Pastor Rick Baker

June 23 2019

The Purpose of Religion… *is not Religion*

(Mark 2:13-3:5)

*There are systems of religion that are actually leading themselves and people to eternal death.*

*The big takeaway Jesus offers isn’t about how to do church for people who don’t like church; it is how to do church* ***for people who don’t like death****. It’s about upsizing life over stubborn form. It’s about religious cultures giving way to God’s revelation in Christ.*

Three important “Christian” or kingdom matters that need to be brought into alignment with Christ’s values.

1. In the matter of reaching out to sinners… (2:13-17)

* All are able to be called by Jesus; those he calls, follow Him and keep on following him.
* Doctors don’t wait for sick people to get better and then engage them; people with sick souls should be pursued.
* There is a very different approach expected towards those who are lost and sinning versus those who are in the family of God and making sinful choices.

2. In the matter of fasting… (2:18-22)

* There is a time for fasting; joyful citizens of the kingdom should do more feasting than fasting.
* Ritual to gain favour is worn out religion and not compatible with the Kingdom of God—reformation must give way to wholescale transformation.

3. In the matter of Sabbath/ Lord’s Day deeds… (2:23-3:5)

* Sabbath is a gift from God to people to be freed from work responsibilities to be with Him.
* More than simply refraining from work, it is time made particularly available for doing good to those who need help.

*There is a type of religion that masquerades as representative of God and yet specializes in missing the point and leading people to death. It is rigid and ritualistic and promotes external favour with God and Jesus makes that religion explode.*