

Higher Ground International School of Ministry

The Spirit of Religion

June 1, 2011

Introduction to Series 1

The Religious Spirit. What is it?

1Ti 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

4:2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

Summary

- Satan is at the top of this system.
- The spirit is also the Anti-Christ.
- Hates the Holy Spirit as the anointing and Revealer of TRUTH.
- A false and alternate system of worship.
- An alternate system of power and idolatry, where the systems of men have replaced the deity of reverence of God and the Kingdom and most importantly, the POWER of God.
- Loyalty is based on legalism and pride.
- Man centered, catered and pleasing, i.e., caters to the flesh.
- It is a spirit and system of pride, “self-exaltation” and promotion.
- It is grounded in ones “works” and self-effort.
- It is grounded the Spirit of Error.
- It is a system of both spiritual and natural death.
- Its basic fruit is “No-change” in the lives of its victim and the reproduction of the “molded image” and other created things by men.
- Spiritually grounded in control, manipulation, greed, covetousness, witchcraft, rebellion, stubbornness, disobedience.
- The Holy Spirit is about doing the will of God; the spirit of Religion is about the will of the flesh of mere men. [Galatians 6:6 “*Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord and not to men.*”]

A religious spirit is one that is CONTRARY to God. Its attributes are “superficiality,” and will deceive and seduce you into acts of piousness, self-righteous or “super spiritual” to gain advantage over others. It loves “flattery” because it serves the need for idol worship.

Introduction. . .

It will take a *real* anointing from God to discern and unmask this spirit in operation in your life, the life of those around you, and in the ministry or church. Always remember that the Religious spirit carries the *form*, but is not the genuine thing. This spirit is however NO MATCH for the anointing of Jesus Christ that rests in the life of a true believer. Remember, Satan cannot cast our Satan. Victims of this spirit have turned themselves (and their ideologies, opinions, and belief systems of who they think God is) into religious doctrines of “men and of devils.” This is one of the most high ranking principalities and powers ever to hit planet earth in the form of a system of bondage, oppression, control, and in its truest execution and mission, murder of the saints of God.

(Lesson Focus) John 18:39-40; 19:1-10

Where the spirit of Herod might contemplate and be given to fear, the spirit of Religion is relentless and is in the “first strike” position.

Key Concepts about the Spirit of Religion throughout this series:

- Seeks to bind your liberty in Jesus Christ.
- People influenced by this spirit have an outward appearance of holiness, but are self-righteous in their innermost being.
- Will always feel sorry for the “wrong people” and run to the defense of others who appear to be victims of **their own** wicked devices, demonic assignments, plans and plots to destroy God’s work.
- Religious spirits are designed to stop your advancement.
- Will ruin your true Christian witness.
- Corrupts your perception of WHO JESUS REALLY IS.
- Wants you to trade your liberty in for legalism.
- Is cold and turns away those drawn to Christ.
- Religious spirits will speak of controversial subjects, and to be sure at the wrong time.
- Religious spirits are not teachable and know it all.
- Religious spirits are always critical of anything you do for God. No matter how well you do it, you could have always “done it better.”
- When they are confronted or exposed they will accuse you of being unloving and not measuring up to the stature of Christ.
- As advisors, they infect their victims with a spirit of discouragement.
- Are hunters of position and actually want to usurp your God given authority.
- Confuse passion with anger.
- Will never submit to true religious authority.

- Will flatter leadership to its face, but will nail you in the back when you leave.
- Will always seek to teach and perform to seduce their victims.
- Is an impersonator and wants to display a quality they actually do not have.
- Are now subject to the (8) Woe's of Jesus Christ.

The doctrines of demons (as taught by a Pharisee) will be marked by the following:

- A denial of the power of God's kindness. (Romans 2:4)
- Inflicting inordinate or excessive (extra-biblical) regulations on adherents.
- Undermining the goodness of the Lord who gives us all things to freely enjoy. (1 Timothy 6:17, Deut 26:11)
- Dehumanizes followers by denying them the right to enjoy the pleasures that God has scripturally sanctioned.
- Denies that Jesus can transform a soul by the indwelling of His Spirit. Change is forced through external regulations.
- Paints God as an impersonal deity who demands blind obedience, rather than a personal God who walks alongside us as a teacher and Father.
- Portrays God as more pleased with self-denial than humble thankfulness. (Psalm 51)