

RELIGIOUS DECEPTION

I never cease to be amazed at how gullible people are when it comes to anything done in the name of religion. As you watch and listen to the preachers on TV and radio it makes you wonder how anyone who has any knowledge whatsoever could be deceived by some of the schemes used by these men. During the time I lived in the St. Louis area I heard one of these TV preachers say that the Lord had told him to take some dirt from the tomb where Jesus was buried and to make this available to the people. He claimed to have taken this dirt from the tomb and was making it available in small bottles that could be worn around the neck. Of course these were "absolutely free" to every person that would send \$20.00 to this preacher. I wonder how many people responded to this lie. I know it was a lie because the Lord did NOT tell this man to do this. God's will has been revealed and is complete and final (2 Timothy 3:16,17; Jude 3). Nowhere in the word of God is anyone told "to take the dirt from the tomb of Jesus." When this man, or any other man, claims that the Lord instructed him to do so he is either deceived or is guilty of seeking to deceive others. I am persuaded it is the latter.

I am sorry to say that this man is not alone in such deception. There is a preacher who has been on the Harrodsburg, Kentucky radio station (and maybe others) for years that makes the same type of appeals. He offers various items "absolutely free" to listeners who will send contributions to his "ministry." When I lived in Harrodsburg several years ago he offered a cassette tape recorder (which could be purchased at that time for about \$25) "absolutely free" to anyone making a \$75 contribution to his "ministry." Each time I hear these men making such pleas I think of Peter's words in 2 Peter 2:3 (*"And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."*) Yes, these men are false teachers and deceivers and are making merchandise of the people. Peter said they would *"bring upon themselves swift destruction"* (2 Peter 2:1).

We plead with each of you to search the scriptures and know what the will of the Lord is. With such knowledge you can avoid being deceived by such men.

✍ James Hahn