Locked Out of Love

Greig Whittaker

Here is the revelation that is shaping my life today: religion locks you out. Religion focuses on the peripheral issues and makes them the priority for entry. Jesus came to expose the fraud that is religion in all its perversity, fraudulence, and arrogance, so that no one would ever follow religion again. Already loved replaces stories of separation, so that no one misses out.

"Great sorrow awaits you religious scholars and you Pharisees-such frauds and pretenders! You do all you can to keep people from experiencing the reality of heaven's kingdom realm. Not only do you refuse to enter in; you also forbid anyone else from entering in!" . . .

"Great sorrow awaits you religious scholars and Pharisees-frauds and pretenders! For you are obsessed with peripheral issues, like insisting on paying meticulous tithes on the smallest herbs that grow in your gardens. These matters are fine, yet you ignore the most important duty of all: to walk in the love of God, to display mercy to others, and to live with integrity. Readjust your values and place first things first."

—Matthew 23:13, 23 (*The Passion Translation*)

OBSERVATION

Religion moves the first-place issue of love to a distant last place and disguises the way God is experienced through establishing performance as the entry door, so no one ever gets to experience Heaven's love. It places behaving right for acceptance above experiencing the already lavished beauty of God's gift of acceptance.

As soon as you are locked out of Heaven's love embrace then you are imprisoned in the performance cycle of always reaching for performance-based worthiness for your acceptance. And you just never make the grade—no one makes the grade. So, religion locks you out of love and gets you "obsessed with peripheral issues," and then the management of your, and those of others, performances on the thousand peripheral issues. Critical critique not beautiful embrace becomes the story of your journey.

When you miss how already unconditionally loved you are then your story starts and is shaped by separation from God, and religion shows you the way you must behave to overcome the separation. And performance is so demanding, ***"paying meticulous tithes on the smallest herbs,"*** that you lose sight of love, and God becomes a demanding, distant tyrant that is obsessed with the details and judges harshly your every misstep.

The story of God starts, is founded on, and finished with the truth that you are loved, always have been and always will be. All who choose to hear will know this to be their story. It's only when you know you are loved that you realize the "most important duty of all: to walk in the love of God."

You see there are no nit-picking laws to follow, there is only be loved, walk in the embrace of love. Religion has us work and we miss love. Whereas God wants us to be loved, stay loved and then overflow, to reflect love. This is not working—this is now being me. The loved me, loves, and love shows mercy and lives in integrity. Place the first thing first and everything else falls into place. *Place religion first and you don't enter in; place love first and you will experience Heaven and bring Heaven to earth.* How do we miss this?

APPLICATION

I will never allow rules or religion in any of its warped forms, no matter how good and right and godly they may appear, to be the meter of judgement for my acceptance into the open embrace of Heaven. Nothing, nothing at all, not the worst behavior I could think upon, or engage in, will

ever have me walk away from Heaven's embrace.

Heaven's love is where healing happens, where I become my truest self, shaped in Heaven's image. I will never judge others to be unworthy, and I will never sit under any judgement that condemns me to be unworthy of being embraced and experiencing His love.

This is the priority of life, I will readjust all my values to "the most important duty of all: to walk in the love of God."

Thank you that you hate religion and tear down its condemning rules and silence its shame-filled voice. I would be locked out of love if religion had its say.

Thank you that you call me into a beautiful life of experiencing your unconditional, uncaused, unworldly love. Being postured always to encounter love like this, is the priority of life, with the second being reflect it. This is a life I can live, this is a life I can embrace, this is life!

Thank you that you place no barriers, no grades to pass, no measures to meet, no behavioral monitors for acceptance, between me and your love.

Meditate: the most important duty of all is to walk in the love of God.

Consider: How loud is religion's voice in your life?

Do you ever feel unacceptable to be embraced by Gods love?

How beautiful is love's embrace? ❑

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