

# A Declaration of Those Things Which Are Most Surely Believed Among Us

## An Expositional Study of **The Gospel According to Luke** **Chapter 6- Luke 6:1-5**

### 73- Jesus is Lord Also of the Sabbath- Part 1

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May 23, 2010

#### **Luke 6:1-5**

Now the text before us- Chapter 6- illustrates the very heart of this ongoing and escalating conflict between the self-righteous religious bigots, called the Pharisees, and the Perfect and Holy Lamb of God- Jesus Christ- Who exposes their hypocrisy and Who puts an end to their man-made religion. And at the very heart of this conflict is the issue of the Sabbath- because at that time- the Sabbath was the very anchor of all that Judaism was and had. This one single routine ritual- that was carried out every seventh-day- from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday was the very anchor of all of Judaism. And what you can easily see here in these first few verses of Chapter 6- is Jesus' complete disdain and rejection of their way to observe the Sabbath.

Now please notice in these five verses that the Son of God doesn't say, *"You know, I really applaud your devotion and I admire your dedication and sincerity -but your just a little bit off base- so let Me show you how to improve your worship and make it better."* No, Jesus shows absolutely nothing but complete disdain for their Sabbath observance, and this is really insulting them at the very core of their entire system of worship because, for the most part- developing self-righteousness and trying to earn Salvation by works came down to how well a person observed the regulations of the Sabbath.

If you did all the Sabbath stuff correctly- then in the mind of the Pharisees you had earned your righteousness and could go to Heaven. And so, if Jesus is truly going to attack their false religious system of works righteousness- He *has* to attack their Sabbath structure. So if anyone is going to be saved at all- then every system of false Salvation and every attempt at producing false righteousness must be exposed

and it must be utterly rejected out of hand as *not* being something that is noble, and as *not* being something to admire or speak well of, but it must be correctly categorized as being a false Gospel and a hindrance to true genuine Salvation. And, by definition- that is offensive- especially to the very people who base their entire relationship to God on this false system.

These religious leaders were categorically wrong about the Sabbath and they were wrong about what God required and they were wrong about how sinners are made righteous and they were wrong about how sinners can be saved and stand in God's Presence free of Wrath. Other than that- what they said and what they taught was pretty much okay- but as it pertains to the only thing that matters- how a lost sinner can pass through God's Judgment on his life- they couldn't have been more wrong.

And if you are concerned about seeking and saving those who are lost- as Jesus was- then you really have no choice here. To applaud or to go along with what these Jews were teaching about God and about Salvation and about Righteousness would be to give them credibility, and all that would do would be to guarantee that lost people would remain lost and die in their sins and spend eternity in hell. Precisely how would *that* be love?

It always amazes me to hear the reasons behind all the efforts of so many today to compromise the Word of God. Very few people in the modern Church compromise with what the Bible actually says because they say they don't believe the Bible, or because they say it is wrong. No, people use the most bazaar reason of all to preach and teach a false Gospel. They say they are doing it out of "love"- that because they love people so much- they don't want to offend them or they don't want to make them feel bad or they don't want to alienate them or they don't want to remove an opportunity to have influence in their lives down the road.

So they dull the edge of the sword and they compromise on Divine Truth and they hide the Bad News part of the Gospel and they minimize the impact and they lessen the offense and they alter it so it is more attractive and they tinker with the details until they eventually arrive at some benign, shallow, surface, powerless "gospel" that requires no repentance, that requires no allegiance to Jesus as Lord, that demands no confession that God physically and literally raised Jesus

from the dead, that requires no belief, that makes no demands on their lives, and that delivers no Salvation.

This is the foundation behind why Rick Warren and Joel Osteen and Robert Schuller and so many others can say that Jesus died on the Cross to save us from low expectations, and this is why Creflo Dollar and TD Jakes and Fred Price and so many others can teach that Jesus suffer horribly on the Cross so you can walk in financial prosperity.

And at a time when fully 3/4 of all believers on the face of the earth go through daily torture and unbelievable persecution and untold physical dangers because of their love and their faith in Jesus Christ- a silly, foolish woman named Joyce Meyers can tell Time Magazine, *"Why in the world would any lost person ever come to Christ if they thought they had to suffer in this life?"*

Dear friends, we need to know that for anyone to change or to alter or to minimize or marginalize the Gospel is to doom people to hell- that is what is at stake here. God has designed eternal Salvation through the finished Work of Jesus Christ in such a way that nobody gets saved without hearing and believing the Gospel. Nobody gets saved without a Sovereign and a miraculous and a supernatural move of God the Holy Spirit coming inside the lost person- *before* he is saved- to grip him and give him eyes to see, and give him ears to hear, and take out of him a stony heart and give him an heart to believe. And nobody gets saved until the Holy Ghost working in and by the preaching of the everlasting Gospel convicts that new heart about their lost condition and draws them and drags them to repentance.

So it is not your praise band that brings forth Salvation; it is not your new and exciting revelation or your own personal relationships or your ability to interpret dreams or your ability to speak with angels or your ability to foretell the future or fall on the floor or pop your neck or your hot hand of healing or your ability to hear directly from God that allows lost sinners to come to Jesus for Salvation. It is how accurately and how fully you preach the Gospel.

There is no nice way to say this, there is no diplomatic way to say this, there is no sweet and tender way to say this- those who preach another gospel, those who do everything in their power to make the Gospel look like something else, those who try to fool and trick people into repenting, those who have substituted the preaching of the everlasting Gospel with physical healing and financial prosperity and

foretelling future events, and those who have completely given up on preaching the Gospel and now resort to having so called "deliverance services" to mask the fact that lost sinners are staying lost- those people are ashamed of the Gospel- pure and simple.

And they can say that they are doing it out of love all they want to- but the bottom line- nobody gets saved without hearing and believing the Gospel, and these people are hindering lost sinners from hearing the Gospel by what they are doing and that is not love.

Jesus wasn't concerned about making friends, Jesus wasn't concerned about being popular, Jesus wasn't concerned about developing personal relationships, and Jesus wasn't concerned about flowing in the prophetic anointing; Jesus was concerned about the Truth. He was concerned about preaching and teaching only what the Father had said, and He was concerned that His Own life backed up what He was teaching, and he was concerned with confronting those who were peddling a false gospel and confront them to their face.

And so Jesus literally dropped like a bomb in the middle of their Sabbath mentality. You see, what Jesus was doing- He was *forcing* these religious leaders to choose between Himself and their pagan religion. Now please notice as we go through the rest of Luke that Jesus never came up to these religious Jews and said, *"Look, I realize that you guys are very sincere and I really respect your sincerity, and I know you mean well but your just a tad bit off base. So let me help you improve on what you already have. So I've got a great idea. Why don't we just gather all of these diverse and bazaar ideas about God and Salvation and Worship that you guys have made up and fabricated through the years and let's just blend them all together with what I've got and that way we can find common ground among us so we can all just go forth and love God and love one another and live together in peace and harmony."*

No, Jesus said, *"Here's the Truth about God, here is the Truth about Salvation, and Here is the Truth about true Worship."* And everything that differs from what I've got is a lie and it is from satan and it is evil and it will damn your soul. So I call you to utterly abandon all that you have that is in any way different from what I've got, and I call you to totally reject everything that you have that is in any way different from what I've got, and I call you to fully embrace what I say and you can have eternal life."

Jesus did not applaud any of their efforts or their rituals or their ceremonies or their teachings. Jesus never gave them any credit at all for their sincerity. Jesus never approved of how intricately they adhered to their man-made version of the Sabbath. Rather- He condemned it all and He called them all to repent and to make a very clear choice. *"Choose the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Gospel of Humility, the Gospel of Repentance, the Gospel of Grace, the Gospel of Faith and utterly reject and turn away from spiritual pride and self-righteousness and merit and works with all of the rituals and ceremonies that promote those things"*- which is exactly what Judaism was then and it is exactly what Judaism is today and it is exactly what every other false religion and every other human philosophy in the world is.

Jesus never, in any way, sought to blend or mix what He had with anything that they had. He never sought in any way to adopt some of what they had and incorporate it into what He had, and He never sought to include one single thing that they believed or one single thing that they were doing into His teaching about God and Salvation and Worship.

And this is the exact message that was preached to the Jews some 40 years later when the writer of the **Epistle to the Hebrews** called the Jews to completely leave what they had and to fully embrace Jesus- so let's read about this by turning to **Hebrews 6:1-3** together:

- 1 Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,**
- 2 of instruction about washings and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.**
- 3 And this we will do, if God permits.**

Now the "**elementary teaching about the Christ**" that the writer of **Hebrews** is talking about here in verse 1 is the *partial* and the *inferior* Revelation of shadows and types and symbols and portions that God gave to Moses and the other writers found in the 39 Books of the OT. In other words- the "elementary teaching about the Christ" has absolutely nothing to do with Christianity- but it is the Old Covenant.

And the "**maturity**" that the writer wants these Jews to "**press on to**" is the final, and the full, and the finished, and the completed

Revelation of God found in the Life, Death, Burial, and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ as articulated and explained by the Apostles and other writers in the 27 Books of the NT. So the maturity, or perfection, that the writer is talking about here is the New Covenant.

So what the writer of **Hebrews** is saying here to these Jews of the *last half* of the 1st Century is the very same message that Jesus gave to the Pharisees before they had Him murdered- and that is for every Jew on earth to completely *abandon* and leave the principle or foundational Truths of the *inferior* Revelation of the First or the Old Covenant that was administered through the blood of animals by a sinful priesthood and to fully embrace the *superior* Revelation of the New Covenant that was administered through the holy Blood of Jesus Christ- the perfect and sinless High Priest.

That is the very same message that Jesus preached, and that is the very same message that all the Apostles preached, and that is the very same message that the Christian Church has preached now for 2,000 consecutive years, and that is the message that I preach to you this morning. Leave all of you man-made religious ideas, abandon rituals and ceremonies, drop all humanly engineered philosophies, walk away from the doctrines of man and the doctrines of demons, and press on to and embrace and adopt and accept and trust fully in the finished Work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now in saying this- please do not take this further than what I am saying. The 39 Books of the OT are the Word of God. What God gave to Moses and the other OT writers is absolutely true and it is good and it is holy. Not one lie or falsehood exists in the OT. And all of the OT is inspired and all of it came from the very Mouth of God. I read and study the OT every day of my life. The OT is a part of my own personal daily Bible reading and I am in awe of the Majesty and the Glory and the Power of the Divine Truth that is in the OT. We have a public reading from a portion of the OT- usually the **Psalms**- in this Church every single Sunday Morning. I love the OT.

But even though all of that is true- what is also true is that the OT is in part. It is not finished. It is not final. The Old Covenant was never designed by God to last forever. The Old Covenant itself pointed to the coming of a better and a superior New Covenant that would absolutely replace the Old. Animal sacrifices, the various washings, the ceremonies, the dietary and ceremonial laws, along with the entire

system of Levitical priests was never intended to last forever. All of these things were designed by God to fade away under the Brilliance and the Glory of what Jesus brought forth in the superior New Covenant.

And we also need to know that Jesus Himself said that everything in the Old Covenant- when read and understood correctly- points to Jesus. So, if you read and study the OT correctly and accurately, and as God intended for it to be read and studied- you will naturally and normally come to Jesus to be saved. And those who read and study the OT and who do not come to Jesus to be saved by His finished Work do not read and study it correctly- they are, in fact, deceived.

Every OT character who was genuinely saved knew and understood this, and without exception- every single person who lived and operated under the OT fully embraced to some degree this very principle. And in all of their writing you can see that none of these OT heroes were justified by their own works, and none of them believed that Salvation came by way of what they did for themselves- but that Salvation was a Sovereign Act of God that was administered to them by way of undeserved Mercy and Grace.

All of the OT people looked forward to the time when Messiah would come and the inferior OT would be forever replaced by an infinitely superior New one. And another thing you need to know about the 39 Books of the OT is that it is not *hard* and it is not *difficult* to read the OT and get the correct meaning- it is *impossible* for anyone to read and study the 39 Books of the OT and get the correct and the full meaning of what is written without the help and the aid and the assistance and the guidance from what the Holy Ghost Authored in the 27 Books of the NT.

In fact- one of the main reasons why God the Holy Ghost breathed out 27 additional Books after the 39 Books of the OT were finished was so that we would understand what the 39 OT Books were saying. In other words- if anyone gets a different meaning of an OT verse that is not verified or confirmed by a NT verse- then regardless of how long they have studied and regardless of how much time they have put into their study- that interpretation is just flat out wrong, and it is not of God, and is, in fact, a false interpretation that will deceive you and damn your soul.

So we need all 39 Books of the OT and they are as much a part of our understanding of God and Salvation and Worship as is the New. *But only in their proper context.* Basically the OT gives us the Promises of God, and basically the NT shows how all those Promises are fulfilled in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But we must understand that even though all 39 Books of the OT is the Word of God- nobody ever got saved by obeying the Law of God. The Law of God does not have the *capacity* to save *anybody*- not because there is anything wrong with the Law- there isn't. The Apostle Paul said in **Romans 7:12** that the Law of God is holy, just, and good. What is wrong is us- we are what is wrong with the Law because we are human and weak and frail- and we *cannot* and we *do not* and we *will not ever* live up the Standard of perfect and continuous Righteousness that the Law demands. Moses did not keep the Law; neither David nor any of the OT heroes that died and went to Heaven ever fully kept the Law of God.

Everybody sins; everybody falls short of obeying the Law perfectly and continuously in thought, word, and deed- 24 hours every day and 7 days every week- which is what sin is.

But, Brother Blair- if the Law *cannot* and *does not* save anybody- then why did God give it? To bring to us the knowledge of sin. The Law puts forth the perfect Standard of what God expects, and everybody on earth born of woman falls short of that Standard. And that is what makes us to be sinners. And that is what makes us to be in *need* of God's merciful Forgiveness, and that is what makes us to be in desperate need of God's Amazing Grace.

So the Law of God is a mirror to show us just how bad and wicked and sinful we really are. But why does God have to remind us how bad we are? Don't we already know that we are lost and in need of Salvation. And you would think that the answer to that question would be a resounding, "Yes!" That after 6,000 years of sin and evil and wickedness being manifested on the earth that surely we would all know that we are sinners by now.

But sadly that is not the case. Because part of what it means to be lost and fallen and depraved is that we really don't believe that we are lost and fallen and depraved- in fact- we actually think that we are really nice and good people. You see, inherent in being fallen is a blindness to our own condition and a moral deception about what is



"good" and what is "evil". Deep down inside our depraved and wicked hearts there exists a very powerful lie that constantly tells us that even though we may periodically do "bad things"- that- basically- we are really "good" people, with "good and "noble" hearts who basically want to do the "right thing". And Secular Humanism and Sociology and Psychology and Psychiatry and both Social and Religious Liberalism all agree with that lie and they teach that lie and they promote that lie.

This Lie says that what is right with Man lies *internally*- inside him, in his heart, and in his soul. And that what is wrong with Man lies *externally*- outside of him- in his horrible environment, and in his violent and evil culture, and the sins that a person commits is due to his lack of money, and his lack of education, and his lack opportunity.

The Lie goes on to say that if we can learn how to "tap" into our "inner strength" and our "inner self" and to go deep down within us to reach into our own internal "goodness and power"- and learn how to release that "goodness" and that "strength" and that "power"- then we can do all that is within our hearts to do and we can have whatever we want to have and nothing shall be impossible for us.

So the Lie teaches us that by providing "bad" people with more money and more opportunity and to teach them how to build up their belief in *themselves*- then society and Schools and Government as a whole can magically redeem these "bad" people, and we can by and through our own efforts turn "bad" people into "good" people.

This Lie, of course, is not new, and it isn't science- it is the classic man-made religion of Secular Humanism- which is the worship of "self" and the expanding and the building up and the exalting of the inner "self" for the purpose of the deification of Man- all to the glory of Man.

Think about this for just a second. The issue here is all about Righteousness and how we get it. Humanists and the Pharisees and, for that matter, all of the leaders of all the world's false religions and human philosophies all say the same thing. They all seek by various means to improve and to develop their own intrinsic personal human goodness and righteousness that they already have; that they were born with to the point that they can become acceptable to God. The only areas where the various religions differ are in the details of what they have do to accomplish this. But the goal with all of them is the same- they seek by good works and noble deeds and human activity and education and a change of environment and the influx of more money

and opportunity to become righteous. And that is the definition of what self-righteousness means- the development and building up of the righteousness that man already has; that he was born with to the point where it is perfect and full.

You see, the definition of "self-righteous" is to develop your own personal righteousness by what you do for yourself- which is why the people who have bought into this lie talk constantly about "self". And that is why you hear so much talk today about "self" improvement, and "self" actuality, and self-fulfillment, and "self" esteem, and "self" help.

And whether the self of Man is developed by taking Communion or by praying the Rosary or by sacrificing animals or by going on long fasts or by dressing in certain ways or by praying certain prayers or by speaking in tongues or by building houses for the poor or by getting Baptized- if you are trying to improve your standing with God by any of these things, if you are trying to earn Salvation through any of these vehicles, if in any way- you are trying to make yourself to be a better person, and thus develop your own self-righteousness by any of these things- then you are not following Biblical Christianity- you are, in fact, a follower of Secular Humanism and you are deceived.

Now listen- some of those activities are very good and we should be doing them - but not to earn righteousness- but we should be engaged in these things in humility out of a grateful heart as a result of already being saved to begin with.

And as you are aware- Secular Humanism as we know it today- was developed by a man named Pelagius some 1700 years ago- as he fought against Augustine over such basic fundamental Biblical Truths as Original Sin, Human Depravity as a result of the Fall, our need for Forgiveness and Salvation, and Grace.

And as this gigantic battle was waged- Pelagius came to the inevitable conclusion- as all humanists do- that if Man is really not fallen after all, and if Man is really not that bad anyway, and if Man already has the power and the ability to do what is right- without gracious Sovereign intervention- than Grace is absolutely irrelevant, and the Fall of Man is a myth, and the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ was nice but completely unnecessary.

Pelagius taught 1700 years ago, as do so many of the preachers on the Hay, Wood, and Stubble Television Network teach today, that we really don't need Grace, we really don't need Mercy, and so our greatest

need is not to obtain Forgiveness for our sin, and we really don't even need Salvation- because we are really not that bad to begin with.

And in our day of so much technology and the development of Man and the development of Science and the advancement of Medicine and the glory of human Government- that surely we don't need to conform our lives to that outdated and archaic old manuscript called the Holy Bible- but we need to follow our hearts and do all that is in our hearts and do what is right in our own eyes.

That what we *really* need to do is to "exercise our own faith", and all we need to do is to "speak the word", and all we need to do is "put our minds to it", and all we need to do is "make our minds up" and "exercise our free will" and "put forth more effort" and "pray secret prayers" and "sow seed offerings" into somebody's ministry, and go out and get the prophetic anointing, and learn how to tap into that inner strength and that inner power and that inner goodness, and we need to learn how to follow that "inner voice", and we need to learn how to psyche ourselves up, and learn how to do something for ourselves to improve our own personal righteousness.

But as we can see right here in **Luke**- Pelagius really didn't invent anything because this was the religion of the Pharisees. And the pied pipers of our day haven't received a new revelation at all like they claim- but this is simply the very same man-made religion of self-righteousness and works that the Pharisees had, and because they don't know history and because they don't know the Bible- an entire generation of Church goers in our day have been deceived by this very same lie all over again, and they are teaching it to another gullible generation of weak and silly and undiscerning people- who would rather follow emotional outbursts and chase after fantasies than to actually walk with God.

And what is amazing is that this Lie that says that what is right with Man lies on the inside and what is wrong with Man lies on the outside is taught in all of our Public Schools, it is the state sponsored religion of the Federal and State Governments of the United States, it has been defined as a religion by the Supreme Court of the United States, and is taught and applauded in our Military. It is accepted and promoted by all of the Fortune 500 Corporations, and sadly- in our day- Secular Humanism- the deification of fallen Man- the very religion of the Pharisees has been welcomed with open arms and has been

accepted and is now being taught from many pulpits in the modern Church.

Recently, a nationally known ministry team from Cross TV went into various Federal Prisons and was given access to the inmates of Death Row. Here they interviewed several hundred inmates who were on Death Row- awaiting execution for the most heinous crimes imaginable. These are the sure 'nuff serious criminals who have committed unspeakable acts.

The ministry team went in and asked them all the very same question. *"Do you consider yourself to be a "good" person?"* Without exception- 100% of these Death Row inmates all said that while they had certainly done evil things- that deep down inside them- they considered themselves to be "good" people with "good" hearts, and thought that because they were "good" people- that surely God would allow them entrance into Heaven when they were executed!

This is the level of blindness that is inherent in the human soul. We really and truly do not believe that we are fallen and sinful, and that our sins are really that big a deal. And even though we acknowledge that we periodically do "bad" things- we do not accept the fact that God would be Just to condemn us to everlasting destruction because what we do.

In fact, for anyone today to preach that God is Correct to damn sinners to hell, for anyone to say, get on the radio and preach that unless we fully understand the Bad News of our lost and sinful condition- then the "Good News" of Christ's Salvation is meaningless- he would be labeled "mean spirited, legalistic, rude, and unloving and even unchristian"- instead of what he *really* is- which is faithful to what the Word of God actually teaches.

But that is exactly *why* the Law of God was given to us. Not to save us- but to prove to us without any shred of doubt that we are not good people, we are not righteous at all- but that we are, in fact- wicked sinners- who *deserve* God's Judgment because we are guilty. The Law of God proves to us every day that we are all weak and frail, and that we cannot cease from sin and that we are all born in sin and that we are all shaped in iniquity, and that we actually love our sin. And the net effect of God's Law is that by its rigidity and refusal to bend or make exceptions- the Law of God will bring every single human being on

planet earth to this one place, and I want you to read it for yourself so please turn with me to **Romans 3:19:**

**Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God;**

Now the "closing of the mouth" that Paul talks about here is the Supernatural Power that the Law of God has in silencing all of those who say they are "good" and who insist on believing that they are not fallen and they are not "bad" people and they are really "good" and "righteous" people who are working their way into Heaven by what they do.

And the Apostle Paul says right here that the Law of God has the ability to stop that kind of talk. But then Paul goes even further and says that the Law- all by itself- when rightly understood- not only silences those who insist they are really not that bad but it also brings what? It brings guilt to who? To the entire world. But how does the Law bring all the world guilty before God if some of the people in the world are "good" and are not fallen and are not really that bad and are not sinners and fallen? Because they are. This is why God gave the Law- not to save anyone- but so that every mouth who insists on protesting their own goodness will be stopped, and so that every human on earth will be found guilty in God's Eyes and in desperate need of Mercy, Grace, Forgiveness, and Salvation.

So the Apostle Paul had it right when he wrote in **Galatians 3:24&25:**

**24 Therefore the Law has become our tutor *to lead us to Christ*, so that we may be justified by faith.**

**25 But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.**

So the Law of God acts like a very strict teacher that drives us to that place of utter desperation and helplessness- as we collapse under the weight of our own sin and our own guilt, and we have no excuse and we have no defense, and all that we have left is to cry out and beg God for Mercy that we do not deserve, and beg God for Forgiveness because we realize that we cannot develop our own righteousness, and at that

point- God Himself promises to save us to the uttermost by and through the Lord Jesus Christ.

So, here is the main point of all that I have said. If it is true that the purpose of the Law is to stop every mouth and bring all the world guilty before God- if that is why God gave us the Law- then the religion of the Pharisees is the single worst and most evil religion that anyone could ever trust in because their religion taught that Man is not really that fallen and he is not really helpless to improve his own condition before God, and they taught that by doing certain religious duties that we humans have the power to save ourselves and to make ourselves righteous in God's Eyes without Christ and without Grace and without Mercy and without Forgiveness - which is the worst thing that anyone could ever teach and it is in direct opposition to the very purpose of why God gave the Law in the first place- which Law- these guys said they were following.

You see, the Holy Bible says that what is wrong with Man is what is inside of himself- in his fallen and depraved nature and in his wicked and sinful heart- Jesus said that all evil, all lust, all covetousness, all violence, all injustice, and all idolatry does not come from some external place- but those things originate from inside the human heart. In fact, the Bible says in **Jeremiah 17:9**:

**The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?**

So the worst possible counsel that we could ever give to people is to tell them to "*follow their heart*", or to go and do "*all that is in their heart*" to do because their heart is the worst and the most evil and the most fallen and the most depraved and the most sinful aspect about them.

And the Bible goes on to say that what is right about Man lies external to himself- in Heaven, in the Bible, on the Cross, and in the Person and finished Work of the Lord Jesus Christ. So, for anyone to "look inward" for help is to deny the *external* Grace and Forgiveness and Salvation offered by Jesus Christ. To "tap into" that "inner strength" is to deny the Power of God from Heaven, and for anyone to "follow their heart" is to deny the external Objective Propositional Divine Truth found only in the 66 Books of Holy Scripture.

I think that you can see by now why Secular Humanism is so prevalent in our day. Secular Humanism is easy to teach, easy to learn, and easy to accept because it confirms and verifies and rewards the Lie that already exists inside fallen Man- that he is basically just fine, and that while Grace and Mercy and Salvation and The Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus and the Word of God is just fine for those people that might need it- they personally don't really need it- because they are not "bad" people- they have worked real hard to improve their own lives without Grace, and they have labored very diligently to improve their own human morality by what they have done for themselves without Jesus having to die and rise again, and, therefore- they are not bad- they are, in fact, "good" people.

The Law says that the Original Sin of Adam passes down to every human being at the very moment of conception. The Law says that we are not sinners because we sin- but that we sin because in our very nature- we are all wicked sinners who delight to do our own thing, and that we are all born sinners, and that we love darkness rather than light, and that we naturally and normally desire to run away and hide from God, and the Law tells us over and over and over again that our human depravity is so deeply seated and so far reaching that left to ourselves- without any Sovereign interference from a gracious and Merciful God- nobody would ever love God, nobody would ever be convicted of sin, nobody would ever repent, nobody would ever serve God, and nobody would ever be saved.

And the Law says that not only is it true that we are all terrible sinners- but that because of our sin- God is correct and He is Right and He is Just to judge us for our sins. So we are all in the worst of all possible positions- not only are we all guilty of being wicked sinners- but we are all standing underneath the certain and Just Wrath of a Holy God, and that unless and until we repent and beg God for a Forgiveness that we do not deserve, and beg God for a Mercy that we cannot earn- we have no hope at all and we are, in fact, doomed.

But this is what makes Grace so magnificent, and this is what makes unmerited Favor and God's Mercy so glorious. If, in fact, we are all guilty, if, in fact, we are all helpless sinners and unwilling and incapable of changing that fact by *anything* that we do for ourselves, if it is impossible for fallen human beings to develop their own righteousness by their own actions- then God's Mercy through the

Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the only game in town. And this is precisely the conflict here between Jesus and the Pharisees.

So if you're going to preach the Gospel faithfully- then the Gospel is exclusive. It does not and it cannot and it must not mingle or mix or blend with anything else. You cannot bring the Gospel in like a new piece of garment and sew it in to old Judaism. You can't bring the Gospel in like new wine and try to put it into the old wineskins of Judaism. You can't mingle the Truth of what Jesus had with the error of the Pharisees. You can't mingle the Gospel of Grace and Faith, a gospel of humility and repentance with a humanistic religion of spiritual pride, self-righteousness, merit and works. It is either/or, it is all or nothing, it is "leave" and "press on to", it is totally abandon all false religious ideas and fully embrace Divine Truth. It is accept Jesus and the free imputation of Christ's Righteousness by Faith alone and categorically reject Judaism, or it is to categorically reject Jesus and accept man-made humanistic self-righteousness.

And that is where we are today- so come to Jesus and leave everything else behind.

Let's come and pray.

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The Covenant of Peace Church 13600 John Clark Road Gulfport, Mississippi 39503 228.832.7729 [www.covenantofpeace.net](http://www.covenantofpeace.net)

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.