

# ROGUE MESSIAH

Getting to Know Jesus & Love Him

Pastor Toby Locke • Week 8 • 3/1/2020



FIRST BAPTIST HORSEHEADS  
**LIFE GROUPS**



Debrief Plan: 3/1/2020

## Jesus and Religion

Matthew 5:17-20

**Introduction:** Have you ever wondered why the most religious people of Jesus' day hated him so much?

### **Theory #1: Jesus represented RELATIONSHIP, while the Pharisees represented RELIGION.**

- **But is that what Jesus actually says? (5:17-20)**
- **Religion is NOT...doing GOOD THINGS to EARN a RELATIONSHIP with God.**
- **Religion IS...an organized SYSTEM of BELIEFS, DUTIES, and PRACTICES to help you LIVE OUT your RELATIONSHIP with God.**
- **SUMMARY:**  
"Relationship" teaches you to LOVE God for all He has done for you.  
"Religion" teaches you how to SHOW God your LOVE in your everyday life. (James 1:26-27)

### **Theory #2: The Pharisees' religion had LOST its WAY, and Jesus was relentlessly calling them BACK to the religion that God had INTENDED. (5:20)**

**Conclusion:** Do you have a relationship with God based on His grace through Jesus? If not, begin one today! If you have, then how is your religion doing? Are you showing God your love for Him in your everyday life? Or has your "religion" lost its way?

#### Icebreakers:

1. Name an influential religious leader you respect. Why do you respect them?
2. What is one world religion (besides Christianity) that you would like to understand better? Explain why you picked that one.

**Sermon Summary:** Though most religious people in Jesus' day hated Him, Jesus didn't hate religion. He knew that religion existed to teach humans who were **already** in relationship with God how to live out that relationship in their everyday life. What he **did** hate was how the religion God gave His people had been twisted to keep His people away.

#### Discussion Questions:

1. Does the word "religion" provoke a positive or a negative reaction in you? Why is that?
  2. Who did Jesus have more in common with- the tax collectors and "sinners", or the Pharisees? Make a list of things he had in common with both groups.
- \*Theory #1**
3. Read Matthew 5:17-20. What do you think Jesus meant when he said that he had come to "fulfill" the Law in verse 17?
  4. What do you think it means to "relax" the commandments of the Law (vs. 19)? Why is Jesus so worried about this?
  5. What do you think that it means to "exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees" (vs. 20)? How can someone do that?
  6. Read Exodus 20:1-3. It is clear that Israel's **relationship** with God came **BEFORE** the **religion** they got from God in the form of the Law. Why was it important that things happen in that order? Why not the other way around?
  7. What are some of the practical ways that the Jewish religion taught God's people to show Him their love in their everyday life?
  8. Do you have any objections, questions or concerns about how Pastor Toby has defined the difference between "relationship" and "religion" this week?

#### **\*Theory #2**

9. Read James 1:26-27. What does James seem to prioritize as necessary for pure and undefiled religion? Why are those things so important?
10. How can religion (even a religion that looks like ours) "lose its way"? Make a list of possible ideas with your group- we'll return to this thought next week!