

Real Religion 3

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There is an ingredient found in religion that if ingested, will destroy your relationship with God.

Matthew 16:5-12 – ⁵ Now when His disciples had come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread. ⁶ Then Jesus said to them, "**Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.**" ⁷ And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "It is because we have taken no bread." ⁸ But Jesus, being aware of it, said to them, "O you of little faith, why do you reason among yourselves because you have brought no bread? ⁹ Do you not yet understand, or remember the five loaves of the five thousand and how many baskets you took up? ¹⁰ Nor the seven loaves of the four thousand and how many large baskets you took up? ¹¹ How is it you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread? — **but to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.**" ¹² Then they understood that He did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but **of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.**

The doctrine of the Pharisee was to earn your righteousness by keeping the law.

It was self-righteousness obtained by religious rule keeping.

The doctrine of the Pharisee was to bury man under the burden of his sin by asking him to lift the impossible weight of obtaining righteousness by keeping the law.

Matthew 23:1-7 - Now Jesus turned to address his disciples, along with the crowd that had gathered with them. "The religion scholars and Pharisees are competent teachers in God's Law. You won't go wrong in following their teachings on Moses. But be careful about following them. They talk a good line, but they don't live it. They don't take it into their hearts and live it out in their behavior. It's all spit-and-polish veneer. ⁴⁻⁷" Instead of giving you God's Law as food and drink by which you can banquet on God, they package it in bundles of rules, loading you down like pack animals. They seem to take pleasure in watching you stagger under these loads, and wouldn't think of lifting a finger to help. ***The Message***

Pharisees added nuances to the existing 600+ laws of God.

Romans 3:20 - Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin. ***NIV***

- Law was a tutor to lead us to Christ.
- Law was intended to produce humility in us and drive us to a need for a Savior.
- Self-righteousness is when you use the law to make YOURSELF righteous.
- This is why, when we judge someone, we are in essence saying that I am more righteous than you, based upon my actions.
- All righteousness comes from God as a free gift and must be received as such.

Self-righteousness is the curse of religion. Why do you go to church, read your Bible, and pray?

Matthew 23:24-28 - ²⁴ You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel. ²⁵ "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You **clean the outside** of the cup and dish, but **inside** they are full of greed and self-indulgence. ²⁶ Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean. ²⁷ "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful **on the outside** but **on the inside** are full of dead men's bones and everything unclean. ²⁸ In the same way, on the outside **you appear to people as righteous (on the outside) but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.**

Jesus came to clean the "inside of the cup."

Religion demands that you "earn this."

You can respond to Jesus's sacrifice through gratitude or by trying to make yourself worthy.

Galatians 5:1-4,9 – ¹ It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. ² Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised (*justified by keeping the law*), Christ will be of no value to you at all. ³ Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to **obey the whole law.** ⁴ You who are trying to be **justified by law** have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. ⁹ "A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough."

The most dangerous thing about the yeast or doctrine of the Pharisee is that it will work into every area of your life.

You won't be loving, forgiving, and gracious, but will demand that people "earn" your favor, love, and acceptance.

You will treat others the same way you believe God treats you.

Philippians 3:4-9 – ⁴ Though I myself have reasons for such confidence [self-righteousness]. If anyone else thinks he has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: ⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless. ⁷ But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.

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