



“CLUES YOU ARE RELIGIOUS”

Series: “RELIGIOUS OR CHRISTIAN?”, Part 1 of 4

Sunday, September 8, 2024, at 9:00 and 11:00 AM

Text: Matthew 23

Big Idea: Religious forms without a vital relationship with God lead to spiritual sterility and deadness.

Definition of religion: “Belief in or acknowledgment of some superhuman power or powers (esp. a god or gods) which is typically manifested in obedience and reverence.” Oxford Dictionary

Matthew 23:2-3, “The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. 3 So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach.”

I. YOU VALUE RULES OVER RELATIONSHIP.

Matthew 23:4, “They tie up heavy loads and put them on men’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.”

Galatians 5:1, “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.”

Ezekiel 36:27, “And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.”

II. YOU VALUE PLEASING PEOPLE OVER PLEASING GOD.

Matthew 23:5a, “Everything they do is done for men to see.”

Matthew 23:5b, “They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long.”

Matthew 6:1a, “Be careful not to do your ‘acts of righteousness’ before men, to be seen by them.”

Matthew 23:6-7, "They love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; they love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them 'Rabbi.'"

1 Peter 3:3-4, "And let not your adornment be merely external— braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God." {NASV}

1 Samuel 16:7b, "The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

Matthew 23:25-28, "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. Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean. "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. In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness."

III. YOU VALUE FORM OVER SUBSTANCE.