

I. The Kingdom Is Not Founded Upon Rules (Romans 14:17-20)

“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. 18 Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. 19 So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.”

Not the one who is a rule-follower but the one who resembles the Father

II. The Kingdom Is Not Validated Through Rhetoric (1 Cor. 2:4-5, 4:20)

1 Cor. 4:20 - “For the Kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power.”

1 Cor. 2:4-5 - “My speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5 so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.”

III. The Kingdom Is Not A Friend to Religion (Matthew 23:13-15, 15:7-14)

Matthew 23:13-15 - “But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. For you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in...For you travel across sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves.”

Jesus denounces the scribes & Pharisees - 7 WOES TO: Hypocrites (6x); Blind (5x) – guides, fools, men, Pharisee; Serpents/brood of vipers; Hell-bound; living in the spirit of murder

Matthew 15:7-14 - “For the sake of your tradition you have made void the word of God. 7 You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said: 8 “This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me; 9 in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men. 10 And he called the people to Him and said to them, “Hear and understand: 11 it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth; this defiles a person.” 12 Then the disciples came and said to Him, Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?” 13 He answered, “Every plant that My heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up. 14 Let them alone; they are blind guides. And if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit.”

Religion and religious leaders refuse to enter the reality of the Kingdom & serve to obstruct others from entering in

IV. The Kingdom Is Not A Place of Retreat (Acts 14:19-22)

“But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead. 20 But when the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and entered the city, and on the next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe. 21 When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, 22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.”

We never retire. We never resign. We are never released. We never regret. We never retreat.