

Direct From Dave —

September 6, 2018



What is Fake Christianity?

In the next 4 weeks we will be looking at that very thing. I sometimes think the world sees us going through the motions and not really doing what Christians need to be doing. I think that people observe or perceive a certain behavior and then find out that a person is a Christian and they are shocked. You see, we need to be Christians more than just on Sunday.



So a new sermon series begins this Sunday. We will be looking at **Fake Christianity** compared to real/authentic/genuine Christianity. We will begin with "**Fake Christianity: Churchism.**" Now to be honest, this is a tricky one. I believe that going to church is very important. Why I even preached a sermon series on "**Can't Miss a Sunday.**" I think it is important that you attend and belong to a church. There are many positive attributes associated with church membership.

What I am concerned about is church and religiosity taking the place of God. I'm all about loyalty to a church, but being in a church should not be a place where legalistic rules prohibit Kingdom growth. Allow me to give 2 examples. Both these examples are from churches I have served previously to PHUMC.

I was having a Children's Rally at the church I was serving. I invited a United Methodist Pastor friend of mine who was a semi-professional magician. He used what is called "Gospel Magic." He had elaborate tricks, live animals and really was quite the magician, and each 'trick' helped him convey Good News of Jesus. The church platform (chancel) area was very small. The altar table that had the 2 candles where the offering was placed was right in the middle of the platform. When my guest pastor friend was setting up his equipment he asked if he could move some things. For him to have the space he needed, I did not object. So we moved the "altar table" to the side of the sanctuary to make room for him to minister to children that evening. Before the weekend was up I had a Trustee very upset at me. How dare I move that altar table!!! "*That table is not be moved! We have never moved that altar table.*" Oh my! I was simply trying to make room on this Friday or Saturday for children to hear the Good News of Jesus in a way that might make a difference in their life. In my opinion the Trustee, who was a friend of mine, was caught up more in religious rules than what I saw as a Kingdom issue.

Example #2 (again not at PHUMC) A lady was upset at seeing a person bring a cup of coffee into the sanctuary. She was so upset she went to my Associate and said, "*Pastor Herb, there's a person over there with a cup of coffee in the sanctuary. What are you going to do about it?*" Pastor Herb called her by name (by the way it wasn't the first time she had complained about something J), and said, "*I'm not going to do anything, I'm not the coffee police, and neither are you.*" And then he turned around and walked away.

Bill Easum, a church consultant and well respected leader in the '90's, wrote a book entitled, "*Sacred Cows Make Gourmet Burgers.*" Yep, sometimes "rules" have replaced relationship. I want to be flexible enough to make sure that we don't 'lock' the kingdom away from people simply because of legalistic rules or our religiosity. What are the true Kingdom things???

⁸ See to it that nobody enslaves you with philosophy and foolish deception, which conform to human traditions and the way the world thinks and acts rather than Christ.

Colossians 2:8 (Common English Bible)

Let's not let "churchism," but a true faith and hope in Jesus Christ, define us here at PHUMC. Let's get real with our Christianity!

With the Joy of Christ,

Pastor Dave

Sunday Sermon

September 9, 2018

8:05, 9:30, 11:05 a.m.

Scripture: Colossians 2:6-8 (CEB)

Our faith is in Christ, not in a church.

**DON'T LET YOUR
LIPS AND YOUR
LIVES PREACH
TWO DIFFERENT
MESSAGES**

Palm Harbor United Methodist Church

1551 Belcher Road (between Nebraska & Alderman), Palm Harbor, FL 34683

Phone: 727-785-7487

Website: www.phumc.net

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