What Does God Think About Religion?

**Experience genuineness and transparency with God**

**Monday**

Read Matthew 15:1-6, James 1:27

* *Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to show you anything that nullifies the Word of God in your life.*

**Tuesday**

Read Matthew 15:7-9, John 4:21-24

* *God is looking for sincere, real worshippers who have relationship with Him. Study and meditate on these scriptures and journalize how you can become a true worshiper.*

**Wednesday**

Read Matthew 15:10-11, James 3:1-12, Matthew 12:36

* *Study these scriptures about the danger of what we say. Journalize your thoughts.*

**Thursday**

Read Matthew 15:12-14, 1 Corinthians 11:1

* *Jesus talked about blind guides, that is, leaders who can’t see where they were going. All of us are leading someone. What part of your example is godly and what part needs to be worked on?*

**Friday**

Read Matthew 15:15-16, Hebrews 5:11-14, 1 John 2:27, John 14:26

* *Do you ever feel that you lack spiritual intelligence and depth? Study these scriptures to find out how you can grow spiritually.*

*Wednesday night question:*

*What is the armor of God and how can I use it? (continued)*

*Read what the Bible says:*

*Ephesians 6:10-20 (focus on the sword of the Spirit and helmet of salvation)*

*Romans 8:12-17,26-27*

*John 14:15-31*

*Acts 2 (find all references to God saving)*

*What does the Bible teach?*

What Does God Think About Religion?

Matthew 15:1Then some Pharisees and teachers of the law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, **2**“Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don’t wash their hands before they eat!”

**3**Jesus replied, “And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? **4**For God said, ‘Honor your father and mother’[a] and ‘Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death.’[b] **5**But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father or mother is ‘devoted to God,’ **6**they are not to ‘honor their father or mother’ with it. Thus you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition. **7**You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you:

**8**

“‘These people honor me with their lips,

    but their hearts are far from me.

**9**

They worship me in vain;

    their teachings are merely human rules.’[c]”

**10**Jesus called the crowd to him and said, “Listen and understand. **11**What goes into someone’s mouth does not defile them, but what comes out of their mouth, that is what defiles them.”

**12**Then the disciples came to him and asked, “Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this?”

**13**He replied, “Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots. **14**Leave them; they are blind guides.[d] If the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit.”

**15**Peter said, “Explain the parable to us.”

**16**“Are you still so dull?” Jesus asked them. **17**“Don’t you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body? **18**But the things that come out of a person’s mouth come from the heart, and these defile them. **19**For out of the heart come evil thoughts—murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. **20**These are what defile a person; but eating with unwashed hands does not defile them.”

Matthew 15:1 Then some Pharisees and teachers of the law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, 2 “Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don’t wash their hands before they eat!”

Tradition of the elders - written jewish traditions; ‘dead weight of orthodoxy’

Religion majors on the minors.

Religious traditions can be really harmful.

Harmful meaning that they are confused for producing righteousness

or we get so comfortable with a way of doing things that when it changes we make a mountain out of a mole hill.

-Order of service

-When we have church

-Where we meet

-Claiming a seat in church

-Certain style of music

James 1:27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

**3**Jesus replied, “And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? **4**For God said, ‘Honor your father and mother’ and ‘Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death.’ **5**But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father or mother is ‘devoted to God,’ **6**they are not to ‘honor their father or mother’ with it. Thus you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition.

How could religion nullify the word of God?

-saying a prayer instead of simply praying

-going to church without living a different life

-singing a song without actually worshipping God

-never offering your time to serve others in love

**7**You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: **8** “‘These people honor me with their lips,

    but their hearts are far from me.

**9**They worship me in vain;

    their teachings are merely human rules.’”

Religion happens when you give lip service but no heart service.

Religion happens when there is no relationship with God.

Religion happens when we follow man-made rules instead of God’s rules.

Religion happens when we are more interested in appearances and a positive change of heart.

Hypocrites - pretenders, actors

Excuse for not becoming a Christian, “I don’t want to be hypocrite.”

The church is a not a beauty pageant, it is a hospital. So we certainly are going to have ‘sick’ people here…we are far from perfect.

But let’s be sincere and honest in our worship to God.

Daily devotion to God where He is more important that your:

-Career

-Plans

-Other’s perception of you

-Comfort

-Security

John 4:23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.

I want to worship God from my heart. More interested about what is happening on the inside, that what is visible on the outside.

Be real, be sincere, be transparent, show God what is really in you

I want to take off ‘my sandals’ as Moses did. I want to take off everything I put my confidence in, I want to take off everything that makes me feel ashamed or makes me feel insecure and worship the Lord…’in spirit and in truth.’

**10**Jesus called the crowd to him and said, “Listen and understand. **11**What goes into someone’s mouth does not defile them, but what comes out of their mouth, that is what defiles them.”

Defile - degrade, spoil

‘When you are easily offended, you will become offensive’

James 3:1 Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. **2**We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check.

What you say to others

What you say about others

What you say about yourself

Luke 6:45 for it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks.

**3**When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. **4**Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. **5**Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. **6**The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts (defiles) the whole body, sets the whole course of one’s life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.

**7**All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, **8**but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

**9**With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God’s likeness. **10**Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. **11**Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? **12**My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

Matthew 12:36 But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken.

empty/careless - idle, lazy, thoughtless, unprofitable, injurious

**12**Then the disciples came to him and asked, “Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this?”

Jesus addressed the following people strongly:

* 1. Religious people were his number one target
  2. Wishy washy - double minded, those who couldn’t decide if they were with Jesus or not
  3. Proud and stubborn people

To his disciples

* 1. Got onto them for not having faith or enough love
  2. If they were walking in the flesh (in their own strength)

Jesus generally spoke gently and with a friendly, loving tone to ‘sinners.’

**13**He replied, “Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots.

Are you planting something eternal or something temporary?

Example at work

**14**Leave them; they are blind guides. If the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit.”

Another word for guide is leader.

Leadership = influence

When you look behind you, who is following you? Who looks up to you? Who is watching you example?

1 Corinthians 11:1 Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

**15**Peter said, “Explain the parable to us.”

**16**“Are you still so dull?” Jesus asked them.

spiritually dense, dingy, dull

Hebrews 5:**11**We have much to say about this, but it is hard to make it clear to you because you no longer try to understand. **12**In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God’s word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! **13**Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. **14**But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

We can fall into spiritual laziness very easily.

“Just tell me what I need to know”

You don’t need any man to teach you, the Holy Spirit will teach you and remind you of all things.

[1 John 2:27](https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/1-John/2/27) As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him.

[John 14:26](https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/John/14/26). "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

**17**“Don’t you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body? **18**But the things that come out of a person’s mouth come from the heart, and these defile them. **19**For out of the heart come evil thoughts—murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. **20**These are what defile a person; but eating with unwashed hands does not defile them.”

From this list we understand that what we say is the only thing that defiles us, our actions do as well.