

DESCENDING INTO GREATNESS

“Why God hates ‘Religianity’”

- 1. Review last week’s prayer requests and update each other**
- 2. Review the Big Idea:** What did you hear this morning?

It’s very easy for us to get caught up in keeping a bunch of rules or following other people’s expectations for what it really looks like to live for Jesus. It can be a real challenge to get out of the religious mindset of the ‘thou shall’ and ‘thou shall not’. As Jesus went about His days sometimes He was lead to go against the ordinary religious expectations to meet the needs of others. Jesus knew that the Christian live was not about religious rule keeping. Can we get out of a rule based mentality and chose relationships ahead of our religious paradigm? Because simply being about rule keeping prevents us from seeing the value in people and situations just because they are different from what we expect to see. What is it going to take from us to allow Jesus the chance to shape our thinking and change us from a rule keeper to someone who simply enjoys the relationship that He offers?

CHRISTIANITY BECOMES RELIGIANITY WHEN WE START TO CARE MORE ABOUT...

1. PERFORMANCE THAN PEOPLE

“But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...’ He said to the paralytic, ‘I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.’ He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all.”

Mark 2:10-12a [NIV]

“When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the ‘sinners’ and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: ‘Why does he eat with tax collectors and “sinners”?’ On hearing this, Jesus said to them, ‘It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.’”

Mark 2:16-17 [NIV]

2. “HOLINESS” THAN WHOLENESS

“Then he said to them, ‘The Sabbath was made for people, not people for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.’”

Mark 2:27-28 [TNIV]

“Then Jesus asked them, ‘Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?’ But they remained silent. He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, ‘Stretch out your hand.’ He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored.”

Mark 3:4-5 [NIV]

- *Why does it seem natural for us to define the Christian life according to the religious rules, ceremonies, and traditions?*
- *Share with the group some of the 'old wine skin religious mindsets' that you grew up with (...if any). Are these mindsets still a part of your Christian life today? How?*

NOTE: *If you grew up outside of the church share your impression of what Christianity was like based on what you saw in others.*

- *Is it a challenge for you to build genuine friendships with the 'Levi's (the people who need forgiveness the most) in your life? If so, Why? How does your relational life need to change to follow Jesus' example?*
- *What aspects of 'an old wine skin religious mindset' do you need to rethink to make the maximum impact in the lives of those around you?*

'Rubber meets the road'

- *Jesus never got distracted from befriending helpless, hopeless, and hurting people so they could see the difference that He can make. How does your life need to change to make that the goal of following Jesus' example?*

WHY DOES GOD HATE RELIGIANITY?

BECAUSE IN RELIGIANITY, RULES RULE RATHER THAN CHRIST.