

SERMON NOTES
January 22, 2023
“True Faith vs Mere Religion”
Matthew 14:34 – 15:20

Pharisees strive to PROTECT their religious TRADITIONS
Jesus strives to INSTILL knowledge of the LIVING God.

I. THE CONTEXT 14:34-36

Jesus knew they were USING Him.

II. THE HARD QUESTION 15:2

- (1) Their concern was not HYGIENE but RITUAL
- (2) The Pharisees traditions MEANT far MORE to them than our traditions mean to us.
- (3) Pharisees assumed Jesus TAUGHT them to violate the traditions.

III. THE IMPORTANT QUESTION 15:3

Jesus cares about TRUE HOLINESS
Jesus asks the RIGHT QUESTIONS
Jesus specifies two ways for children to respect their parents.

- 1) SPEAK respectfully!
- 2) Jesus says, we OWE our parents aid in later years
A child owes OBEDIENCE
A child owes RESPECT
A child owes COMMUNICATION
A child owes CARE

❖ Respect and care is our DEBT to our parents.

Tradition looks at the HANDS; GOD's law examines the HEART

IV. THE DIAGNOSIS 15:7

The Pharisees slowly came to honor their OWN TEACHINGS
Their worship became vain & WORTHLESS
The Pharisees tried to attain holiness by REGULATIONS & tradition leaves the HEART untouched (Mt. 23-16-24) LAW-KEEPING
We tend to seek GOD's favor through RULE-KEEPING
We fail to CLAIM the Gospel DAILY

All traditions were probably ATTRACTIVE at some time.

Sometimes the WORDS or THOUGHTS of others become traditions.

- Thoughtless adherence IMPEDES
- We can become COMPLACENT
- We can start to believe ours is the ONLY proper way

1) Anyone can lapse into LEGALISM

❖ The legalist serves the rules

2) Legalism removes the need to live by GOD's STRENGTH & GRACE

❖ “Manageable” is the message of RELIGION

V. THE PLAIN TRUTH 15:10-20

Jesus was willing to offend because it was NECESSARY to PROTECT the people

Everyone needs to know how they can & cannot attain holiness

- ❖ The direction of the heart either purifies or defiles
- ❖ The mouth & the hand SHOW what is in the heart

1) Jesus compares the Pharisees to BLIND men

2) God compares Himself to a GARDENER

❖ Jesus planted the TRUTH in His disciples

➤ Religious hypocrisy is not HARMLESS

➤ It must be torn up so true FAITH can take root

CONCLUSION: True Faith

What is TRUE FAITH

➤ Our words ABOUT real faith are not REAL FAITH

True Believers have:

- ✓ A HEART for God
- ✓ A DESIRE to know Christ in His suffering & His glory
- ✓ A desire to PARTAKE in His life
- ❖ It includes love for the triune God & a secret UNION with Christ