salvation state is, and friends, you need to be regarded, about these trends today, a, an old time preacher,

Pearson, was asked, about the, the work of missions, which he had a love for, he said, don't you think, that the world, is getting converted already, well, he replied, I admit, that the world, has become a little churchy, but the church, has become, immensely worldly, immensely worldly, you

know, as parents growing, with children growing up, we want our children, to be hearing, sound doctrine, we want our children, to be, growing in a church, where they can, be sure, that there's truth, being declared, it's not some mishmash, it's not some compromise, with the world, where, the church, is becoming, immensely worldly, but friends, it's true, of our churches, it's true, of this church, that sometimes, we can draw a crowd, for some special event, some picnic, some outing, some game, but no one shows up, when it's time to witness, no one shows up, when, there's much, that we can do spiritually, where there's, a prayer meeting, where there's, opportunity to witness, [17:40] Vance Havner said, people, go, where they want, to go, where their hearts, are, their heels, will follow, where your heart, is, there you'll go, and friends, we need to be stirred, our Lord, rebukes the backslidden church, we see that, in Revelation 2, verse 4, thou hast left, thy first love, backsliding, is where sin, is tolerated, where it's excused, we need to be challenged, I need to be challenged, day by day by day, week by week, to be challenged, to be more on fire for him, to be challenged, to be more real, to be more genuine, in my faith, because God hates, false religion, he doesn't want a bar of it, think about, these warning signs, warning signs, I've read some warning signs, and listed them here, warning signs, to watch out for, warning signs, of backsliding, when Christians, would rather talk, about sports, or their job, or shopping, or worldly entertainment, or some frivolous things, rather than talk about, the things of God, it's a warning sign, when prayer, and Bible study, is neglected, when there's a lack, of interest, in preaching, in prayer meeting, in Bible teaching, when Christians, are stingy, when Christians, make excuses, for their lukewarmness, and their backsliding, when Christians, will not deal, with their besetting sins, when Christians, can grieve, the Holy Spirit, and not seem to care, when there is, a lack of interest, in witnessing, in missions, signs, of backsliding, when Christians, are just as worldly, as the carnal, as the unsaved,

God hates, false religion, he wants you to be, dinky guy, true blue, fair dinkin, he wants you to be, sold out, on fire, will we be one, of the genuine worshippers, will we be like Daniel, Daniel in Daniel 1 verse 8, but Daniel, purposed, in his heart, he purposed, in his heart, he made that commitment, he made that, decision, he made up his mind, that he was going, to serve God, to serve God, and put God first, no matter what, no matter what, he would face, he would honour him, and he would serve him, with gladness, yet we see, back in the word of God, false religion, false religion, it's been there, since Genesis 4, when Cain, Cain with that, false, worship, and God rejected, Cain's offering, in Genesis 4, verses 4 and 5,

Cain's religion, was a religion, of self-will, his worship, was one, of man's works, and the Lord, had respect, unto Abel, Abel, had given that lamb, to his offering, but, unto Cain, and to his offering, God had no respect, and Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell, Cain grew angry, because his offering, was rejected, but it was an offering, that was vain, it was an offering, of his own self-will, of his own works, and sometimes, even today, worship, worship, so called, it can be of man's invention, it can be so organised, so artistically orchestrated, so skilfully created, and crafted, and so engineered, by man, employing all the latest, techniques, and multimedia, and drama, and there's not necessarily, things wrong with such, but it's missing, that vital ingredient,

God, is not in it, God is not in it, that's the point, we can go through, all the machinery, and motions, and all the methods, of man, and miss the point, when God is not in it, because God hates, false religion, we see that, for example, some numbers of false religion, we can think of, today, idolatry, it's an obvious one, you've got some churches, there's statues, there's stained glass windows, there's all kinds of, paraphernalia, idolatry, ritualism, where there's vestments, and ceremonies, and candles, and candles, priestcraft, where there's only, a select number, that have, some special status, it's priestcraft, yet the Bible says, there's a priesthood, of all believers, every one of us, can participate, and be a part, formalism, where there's an emphasis, on external forms, without any substance, syncretism, where there's a synthesis, or satanic, of blending, of different religions, of different philosophies, into some, compromised, construction, and hypocrisy,

God hates, hypocrisy, our Lord said to the Pharisees, scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites, God hates, false religion, false religion, whether it be, idolatry, ritualism, priestcraft, formalism, syncretism, or hypocrisy, worship, can be false, it can be rejected, of God, we can be mistaken, into meaning, making a lot of noise, and being sincerely busy, with a whole lot of programs, and things of man, and yet missing, the whole point, the reality of God, worship, friends, let me, draw your attention, in contrast now, from false worship, to real worship, from false religion, to real faith, Genesis 22, verse 5, it says, Abraham said, I and the Lamb, will go yonder, and worship, and come again to you,

[23 : 41] Genesis 22, verse 5, is the first mention, of worship, the first mention, of worship, in the Bible, as in the word, worship, and it reveals, that essence of worship, is sacrifice, as we know, Abraham, took his son, to be an offering, he was willing, for the son, to be an offering, on the mountain, he said, I'm going to go, over there, and I'm going to worship, and sacrifice, was, an essential part, God wants true worship, from worshipers, whose heart is right, living sacrifices, living sacrifices, you and me, you and me brother, you and me sister, living sacrifices, worshipers, in John 4, 23, our Lord, was talking, to the woman, at the well, and she says, the hour cometh, and now is, when true worshipers, will worship the Father, in spirit, and in truth, for the Father, seeketh such, to worship him,

God is a spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him, in spirit, and in truth, in spirit, and in truth, that's the, reality of worship, it's a heart work, it's a worship, that, is real, doesn't just look, authentic, it is real, otherwise, it dishonours, our God, someone put it, people today, are not just being true, to false gods, but false, to the true God, we need to be real, with God, true to God, he says, in vain, they do worship, in teaching, for doctrines, the commandments, of man, the Pharisees, had all these traditions, and commandments, of man as doctrine, they're getting away, from Bible doctrine, to their own kind, of doctrine, their own kind, of teachings, we're seeing that today, where, oh, you don't question, the so called, slaying in the spirit, oh, if Benny Hinn's doing it, must be right, you know, people got this view, if these leading lights, of the stage, of the false, of the, the charismatic stage, if they're doing it, it must be right, it doesn't matter, if you can't find it, in the Bible, that's what some people think, it's, a commandment, of man, it's a doctrine, of man, it's a teaching, of man, real worship, is anchored, in the Bible, and anchored, in Bible teaching, and authority, real worship, is the overflow, of a grateful heart, in response, to divine favor, it's not worked up, but it springs up, it springs up, like a well, within, real worship, that's what we want, isn't it, that's what you want, isn't it, real worship,

I trust you do, it's, as someone described it, the outpouring of a soul, at rest, in the presence of God, it's that knowledge, that we're accepted, in the beloved, Ephesians 1, verse 6, someone has, defined it, real worship, as the occupation, of the heart, not with its need, or even its blessings, but, with God, himself, the occupation, of the heart, not with its needs, or its blessings, but with God, himself, can we be truly, occupied with God, can man, truly live, as he was created to, to glorify God, genuine worship, is that expression, it's that relationship, with our God, it's that love, unto him, as we gather to praise, the majesty of God, as we catch a glimpse, of the holiness of God, as we seek his will, as we heed the word of God, that's true worship, as we truly, are raising him up, in our worship, there's a drawing of people, unto him, there's a conviction, there's a, a stirring of hearts, instead of false worship, let us give him, our genuine worship, friends today, be encouraged, read the Psalms, and be stirred, read the Psalms, sing the Psalms, give unto the Lord, the glory, due, unto his name, worship, the Lord, in the beauty, of holiness,

Psalms 29, verse 2, there's so many we could, refer to, turn to the Psalms, and make it, the song of your heart, make it the melody, of your heart, Hebrews 13, 15 it says, by him therefore, let us offer, the sacrifice, of praise to God, continually, that is the fruit, of our lips, giving praise, giving thanks, to his name, real worship, it's more than, just singing praise, it's about living a life, of worship, it's living a life, that is a living sacrifice, unto him, and true worship, affects all of our life, it's not something, we switch on and off, according to, the clock, according to, the atmosphere, I will come and worship, and wait, till the same time, next week, to worship him, but it's, a life, of worship, it's a life, of living worship, and friends, just to, wrap up, someone has, indicated, how worship, affects the whole, of our lives, there's some references here, let me relate to you, how worship, can truly affect, the whole of our life, the whole of our being, not just some token gesture, but a true worship, will affect, all of these things, for example, our sanity, our sanity, our, the well being, of our mind, Isaiah 26, verse 3, but thou wilt keep him, in perfect peace, his mind, is stayed, on thee, because he trusteth, in thee, he's going to keep your mind, in perfect peace, in these days, where many are inclined, to stress, and be stressed, stressed out, stressful, living, our mind, can be stayed, on God, as we put our trust, in him, worship, affects our sanity, it affects our families, our marriages, as we read, in Psalm 145, verse 4, one generation, shall praise, thy works to another, and shall declare, thy mighty acts, fathers, you can declare, his praise, to your children, you can declare, his praises, to one another, worship, affects our families, it affects our sleep, in Psalm 63, 6 to 7, it says, when I remember thee, upon my bed, I meditate on thee, in the night watchers, because thou hast, be my help, therefore, in the shadow, of thy wings, will I rejoice, it affects your sleep, you can lie down, and

be restful, in your God, you can, remember him, and meditate, on him, in the night watchers, your worship, affects, your church, your gathering, together, the assembly, as it says, in Psalm 22, 22, [30 : 49] I will declare thy name, unto my brethren, in the midst of the congregation, will I praise thee, lift up your voice, and praise him, use your lips, to praise him, shout praises, shout amens, let your lips, declare, the blessing, to those around about, you know, it talks of, teaching one another, in Psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, making melody, in your heart, to the Lord, there's time, where there's, there's much truth, in the songs, that we can sing, and we can declare them, unto one another, there's a delighting, in the Lord, that we can share, it's not a selfish thing, it's a combined effort, we can know worship, in our jobs, in the very workplaces, where we labour, in Colossians 3, 23, it says, and whatsoever, I do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not, unto the Lord, man, so in that workplace, where you labour, be a light there, be the hardest worker, be that one, you can be counted upon, that your testimony, is a glowing one, in the workplace, it's a worship, unto our God, whatsoever you do, do it heartily, not half-hearted, but heartily, as to the Lord, who is your true master, and, worship, affects our money, in Matthew 2, verse 11, what did, the men do, when they came, to worship, as they saw the young child, with Mary, his mother, they fell down, and worshipped him, and when they opened, their treasures, they presented unto him, gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh, we start giving our best, when we worship, when we worship him, and friends, just, think of the example, of the, woman, with an alabaster, box of ointment, of spikenard, in Mark 14, 3, here she was, a woman, perhaps not well regarded, came to the house, of Simon the leper, in Mark 14, verse 3, again, an environment, where he was a man, who would have been, disdained, and looked down upon, and just tossed aside, and as he, as the Lord Jesus, sat there, at the table, there came a woman, having an alabaster, box of ointment, of spikenard, very precious, and she broke the box, and poured it, on his hair, she broke that box, of ointment, very precious, that ointment, very, very treasured, and the perfume, poured out, friends, we need to be, poured out, as that, picture of worship, as that, perfume, was poured out, as that, anointing, was given, to his head, we need to be, poured out, likewise, to have that, poured out life, that out poured life, that's worship, real worship, it's a transformed life, and we can sing, truly those psalms, such as Psalm 103, verse 1, bless the Lord,

O my soul, and forget not, his benefits, bless the Lord, O my soul, all that is within me, bless, his holy name, as Psalm 33, 8 says, let all the earth, fear the Lord, let all the inhabitants, of the world, stand in awe of him, fear the Lord, stand in awe of him, worship, is getting our heart, our soul, our mind, fixed on God, is standing in awe of him, standing in awe of him, let us, let us, reflect, on, these things, as we live our lives, think of the worship, that keeps our sanity, worship that affects, our families, that's evident, in our, restfulness, in our, assembling together, in our workplaces, in, in our giving, it's a lifestyle, it's a heart work, in contrast to, false religion, false religion, which God hates, he doesn't, receive it, and friends, we need to take stock, what kind of worship, do I give, is it real, or is it false, is it something,

God will receive, or will reject, and what matters, is the heart, it matters the heart, of man, it matters our heart condition, it's not, the critical truth is, I believe, it's the heart, of man, and friends, if you're not, a believer tonight, then, your worship, will not be received, the Lord, says in, Psalms, that, if we regard, iniquity, in our heart, the Lord, will not hear us, you know, it doesn't get, any further than the ceiling, the prayer that you're praying, if you're not saved today, you must turn to him, you must trust him, you must repent, and turn unto him, put your faith, in Christ tonight, for time and eternity, put your faith, no longer in yourself, put your faith, entirely in him, and what he has done, entirely, in what he has, done at the cross, in bleeding, in dying, in rising, and to come again, for those who love him, friends, be found in him, be found in him, not having your own righteousness, but having his,

I urge you tonight, if there's any here present, you've yet to trust him, you're not saved, you can't think, of a time, of a moment, of a day, when you fully trusted him, you gave your life, you surrendered it, he grabbed a hold of you, friends, if you've not come, to such a day, today can be the day, it says in the word, today, is the day of salvation, behold now, is the accepted time, don't resist, the Holy Spirit, if God is speaking, to your heart, and friends, if you want to trust him, please seek prayer, before you leave, that we can encourage your heart, if you can find another believer, another Christian here tonight, to pray with, they can guide you through, to make that decision tonight, if you're a Christian here tonight, and you've been, part of the Laodicean church, be stirred tonight, be stirred, be re-fired tonight, be encouraged, this is not to condemn, but to encourage, and

to foster, that true religion, that true worship, that true faith, that saves, let us pray.