

RELIGION AT ITS WORST

1. Text: I Kings 22:5-8
2. Our faith and religion is so important to us. We cringe to think of religion misused. But our text stands as a classic example of religion at its worst.
3. Context: Judah and Israel are preparing to go to war against Syria. Good king Jehoshaphat wants to know if God is with them. "Please inquire for the word of the Lord."
4. What is wrong here with the religious situation?

I. **The Spokesmen For God Were False.**

1. Verse six: "Go up, the Lord will deliver it into your hand."
2. Matthew 7:15 "Beware of false prophets."
3. I John 4:1 Do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits whether they are of God.

II. **The Majority Agreed And Were Still Wrong.**

1. "The false 400." (22:6) All of them said it. (verse 12)
2. Everything was in one direction.
3. Not time, zeal, or numbers can transform error into truth.
4. "Truth is truth even if no one believes it. Error is error even if everyone believes it."
5. Matthew 7:13-14 Broad is the way to destruction and many go in by it.

III. **The Evil Use Religion For Advantage.**

1. Ahab, king of Israel, is an evil man. He wants God's message to reflect his will and desire. He wants Judah on his side.
2. Simony (the use of religion for personal gain) has been around a long time. See Acts 8:18-19.
3. Much in modern, popular religion is centered in personal prosperity of the proponents and "converts."

IV. **The True Man Of God Stood Alone.**

1. Verse 8: "There is still one man."
2. The need for courage. Joshua 1:7 Only be strong and very courageous. Elijah in I Kings 18:21
3. "Be of good courage." (at least 16 times)
4. Our need today:

V. **The True Man Of God Was Hated.**

1. Verse 8 again: "There is still one man but I hate him."
2. Why would Ahab feel that way? "Because he does not prophecy good concerning me, but evil."
3. Matthew 5:44 "Do good to them that hate you."
4. John 15:18 If the world hates you, remember it hated me first.
5. Hard reality:

VI. **The True Man Of God Was Pressed To Join The Majority.**

1. I Kings 22:13 The messenger sent for the prophet encourages him to "let your word be like the word of one of them."
2. Tremendous pressure always to surrender or at least compromise.
3. II Timothy 4:2-4 Preach the word; keep preaching it.

Conclusion:

A Sermon preached by Monte Ginnings
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