

# 10 Characteristics of a Religious Spirit

Here are a few practical characteristics of religious spirits and how they can be recognized.

**1. Religious spirits have no authority in Jesus Christ.** Jesus hated religious spirits. Jesus was not a religious person, and He did things that shook the religious kingdoms of the earth. Acts 19:13–16 tells the story of seven sons of a man named Sceva. They were referred to as “vagabond Jews and exorcists.” In other words, they were religious. The story reveals that they had no power over unclean spirits.

**2. Religion steals the youthful joy of young people in serving Jesus;** it makes the elders become demonically old. In Matthew 19:14, Jesus forbid His disciples from stopping the little children from coming to Him. I do not believe in an age of spiritual accountability. Everything that has breath must praise and serve the Lord (Ps. 150:6). Children must be raised up in the things of God so that they will not depart.

The Bible only has one account whereby a prophet is called “old.” In the Book of 1 Kings, a man from Judah prophesied against the altar at Bethel. The king ordered that the man from Judah be seized. The king’s arm froze as he pointed to the prophet from Judah, and the king could not pull his arm back to himself. The king asked the man from Judah to pray that his arm would be healed.

He prayed, and the king was healed. Rumors of the authority of the prophet from Judah spread, and he was summoned by an “old prophet.” This prophet was not necessarily old in age but actually washed up. He was spiritually or demonically old! (See 1 Kings 13.)

**3. Religion is an anti-evangelism spirit.** Matthew 23:15 warns

the religious sects of the church that they lose more souls than they win. Their converts become doubly as hellish as them.

**4. Religion is antichrist.** Religious people (the Pharisees and the Sadducees) killed Jesus.

**5. Religious people have no joy and, ultimately, no power!** Nehemiah 8:10 declared that the joy of the Lord is our strength. It denotes that the person who lives in the dwelling place of the Lord (the place of joy—in the presence of the Lord there is fullness of joy) is reinforced with power.

**6. Religious spirits breed bondage and condemnation and block true liberty.** (See Galatians 5:1; Romans 8:1.)

**7. Religion creates a form of godliness through regimen and repetition.** Second Timothy 3:5 warns us to avoid people with forms of godliness.

**8. Religion corrupts and perverts.** It promotes an unrealistic standard that cannot be obtained because of the dictates of the flesh. This is why true worshipers worship in spirit and in truth. The law was a schoolmaster that taught us that in and of our fleshly natures, we cannot obey the commandments of God. This is why we were given a new (and better) covenant. The laws of God are now written in our hearts and not on tablets of stone. Trying to live by the dictates of the tablets of stone alone only opens the doors to corruption and perversion through religious spirits of failure. This is why perversion and corruption are multiplied when men attempt to serve God by their own power and by their guidelines. (See Hebrews 8:7–13.)

**9. Religion stems from the root of spiritual schizophrenia.** One minute the people blessed the name of the Lord and cried, “Hosanna to the Highest!” In another breath they yelled, “Crucify Him!”

**10. Religion hinders positive relationships** by putting a bad taste in the mouths of unbelievers, taking the fire out of marriages, stopping the flow of God in worship fellowships, and making children hate serving God.

To sum it all up, judgment will start at the house of God. Remember, it was religious spirits that nailed Jesus to the cross. Let us not religiously or repetitively serve God. We must worship Him in spirit and in truth. Selah!

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