

Making Effective Things of No Effect

Matt. 15:6

I. Introduction: I

- I. 2 It is possible to make effective things of no effect.
 - A. Think about it: an unread map, an uncharged battery, unheeded recipe.
 - B. These are all effective things that can be made of no effect.
2. The Bible is filled with “effective things” that, if we are not careful, can be made of “no effect” (e.g., **Matt. 15:3-6**). 3 Let’s consider some Bible things that can be made of “no effect”...

II. Discussion:

I. 4 The Word of God:

- A. The word of God is the truth (Jn. 17:17); it is alive (Heb. 4:12); and it is powerful (Rom. 1:16-17; Jas. 1:21: “...receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.”). Yet most are lost. What’s the problem? Is God’s word somehow ineffective?
- B. No, the problem is that man can make God’s word of no effect.
- C. ** This can be done through:
 - (1) Lack of faith in the Bible as God’s word (**2 Tim. 3:16-17**),
 - (2) Ignorance of the Bible’s teachings (**Rom. 10:1-3**).
 - (3) Hardness of heart (**Matt. 13:13-15**), or,
 - (4) Following the traditions of men (**Matt. 15:1-6**).
- D. Do you use God’s word as your only guide? I Peter 4:11

2. 5 Christ:

- A. Christ is powerful! (**Jn. 1:1-3**: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.”; Heb. 11:3) He is “the King of kings and Lord of lords” (1 Tim. 6:15).
- B. ** But we can make Christ of “no effect” by:
 - (1) Seeking justification in the law of Moses (**Gal. 2:21**: “...if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.”; **Gal. 5:4**: You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.),
 - (2) Following the doctrines of men (**Matt. 15:9**: “And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.”) or,
 - (3) Simply refusing to listen to Him (**Heb. 12:25**: “See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven.”; Heb. 1:1-2; Matt. 17:5; 28:20; **Jn. 15:14**: “You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.”; Heb. 5:9).
- C. If we’re not taking up our cross daily to follow Him, He does us no good at all! (cf. **Lk. 9:23**: “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.”)

3. 6 The Cross of Christ:

- A. The cross is powerful! It reconciles us to God (**Eph. 2:16**: “and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.”). But we can make

the cross of Christ of no effect by preaching the wisdom of men (**1 Cor. 1:17-18**: “For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect. For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”)

B. Jesus’ death was necessary to implement the New Testament (Heb. 9:15-17).

C. In fact, anytime we deviate from the simple gospel of Christ as revealed in the New Testament we make His cross of no effect!

D. Are you making His cross of no effect by following “another gospel”? (cf. Gal. 1:6-9)

4. **7** God’s Promises:

A. God “cannot lie” and promised us “eternal life” “before time began” (Titus 1:2; 1 Tim. 2:4). But, we can make God’s promise of no effect!

(1) **8** Paul said, “as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Gal. 3:27).

(2) Concerning Jesus, Peter said, “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12; Acts 2:38-39: “...the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”)

(3) Thus, if we are not baptized we are not “in Christ” and make God’s promise ineffective.

B. **9** In Acts 2 those that “gladly received” God’s word “were baptized” (Acts 2:41) and “the Lord added” them “to the church”, they were “saved” (Acts 2:47).

(1) To what church did the Lord add them?

(2) He did not add them to any denominational church!

(3) **10** The only church in existence was the church the Lord promised to build (Matt. 16:18); the church “which He purchased with His own blood” (Acts 20:28); the church of Christ!

(4) Any other “church” He promises “shall be rooted up” (Matt. 15:13). ******Denominationalism makes God’s promises of no effect!

C. **11** God’s promise of “eternal life” is reserved for those who obey the gospel and remain faithful. So we can make God’s promise of no effect through unfaithfulness! How?

(1) By having an “evil heart of unbelief” (**Heb. 3:12-19**),

(2) By failing to discharge “your reasonable service” (Rom. 12:1-2),

(3) By not taking “up his cross daily” (Lk. 9:23),

(4) By not “abounding in the work of the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58),

(5) **12** By not putting “to death your members which are on the earth” (Col. 3:5),

(6) By not considering “the interests of others” (Phil. 2:4).

(7) By not “liberal sharing with...all men” (2 Cor. 9:13: “...your liberal sharing with all men”; cf. Matt. 25:31-46),

(8) By not remaining “faithful until death” (Rev. 2:10).

III. **Conclusion**:

1. **13** Are you making effective things of no effect?

2. Why not take advantage of God’s effective things...today! 2 Cor. 6:2