

Lose Your Religion: Do Not Judge...Period
Roger - Apr 22, 2018

Series Big Idea: Religion is responsible for wars and hate, bigotry and exclusion. It is known for being superstitious, hypocritical, judgmental and more. But even worse, it misses God and who he really is and what he is all about. Religion is man's attempt to be good by following rules and rituals. Then we are tempted to use our right beliefs and right actions to judge others as to whether they are in the "right" place. Religion actually causes us to judge rather than love. Religion steers us away from the the heart of God who is love. Only Jesus can change our heart and move us from rules, arrogance and judgment to love and relationship. Jesus didn't come to found a religion. He came to free us from religion to love like God.

Message Big Idea: God is my judge, not you! Judgement brings punishment but Love brings restoration.

Main Idea: We can't overstate the antithesis of love with religion and judgment. Religion and judgement are intimate partners that destroy love. When we take God's role of determining what is good and evil then we can't help but create a system of right and wrong and rituals or religion. Then we impose our religion on others and judge if they are good or evil. All of this will snuff out love, which was the eternal goal of God.

Main Text: Matthew 7:1-6 - "do not judge or you shall be judged."
Matthew 20:1-16

Supporting texts: Galatians 6:1-5

Reflection/Discussion Questions:

1. In what situation(s) are you most likely going to feel the desire to judge others in their behavior, performance, relationships, life choices, job or ????
2. What does being critical of and judging the success or failure of another due for you? What do you get from it? How does it benefit you?
3. Judging means to separate. When we judge we separate that which is good from what is bad (in our opinion or even based on our education). So, how does judging another person help them? Does it draw them closer to you or to God?
4. Describe a personal experience when you experienced someone judging you. How has that experience affected you and your relationships?
5. Comment on this statement; Religion leads to Hypocrisy, while relationship leads to love.

Lose Your Religion: Do Not Judge...Period
Roger - Apr 22, 2018

Main Idea: Judgement brings ruin, relationship brings life

Message:

Intro:

Opening thoughts about the series. Tie back to Glen last week.

Two trees, Relationship with God becomes religion when I put myself in the position of knowing best, I think my way is God's way. I put myself in the position of God. I attempt to sit in his seat and religion has taught me how.

Glen mentioned last week that the Bible speaks really clearly and consistently against 3 Specific sins that we, in our culture, don't want to equate as equal to other sins.

Remember what they are, they all start with G.

Greed, Gluttony, and Gossip.

Why do you think this is?

I believe it is because we all get comfortable with certain things, they become normal or acceptable in our culture. This could be the big C culture of our city or country, or the little c culture of our church. What becomes normal/acceptable then becomes invisible...even if the Bible speaks directly and clearly to the topic.

Which sets us up for today. As we continue to teach through losing our religion, I want to suggest that what religion teaches us really hurts us. Religion teaches us, that when we learn enough, study enough, practice enough, we become better than others and therefore we are better than them. When we get to this point, we move from eating of the tree of life to the eating from the tree of Knowledge of good and evil.

And when we do, we put this on! (put on the judges robe and pound the gavel.) We believe we have earned the right to tell others where they are wrong and enforce the consequences of their choices. There is no more talk of God's love, just his expectations...the ones I choose to remind you of anyway.

There are small c religious practices... like

Take your hat off in church

Turn your cell phone off

And Please don't ever sit in someone else's seat.

Then there are big Cultural practices that the church sees as SIN

Our church is against all sin, so don't come here if you sin, unless you are one of us and sin in a way that we don't really recognize as hard core sin, then its ok.

Listening to Secular music especially rap, or country, or...

Rated R movies, unless they are just rated R for violence

Addicted to drugs, though food, pornography, shopping are all more allowable, as long as you do them privately.

Lose Your Religion: Do Not Judge...Period
Roger - Apr 22, 2018

You see when I judge my life simply by the practice of religion, I can become pious and arrogant and think I am above the law. This new position allows me to believe I am in a position of Judge.

A couple weeks ago I told my uncle that I would be sharing this message today, he wrote me this.

"I shall be watching online on the 22nd. (Look at camera and say Hi Uncle Chet) I can say, without hesitation, that I am not nor have I ever been guilty of "judging". I may be critical, I do evaluate, maybe I'm quick to rate or classify, I do enjoy being picky, love to analyze or be a bit harsh in my view but never "JUDGING". Not me. I am glad that I am not like other men."

As we continue to look at this topic today, It may be uncomfortable for you but hopefully you will find more freedom from religion today. To help us along, I want you to hear from Paul and what religion did to him. Paul has been a part of Pantano for many years, he currently serves as a youth coach to Middle School boys. He and his wife Nancy serve and grow here. Listen to his journey and see if you identify with his past.

(Questions for Paul to answer:

1. Paul how would you describe the religious environment that you were raised in?
2. What were some of the concepts you learned about yourself and God during your youth?
3. How did you recognize the judgemental nature of your religious beliefs?
4. How did you lose your religion? What helped you find freedom from Judgement?

(I see questions 1-3 being used at this point, and then saving the last question for the very end, right before my close or maybe at the close depending)

Relationships are not found in rules. God is Love and it is his love and his love alone that allows us to be in a relationship with him.

Turn with me to a time in the life of Jesus that reveals the heart of man and the heart of our God. Let's look in the Bible and see how Jesus defines our roles. Matthew 20:1

The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard

20 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. ² He agreed to pay them a denarius^[a] for the day and sent them into his vineyard.

³ "About nine in the morning he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. ⁴ He told them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you

Lose Your Religion: Do Not Judge...Period
Roger - Apr 22, 2018

whatever is right.' 5 So they went.

"He went out again about noon and about three in the afternoon and did the same thing. 6 About five in the afternoon he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, 'Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?'

7 "Because no one has hired us,' they answered.

"He said to them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard.'

8 "When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first.'

9 "The workers who were hired about five in the afternoon came and each received a denarius. 10 So when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius. 11 When they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner. 12 'These who were hired last worked only one hour,' they said, 'and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the work and the heat of the day.'

13 "But he answered one of them, 'I am not being unfair to you, friend. Didn't you agree to work for a denarius? 14 Take your pay and go. I want to give the one who was hired last the same as I gave you. 15 Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?'

16 "So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

Points to teach.

* Jesus is the owner...we are the workers

*As owner, Jesus sets the terms

*The owner has different rights than his workers

*When given the opportunity, we will eat of the tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and attempt to set ourselves above or below others. Ranking our behavior and rewards.

*Our expectations change based on our own sense of "fairness"

*The owner can be generous if he wants.

*Don't you want to work for a generous owner?????

*Jesus gets to wear the robe...not me and not you.

*The point here is we fight over what is right and wrong here on earth, and God is concerned about the Kingdom of Heaven...not our sometimes silly religious rules.

Lose Your Religion: Do Not Judge...Period
Roger - Apr 22, 2018

Notice that in this parable, the workers did not ask questions of the owner in order to understand his heart and motives, they merely pointed out that they did more and got paid the same. They were selfish. They did not try to understand the heart of the owner, they just did what was expected for the agreed amount term, then expected more when others who worked less got the same. Judgement comes when we think we know best and we don't seek to understand the heart of owner, our creator.

Most of us think, and we are taught that our behavior sets us apart. We are graded and praised from day one for our achievements and when we come up short, we wear the weight of our failures. In our struggle we tend try to find our place as better than some and not quite as good as others. We allow our decisions, our efforts, our mistakes, our sin, our grades determine who we are and who we think others are. We judge. In Matthew chapter 7, as Jesus is teaching a large crowd, he discussing a long list of topics, but in the first 5 verses of Chapter 7 he talks about an issue that is just as relevant to us today as it was then. The religious culture had taught people how to live and Jesus was turned it upside down.

(Matthew 7 “Do not judge, or you too will be judged. ² For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.³ “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? ⁴ How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye?⁵ You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.)

*Jesus teaches my heart, my eyes need to be clear first. Religion does not teach love, it teaches behavior. Love teaches purpose.

*I am called to help another person, I just need to be able to help.

(The main Point)

God is the judge, I am a follower who needs love and grace.

Carey nieuwhof

“When [Jesus taught on judgment](#), not only did he tell us not to judge, and to remove the massive timber from our own eye before trying to find the speck of dust in someone else’s eye first, but he then showed us the purpose of removing the speck from someone else’s eye: it’s to *help* them. The Christian purpose of stepping into someone else’s world is not to judge someone, but

Lose Your Religion: Do Not Judge...Period
Roger - Apr 22, 2018

to *help* them. If you're not trying to help, don't bother. You'll probably only make it worse."

My dad, died last month at the age of 96. I went to CA to be with him as his health failed rather suddenly. The second day I was there a man knocked on the door. It was my dad's former neighbor, Sal. My dad moved 13 years ago, but he had been neighbors with Sal for close to 25 years before that. I remember when Sal moved in. I was in HS, he moved in with his wife and 3 kids. Sal was not like us. He was Mexican and English was his second language. They were very different than us, language, music and the big family parties. There were always people coming and going for all kinds of family get togethers and parties...how could one family have so many relatives.

My dad and he became friendly. Sal came over when my mom died, reached out to my dad during the days after, helped him with the yard occasionally as my dad aged, most of that was unknown to me as I had left for college and then never lived at home again. Sometime after I left, one of Sal's son Jr. got in trouble, made some bad choices and was arrested and sentenced to prison. My dad modeled the truth of Matthew 7 to Sal and his family. He began to write Sal Jr in prison to share with him Love, hope and truth. Sal came over that Tuesday morning to see my dad, He had lost track of him since he moved in with my sister. He came that day, because he had visited his Son in prison the previous Saturday. Jr gave his dad the address from an envelop he had just received the week before.

You see, for the last 20+ years, my dad was a faithful pen pal to Sal Jr. Writing and encouraging him, and sharing the love of Jesus with him. Sal Jr had professed his faith to Jesus, and had also asked my dad to start writing to a friend of his in Prison as well to love and encourage him. My dad did.

Sal left our house in tears that day as my father was no longer responding. He had expected to see my dad and talk with him again, but instead he had to say goodbye to the man who had loved his son with the love of God.

I want you to hear from Paul again (while I stop crying.)

Transition to Paul's video answer 4-5. (Tie in based on video, transition out based on video)

God the owner of the field, the judge of your heart, has invited you into a relationship with him. One that will teach you to live life as he designed it to be lived, a life filled with the purpose he intended you to find. This life begins when we surrender the judge's robe, the comparison to others, the position that we think we know best, and begin to work in his field as we seek the Kingdom of God.

I encourage you be in prayer this week asking God about being part of his kingdom, not the one religion has taught you about, but his word has taught you.

We will be having a baptism service next weekend, inviting you to lay down your religion

Lose Your Religion: Do Not Judge...Period
Roger - Apr 22, 2018

and enter a relationship with Jesus as you declare your faith in His way, the way of Love.

Many of us find ourselves as workers who were invited into the field of our owner long ago, and now we struggle with comparing ourselves to all the new workers, or all those who are standing around waiting to be called to work. This comparison, whether it be verbal or just in our hearts, is the root of religion that causes us to judge and attempt to overthrow the only true Judge. If you feel these words stinging a bit today, I encourage you to reread Matthew 7 everyday this week and pray about 2 things. How can I help others, what do I need to remove from my heart so I can help others.

Pray and dismiss