

Dealing with the Sacred

Sacred - hagiatio (hag-ee-ad'-zo); to make holy, to purify or consecrate; (hallow, sanctify.)

Jesus shows the foolishness of twisting what is sacred and what is not - Matt 23:16-19 - 16 "Woe to you, **BLIND GUIDES! YOU SAY**, 'If anyone swears by the temple, it means nothing; but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.' 17 **You BLIND FOOLS! Which is greater: the gold, or the temple that makes the gold sacred?** 18 **YOU ALSO SAY**, 'If anyone swears by the altar, it means nothing; but if anyone swears by the gift on it, he is bound by his oath.' 19 **You blind men! Which is greater: the gift, or the altar that makes the gift sacred?**

How do we distort what is sacred?

- By making things that **ARE NOT** Sacred...sacred
 - Country, Traditions, Historical events & movements...
- By distorting things that are sacred and HOW they are Sacred
 - Worship (Jn 4:23-24), Provisions (Matt 6:31-33), Revenge (Ro 12:19) ...

For example, we keep debating and changing marriage (i.e, who you can marry & how divorce works) without showing how sacred it is
Matt 19:4-6 - 4 "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning **the Creator 'made them male and female,'** 5 and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh?' 6 So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore **what GOD HAS JOINED TOGETHER, let man not separate.**"

Matt 19:8-9 - 8 Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But **it was not this way from the beginning.** 9 I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery."

The main problem is the absence of reverence (especially when replaced with "meaning well") – 2 Sam 6:6-7 - 6 When they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out and took hold of the ark of God, because the oxen stumbled. 7 The Lord's anger burned against Uzzah because of his irreverent act; therefore God struck him down and he died there beside the ark of God.

We tend to follow the same pattern today - Mark 7:6-8 - 6 He replied, "Isaiah was right when he prophesied about **you hypocrites**; as it is written: "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. 7 They **worship me in vain**; their teachings are but rules taught by men.' 8 You have **LET GO** of the **commands of God** and are **HOLDING ON** to the **traditions of men.**"

There is an extreme danger of not handling what IS sacred as sacred –

Communion is more than a sentimental ritual everyone has a right to take - 1 Cor 11:27-32 – *How we take communion & the dangers for taking it incorrectly

Our bodies are more than just bodies - 1 Cor 3:16-17 - 16 Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? 17 If anyone destroys God's temple, God WILL destroy him; for **GOD'S TEMPLE IS SACRED**, and you are that temple.

Christians are sacred - 1 Peter 2:9-10 - 9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. 10 Once you were not a people, but now **YOU ARE THE PEOPLE OF GOD**; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy

Example of something we make sacred that distorts what truly is sacred - Matt 10:34-37 - 34 "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35 For **I have come to turn** "a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law— 36 **a MAN'S ENEMIES WILL BE THE MEMBERS OF HIS OWN HOUSEHOLD.**' 37 "Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is NOT WORTHY OF ME; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is NOT WORTHY OF ME; (*Remember, when we do anything that is not Christ's way, we do it wrong because He is the way!!)

How to deal with what's truly sacred

We deal with God and the things of God through God's Word led by God's Spirit - John 4:23-24 - 23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. 24 God is spirit, and his worshipers MUST WORSHIP in spirit and in truth."

Make sure you realize what God values is NOT the same as what man values - Luke 16:15 He said to them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but **God knows your hearts**. What is highly valued among men **IS DETESTABLE** in God's sight.

The Sacred are meant for Believers only - Matt 7:6 "Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces.

Realize the danger before you value something - James 4:4 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world IS hatred toward God? Anyone who **CHOOSES** to be a friend of the world **BECOMES** an enemy of God.

We must only value the things of God - Matt 6:19-21 - 19 "**Do not store up for yourselves TREASURES ON EARTH**, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But **store up for yourselves TREASURES IN HEAVEN**, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart WILL be also.

We must make sure our passion for things is not stronger than our Reverence for God

The purpose - Gal 4:18 It is fine to be zealous, PROVIDED the purpose is good, and to be so always and not just when I am with you.

THE PROCESS - Rom 10:2 For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but **their zeal is NOT BASED ON KNOWLEDGE.**

The sacredness of God's Word is to be completely followed. Turning from the Word is unacceptable - 2 Peter 2:21 It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them

Let's deal with God and the things of God with reverence - Heb 12:28-29 - 28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably **WITH REVERENCE AND AWE**, 29 for our "God is a consuming fire."

In our living in True reverence, we allow God to Truly work with us - Phil 2:12-13 - 12 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed — not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence — continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for **it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.**