

Where Do You “Tune Him Out”?

Dub McClish

When I was a small boy my family was very close to a Godly medical doctor in Liberty Hill, TX. This man had a hearing problem and wore a hearing aid the last few years of his life. It was sort of a family joke that much of his deafness was perhaps a matter of convenience. Many times, people would assume he could not hear when he could. Also, when he didn't want to hear something, he could always “tune it out,” either literally or figuratively, and plead that he was hard of hearing. One doesn't have to be hard of hearing to practice this trick. In fact, it has been going on ever since God has been communicating with men. Jesus accused the Jews of His generation of having ears that were dull of hearing (Mat. 13:15), and He was quoting from the outcry of Isaiah against God's people of seven centuries earlier (Isa. 6:9-10). Their prejudiced hearts refused to admit the truth and the evidence that was being set before them. They “tuned him out.” Like the doctor, they heard only what they wanted to.

The skeptic philosopher, theological liberal, and atheist may accept the fact that Jesus of Nazareth lived and died, but they “tune Him out” when they read the indisputable miracles He performed, witnessed by thousands. They further become dull of hearing when they read of His virgin birth and His resurrection, saying that these are impossible, and that they don't matter anyway. To them He was merely a good man who died a needless martyr's death for a lost cause.

Others, while sincerely giving lip service to the Scriptures on many points, tune the Lord out when the exclusive pattern for the church in worship, organization, and purpose is taught. Some will listen to the Lord as He emphasizes the necessity of faith, repentance, and confession for salvation, but when He requires baptism, they tune Him out.

We have a problem with this in our lives as Christians, too. Some will “amen” the preacher as long as he is preaching on the Deity of Christ, the oneness of the Church, or the necessity of baptism, but let him emphasize (with equal Scriptural authority) the evils of such worldliness as drinking and dancing, forsaking the assembly, stinginess, pride, divorce and remarriage for every cause, and other matters they might be involved in—and they “tune Him out.” “Take heed how ye hear” (Luke 8:18).

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