

Brand Ambassador

Luke 6:1-11

Jesus reserved his harshest critiques for the Pharisees and other religious leaders of his day. Why is this? For one thing, the Pharisees represented a brand of faith that Jesus took issue with. Conformity to Scripture and tradition was paramount for the Pharisees, whereas people were paramount for Jesus. Jesus confronts legalistic leanings by showing us how to keep first things first.

Thinking It Through (agree/disagree, consider/contemplate)

We are...Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.

- The Apostle Paul

Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. – Jesus, Matthew 23.23

The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being...

- Hebrews 1.3

Two legalistic leanings: 1) An exaggerated need for certainty and/or control. (2) Looking to catch others doing wrong.

Working It Out

1. What is a brand that you stand behind and why? What is it about the product or customer service that makes you want to be an ambassador?
2. How do you think outsiders experience the 'brand' of Christianity in our culture? What vision of God do people get from the version of Christianity we live out?
3. Jesus elevated people without devaluing the law, but the Pharisees elevated the law while devaluing people. As you read Matthew 23.23 above (all of Matt 23 is helpful), what do you notice about Jesus' critique? Notice there isn't an either/or vibe but a both/and. How can we live this out?
4. Read the two legalistic leanings above. Do you identify with one more than the other? Have you experienced either in your own religious settings?
5. What is it that makes us want certainty in religious thought (or even in politics!)? What's unhealthy or dangerous about the quest for certainty/control?

Prayer Point

- Pray that we would follow the way of Jesus and look beyond the letter into the spirit of God's law.
 - Pray that GFC would be ambassadors of Christ in a way that faithfully represents the heart of God as revealed in the life of Jesus.
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