

Religion of the Heart

by Joseph Parker

True religion is a personal, loving relationship with God, experienced through faith in Jesus Christ.

Scripture: John 7:15, Romans 5:1, 1 Corinthians 1:25, Philippians 4:7, 1 Peter 1:8

Topics: "Heartfelt Faith", "Personal Relationship"

Description

Joseph Parker emphasizes that true religion is not learned through academic knowledge but is a divine experience in the soul, a communion with God that transcends human understanding. He contrasts the eloquence of heartfelt emotion and genuine connection with God to the superficiality of religious practices based on routine and tradition. Parker encourages embracing the various expressions of faith and learning, highlighting that Christianity is about peace, joy, and a profound relationship with God that surpasses human comprehension.

Transcript

"The Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" (John 7:15).

Now above all things it is preeminently true that religion is not learned by letters; it is a divine action in the soul; it is a divine communion; it is the claiming of a kinship long ignored or long misunderstood; it is the look of friend to friend; it is the recognition which comes into the eyes of the wandering child when through all his sin and sorrow and disablement he begins to trace the outline of a pursuing and loving father. Then grammar would be out of place; only one eloquence is possible--the eloquence of sobbing, the eloquence that chokes the throat when it would talk, for talk in such circumstances approaches profanity.

Yet there are those who can give you all their reasons for being religious. It would be harsh to condemn them. There is a piety that goes by the calendar: there is a prayer appointed for today which must not be said tomorrow, and which would have been out of place yesterday; there is a mechanical, formal, and even disciplinary way of living, but there is a religion that cannot give any reasons for itself beyond the reasons which childhood suggests, which love breathes, which an ineffable confidence clings to. We must make room for all these varieties. Make room for all and every kind of learning. Christianity is not a controversy; it is peace, it is a sacred gladness of the heart that dare sometimes scarcely allow itself to hear its own voice, lest it should lose a charm, a possession infinite. There is a silence that is eloquent. Being justified by faith through our Lord Jesus Christ, we have peace with God--a peace that passeth understanding, a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

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