

Freedom from the Religious Spirit

Part Three:

Symptoms of Dead Religion

When we choose rules
over relationship, we eat
from the wrong tree, and
become the embodiment
of the Religious Spirit.

The ultimate outcome of
eating from the wrong
tree is not just sins of
the flesh, but even worse
— pharisees.

Symptoms of Religion

1. Caring more about behavior than heart/
overly concerned with
outward appearance.

25 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For *you clean the outside of the cup* and of the dish, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence.

Matthew 23:25–28

26 “You blind Pharisee, *first clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may become clean also.*

27 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like *whitewashed tombs* which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness.

28 “So you, too, *outwardly appear righteous to men*, but inwardly you are full of *hypocrisy* and *lawlessness*.

Symptoms of Religion

2. Selectively
condemning certain sins
while condoning others.

23 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees,
hypocrites! For *you tithe* mint and dill
and cummin, *and have neglected the
weightier provisions of the law:* justice
and mercy and faithfulness;

Matthew 23:23–24

but these are the things you should
have done without neglecting the
others.

24 “You blind guides, who ***strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!***

Symptoms of Religion

3. Looking at others in
categories of our own

making.

("saint" vs. "sinner")

2 Both the Pharisees and the scribes *began* to grumble, saying, “This man receives *sinners* and eats with them.”

Luke 15:2

11 And He said, “A man had two
sons.

Luke 15:11

Symptoms of Religion

4. Showing love
selectively to those we
deem worthy of it.

29 But *wishing to justify himself*, he
said to Jesus, “And who is my
neighbor?”

Luke 10:29–33

30 Jesus replied and said, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead.

31 “And by chance *a priest* was
going down on that road, and when
he saw him, *he passed by* on the
other side.

32 “Likewise **a Levite** also, when he came to the place and saw him, ***passed by*** on the other side.

33 “But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion,

Symptoms of Religion

5. Enjoying the forgiveness of God for ourselves while withholding it from those we find offensive.

13 “But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from people; for ***you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.***

Matthew 23:13

14 “For *if* you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

Matthew 6:14–15

15 “But *if you do not* forgive others,
then your Father will not forgive
your transgressions.

Unforgiveness brings the Law
of Sin and Death into the
new Life of Grace, keeping
both parties prisoners in a
world from which they have
both been set free!

Dead religion never lets us
live down the worst of what
we have done. Unforgiveness
makes us an agent of that
spirit.

9 For I am the least of the apostles,
and not fit to be called an apostle,
because I persecuted the church of
God.

1 Corinthians 15:9–10

10 But *by the grace of God I am
what I am*, and His grace toward
me did not prove vain; but I labored
even more than all of them, yet not
I, but the grace of God with me.