



TITLE: *It Had To Be Said: 'Jesus on Religion'*

☐ **OPENING QUESTION:** If you could have dinner with any historical figure (other than Jesus), who would it be—and what would you ask them?

Religion Root Meaning: BONDAGE

Mark 2:15-17— And as he reclined at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners were reclining with Jesus and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, said to his disciples, “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?” And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”

☐ **QUESTION:** *What comes to your mind when you hear the word “religion”? Is it a positive or negative association? Why? What are some things you’ve done to try to earn God’s free gift of grace?*

☐ **QUESTION:** *Considering Mark 2:15-17: Why do you think the religious leaders were so bothered by who Jesus ate with? How does this passage challenge the way we view people inside and outside of the church?*

IT HAD TO BE SAID ABOUT RELIGION:

Galatians 1:6-7 – I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ.

Religion focuses on the OUTSIDE IMAGE rather than the INTERNAL TRUTH.


Matthew 23:25 – 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.

Religion Promotes Spiritual PRIDE.

Luke 18:9-12 – To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and




the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men — robbers, evildoers, adulterers — or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get'."


 **QUESTION:** *Pride is difficult to see in the mirror. What can you do this week to help uncover it in your own life?*


NOW HERE IS THE GOOD NEWS:

Romans 3:20-22 – Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin. But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known...This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe...

 **QUESTION:** *Re-read Romans 3:20-22 together. Discuss what this scripture means to you as you relate it to the 3 points that Pastor Gary shared from this passage.*


1. You cannot earn God's acceptance by observing **THE LAW**.
Romans 3:20 – Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law.
2. The purpose of the law is to show your **NEED FOR A SAVIOR**.
Romans 3:20-21 – ...no one will be declared righteous...by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.
3. Righteousness with God comes by faith in **CHRIST ALONE**.
Romans 3:22 – This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe...


 **QUESTION:** *In what areas of your life are you still living as if religion (performance) earns God's acceptance? How can you live more fully in the freedom of God's grace this week?*

 **QUESTION:** *Who in your life needs to hear the truth that righteousness comes through faith—not works?*

Luke 18:13-14 – "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God..."

Closing Questions:

 **QUESTION:** *What's one tangible way you can rest in God's grace instead of striving for approval this week?*

 **QUESTION:** *Is there someone you can invite to coffee or dinner—like Jesus did—to welcome them and show them the love of God?*