

The End of Religion
Part #5: “The Religion God Likes!”

Sunday May 17, 2009

Audio available at www.kingstreet.org/audio

“What religion do I preach? The religion of love.”
(John Wesley)

“The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.” (Galatians 5:6)

→ God has a P.R Problem and the culprit is ‘organized religion’ with the absence of love.

y dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, ²⁰for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires. ²¹Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. ²³Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror ²⁴and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. ²⁵But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does. If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless. ²⁷Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world. (James 1:19-27)

1. **Religion that God Likes is Constructive rather than destructive with our words**

When we have a growing relationship with Jesus ...

→ We can hear other people's points of view without always being preoccupied with being heard.

→ We can learn to speak words of grace rather than words of anger.

→ We speak words that reflect his heart and not our own.

1. **Religion that God Likes is Compassionate in Practical Ways Towards People in Distress**

When we have a growing relationship with Jesus ...

→ We compassionately and sacrificially move towards the orphan

→ We generously and honourably move towards the widow

2. **Religion that God Likes is Counter-cultural in our Daily Life, Refusing to Simply Follow the Herd in Unloving Directions**

When we have a growing relationship with Jesus ...

→ We develop an acquired taste for 'purity,' not 'toxicity' – [values]

→ We make decisions with an eternal perspective in mind; not simply a temporal one – [vision]

→ We involve ourselves intentionally in the lives of others, so that we can be used redemptively – [victory]