



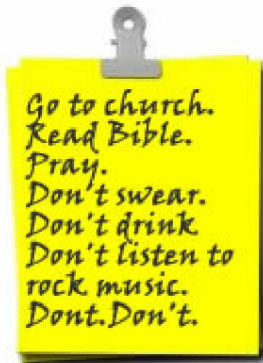
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## “The Religious Spirit”

### Part 2-Countering the Religious Spirit

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**Read: Confessions of a Recovering Legalist**

<http://brentcwood.wordpress.com/2009/06/03/confessions-of-a-recovering-legalist/>

“When you are a legalist, you spend a lot of time evaluating others, making sure they measure up.”

### Judas: the picture of the Religious Spirit.

I ended part one of the series with the Gino Vanelli song, “A Little Bit of Judas” for a reason: Judas was a perfect type of the Religious Spirit. Judas, in fact, epitomizes the Religious Spirit taken to its logical conclusion: he was a betrayer and a murderer---the son of perdition!

Strong's 684. אָפּוֹלֵיָא *apoleia*, ap-o'-li-a - from a presumed derivative of 622; ruin or loss (physical, spiritual or eternal):--damnable(-nation), destruction, die, perdition, X perish, pernicious ways, waste. See Greek 622 (apollumi)

622. אָפּוֹלֵיָא *apollumi*, ap-ol'-loo-mee - from 575 and the base of 3639; to destroy fully (reflexively, to perish, or lose), literally or figuratively:--destroy, die, lose, mar, perish.

Recall in part 1 where I mentioned the connection between Python and Apollo? Recall that Apollo is seen in **Rev. 9:11** And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon. {Apollyon: that is to say, A destroyer

When I say that the Religious Spirit is dangerous---destructive---I am NOT exaggerating!

### One event which demonstrates the work of the Religious Spirit in action occurs in John 12:

3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him,

5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

8 For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

## The Religious Spirit: Legalism, Judgment, and Perfectionism

**Romans 14:10** *But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. 11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. 12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. 13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. 14 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.*

The main theme in the 14<sup>th</sup> chapter of Romans goes straight to the heart of the Religious Spirit. In fact, it continues a broad theme begun in (the badly misunderstood) **Romans 13: 13**-“Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. 14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.”

Paul, here (in Romans 14) addresses the issue of new (weak) believers and the tendency to place upon them strict rules of diet and observances. Paul reminds the Roman *ekklesia* that God, through the Holy Spirit, is able to mature them, and that salvation is not dependent upon works, or on the structures of religion (Judaism, in this instance).

The admonition against judging (v.13) is understood to be of the legalist mindset (from the preceding verses), and is a clear warning about the devices of legalism which cause “STUMBLING” in the walk of faith. We harmonize this with:

**Luke 6:37** Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

**John 7:24** Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

**2Chronicles 19:6** And said to the judges, Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the LORD, who is with you in the judgment.

Paul is not saying here that we never judge (i.e.- discern), but rather that we not stumble, through legalism any of the brethren. This is made abundantly clear in v.14: “nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.” This statement is NOT a call to licentiousness, as Paul in **Galatians 5:13** clearly states: “For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.”

I will point out here that many times when I have corrected, reprov'd, or rebuked brethren, they accuse me of being “unloving” and “judgmental”. Understand that the very spirit of which we speak--the religious spirit---distorts scripture, takes it out of context, and uses it to DEFEND against valid criticisms. The religious spirit does not suffer (valid) reproofs.

### “Get Understanding”

**Proverbs 4:7** Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get

understanding.

**Proverbs 16:16** ¶ How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!

**Matthew 13:19** *When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side. . . .*

Countering the Religious Spirit requires becoming skillful in the Word, and prayerful in the Holy Spirit. The institutions of religion which grew up around the faith in Christ substituted a hierarchial, vertically integrated system---a priesthood---which stunted both maturity in the Word and the growth in prayerful hearing of the Holy Spirit as an active force in the life of believers. Jude underscores this much needed “skill” in:

**Jude 1:20-** “But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, 21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. 22 And of some have compassion, making a difference: 23 And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

Note how Jude divides the discernment of the spirits in verses 22 and 23. It is love to both have compassion and to also use fear (**phobos**- (to be put in fear); alarm or fright:--be afraid, + exceedingly, fear, terror.). Where is your love, brother?

The Holy Ghost must become the guide, or compass, for you walk. The WORD is your map. The Religious Spirit will, inevitably attempt to disrupt both by corrupting the written Word---twisting and distorting, or even nullifying; and by substituting the voice of the Holy Ghost with the voice of guilt, legalism, and condemnation. This understanding will help you better grasp what Jesus meant in:

**Luke 11:35,36** *Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness. If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give the light.*

### **The Religious Spirit is an agent of Satan:**

**Ephesians 6:12** *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

- The religious spirit works through human vessels, either willing, by virtue of their own predispositions to a certain religious/cultural system --- or through manipulation, even demonic control.

This is the very core concept behind all religious cults: it is the reason for all manner of religious conditioning from the subtleties of religious ceremony and ritual to the extremeness of Satanic Ritual Abuse (SRA), ritual psychological terror right up to human sacrifice! The human vessels of the religious spirit are both victims and perpetrators, in a spiral of religious corruption that precludes and then repels the true salvational work of the Holy Spirit.

## **The religious spirit is a SUBSTITUTE for the genuine work of God; an impersonator and a type of the spirit of antichrist:**

**2John 1:7** - For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

Recall that the damsel possessed with the spirit of Python (Greek: *python*) didn't confess Jesus Christ, but: "These men (Paul and Silas) are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation."

The religious spirit pointed to the MEN rather than the Messiah. It promoted the MESSENGERS over the MESSAGE! Her statements were subtle twists of the truth. Paul was grieved because the Holy Spirit's work was being derailed by the CARNAL understanding. The Spirit was being quenched.

The pure MESSAGE, that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh was being corrupted into a form of man-worship and the pretext for the establishment of a RELIGIOUS SYSTEM by which merchandise could be made.

Note the similarities to what eventually did occur with the post-Constantine "church era" and the subsequent rise of Roman Catholicism These very "doctrines of devils" are, to this day, part and parcel of the Romanist system: Catholicism and all her apostate "daughters" (Protestantism, Calvinism, Evangelicalism, Pentecostalism, Fundamentalism---all the established mainstream religions), to this day exhibit the symptoms of the religious spirit on a grand scale.

## **The religious spirit exhibits the characteristics of its FATHER, Satan the Devil:**

"And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"- **Genesis 3:1**

11 ¶ And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked?

### **The cycle of false revelation followed by condemnation.**

**John 8:44** Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

**1John 5:10** He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

### ***Countering the Religious Spirit:***

- ONLY the ministry of the Holy Spirit in recognizing and countering the religious spirit prevail
- Once a pattern of behaviors is established, the host must be confronted, Biblically, by at least two or three Spirit-filled believers. Understand that this WILL be a deliverance.
- Persons in authority, operating in the spirit of religion must be relieved of all ministry responsibilities---the spirit is contagious.
- The religious spirit, left unchecked, will wreak havoc on the body of believers. **It must be**

**countered with the Word of God, rebuked if unrepentant, and ultimately expelled.**

- Fellowship with other believers should be restricted to accountability, i.e.-this person will submit to prayer and Godly counseling. Prayer must accompany any communications and scripture is the final word on all aspects of conduct.
- Matthew 18:15-19 is the protocol for confrontation
- Ask the Lord to reveal strongholds, hurts, and deep-rooted religious lies by the Holy Spirit. All hurts, bondages, false belief structures, and spiritual abuse open doors for the demonic.
- Ask for, and believe for healing and repentance---that ALL deep strongholds would be taken to the cross and placed in Jesus' hands. AGREEMENT in prayer is crucial:

**1Corinthians 1:10** Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. {divisions: Gr. schisms}

**Matthew 18:16** ... in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

- Many times, the host will deny behaviors, responsibility, or dispute accusations---or fail to take personally the ability of Christ to totally redeem. When that occurs, scripture prescribes separation of the brethren from such---UNTIL the offer of repentance and healing are accepted and serious effort is exerted to deal with the offending behaviors:

**Romans 16:17** Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

**1Corinthians 5:5** To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

1Timothy 1:18 This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; 19 **Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:** 20 Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

Note: Not all circumstances allow for the intervention to occur---many times the host of a religious spirit will sense detection and move on, or is beyond the ability to minister "hands on". These circumstances will result in separation. Pray for the Lord to lead the person to people who can, and will, take on the needed ministry of deliverance.

### **"Soul hurts, wounded spirit, and forgiveness":**

Since the first part of this series was released, a number of comments and experiences have been shared with me that indicate people have not fully grasped the necessity of taking hurts, emotional and physical; real and imagined to the Cross of Christ.

**2Corinthians 10:5** Casting down **imagination**s, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; {imagination: or, reasonings}

**High thing is the same Greek word used in Ephesians 6:12... against spiritual wickedness in high places.**

Go back and read Ephesians 6 again. Begin to grasp what that WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD is really about, especially the shield of faith: (v.16)- "taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to **quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.**"

**imaginations-** 3053. λογισμος logismos, log-is-mos' - from 3049; computation, i.e. (figuratively) reasoning (conscience, conceit):--imagination, thought. **See Greek 3049 (logizomai)**

**3049.** λογιζομαι logizomai, log-id'-zom-ahee - middle voice from 3056; to take an inventory, i.e. estimate (literally or figuratively):--conclude, (ac-)count (of), + despise, esteem, impute, lay, number, reason, reckon, suppose, think (on).

Many people hold onto the hurts they encountered as children---small hurts, even genuine Satanic abuse. These "soul hurts" are deeply ingrained, like splinters which never removed bury deeper in the spirit. Some people hold onto hurts 20, 30, 50 years and never get deliverance because they HOLD ONTO THEM!

**James 4:2** Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.

6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.

10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

**Luke 17:20 ¶** And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: {with...: or, with outward shew} 21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

**1John 4:3** And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

4 ¶ Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

5 They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.

6 We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

7 ¶ Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. {is born: Gr. has been born}

8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.