

MODERN RELIGIOUS TRENDS

We cannot fail to recognize the tremendous changes that have taken place in the last few decades. Probably life has been altered more in the past half century than it had been in several prior centuries. There have been many changes in religion too. This morning, we want to mention some of the changing religious trends. Those who are uninformed might be startled to know some of the theological notions that are being advocated.

Among many religious leaders, there is widespread denial of the inspiration of the Bible. Many theologians are saying that the Bible did not really come from God. They argue that there is much that is good in the Scriptures, but at the same time they say that much of the Bible cannot be accepted. Actually, this modernistic position suggests that the Bible is part true and part false. Then with egotistic presumption, they decide what is truth and what is fable.

Following with this, there is also a widespread denial of the authority of the Bible. Of course, those who will not accept its inspiration will not accept its authority. But there are others who give lip service to its inspiration and at the same time reject the absoluteness of its authority. They depend, instead, upon the decisions of councils, and the conclusions of scholars to determine their creed and practice.

There is also widespread unbelief relative to Jesus Christ. Many deny His divinity. Startling as it may seem, there are men of prominence in churches who say Jesus was not born of a virgin, that He performed no miracles, that He did not die as an atonement for sin, and that He **was** not resurrected. They argue that, at best, Jesus was merely a good man and a great teacher. We cannot be surprised that religion has lost its meaning for many people when we realize that such bold infidelity is infiltrating churches.

It is obvious, too, that the teachings of the Savior are also denied. A gospel preacher once read Mark 16:16 to a woman who was denying the importance of baptism. The passage said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." When confronted with such clear evidence, the woman answered: "I don't care what the Bible says, I don't believe it!" Such boldness would not be often found; but in a more subtle way, many deny the things Jesus taught. Instead of openly, saying, "I don't believe it," they explain and reason until they reach a contrary conclusion. But, my friends, one method of denying the truth is no better than another.

As we consider some of today's religious trends, we are reminded of an occasion in the life of Jesus when many of His followers forsook Him. He asked the twelve, "Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou has the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." John 6:66-69

May God continue bless you as you search for the truth.