

Apples of Gold

Zvi Kalisher's life-changing spiritual conversations

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YOU TRUST IN TEACHERS RATHER THAN GOD

Some days things happen that you never expect. Recently my wife sent me to the supermarket with a list of things to buy. As I was looking for what she wanted, something happened that I never could have planned.

A few months ago I had a long conversation with an ultra-Orthodox man about faith in Christ. Who should be in the store but that man. He began pointing at me and shouting, "Beware of this man! He is very dangerous!"

I have lived here a long time, and almost everyone knows me. I have helped many with home repairs and other tasks. They know me as a friend who would never harm anyone. So they thought this man was crazy.

"If you are so strong in your faith," I said, "tell these people who you worship. You trust in teachers, rather than in God."

A crowd began to gather. Everyone was looking at the man, thinking he had lost his mind. For half an hour we discussed faith, with everyone listening.

He declared, "You try to persuade people to leave the pure faith of Judaism. You want to make them Christians."

I gave him much time to speak. He does not understand that he is the one who is not practicing the pure faith of Judaism. He is following rabbinic tradition rather than God's Word. Sadly, the Orthodox lean heavily on the

Talmud and their rabbis' teachings.

After a while, people began asking me what I thought.

"First," I said, "Thank you for giving me an opportunity to reply." Then I asked them, "In whom should we place our trust? In the Lord, or in men? I put my trust in the Lord. I do not approach people with fictional books written by those who call themselves holy. I use one book: the Bible. There it is written in Deuteronomy 6:13–14, 'You shall fear the LORD your God and serve Him....You shall not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples who are all around you (for the LORD your God is a jealous God among you).' We must follow God with all our hearts."

The ultra-Orthodox man became even more agitated and screamed in a high-pitched voice, "He tried to make me a Christian!"

So I showed them my Bible, which I always have with me in a small bag, and told them, "Please read this and see if what I am saying is against the Jewish law."

Several people examined my Bible from beginning to end. "This is the true Bible," one declared.

"Please," I continued, "take this Book. It contains the important words of the Lord. We must follow these words, not the many laws the rabbis have written—most of which they do not follow themselves. We are to fear the Lord and serve Him only. We are not to worship men who have long beards and wear black clothing and try to tell us what to believe."

People had stopped shopping and were listening carefully. I always try to explain to people they must read the Bible only. Unfortunately, many Jewish people have become so unsure of their own ability to understand God's Word that they go to a rabbi and ask his interpretation.

Many people asked me how I came to know all this. I told them, "I read my Bible and worship God according to His Word. Is this against the Law?" "We agree with you," they all said. The ultra-Orthodox man was very disappointed. But I was happy that God had brought so many people to me. Even though I had not planned anything, I had a good opportunity to speak about true faith in the God of Israel, according to the Bible.