

**Problem:**

empty ritual is a product of good intentions but it is death.

-Read the following article and discuss:

<http://alvinreid.com/?p=2967>

**Main Idea:**

Christ did not come to make us religious - He came to make us righteous.

**CPT:**

Who was opposing Jesus (Matt. 15:1)

- where were these religious leaders from?
- What was their intention in following Jesus?
  - Read Matthew 9:3, 11, 14, 34; 12:2, 14, 24, 38, to find out.

What were they opposing (Matt. 15:2)

- Read Mark 7:1-5. What was the tradition Jesus was breaking?
- Read Genesis 2:15-17. What did God say to Adam about the tree?
- Read Genesis 3:1-4. What did Eve do to add to the Word of God?
  - Do you think these traditions of the elders began with good intentions?

What was Jesus opposing (Matt. 5:3-9)

- The religious leaders were arguing that Jesus was not religious enough while Jesus was responding that they were not righteous enough.
- Read Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32; Proverbs 30:5-6 and Revelation 22:18-19. What was Jesus opposing?
- In their additions to Scripture they were breaking the clear teaching in Exodus 20:13-16.
- Read the following article and discuss:
  - <http://carm.org/roman-catholicism-bible-and-tradition>

What was Jesus teaching (Matt. 5:10-20)

- Read verses Matthew 5:10-11 and James 1:13-15 and Jeremiah 17:9. What was Jesus' main argument here?
- Read Matthew 15:12-14 and Matthew 3:7-10; 7:15-20; 12:33-35. What was Jesus illustrating?
- Read Matthew 15:15-16 and Romans 6:23-8:5. Was Jesus saying that the law was bad?
- Read Matthew 15:17-18 and James 3:1-12 and Matthew 12:36-37. What was Jesus' first application?
- Read Matthew 15:19-20. The broad issue is the heart. Based on this text what is the source problem behind murder, adultery, theft and sexual immorality etc.?
  - The heart is the issue behind these things but also behind:
    - Belief - Romans 10:9-10
    - Love - Matthew 22:37
    - Obedience - Ephesians 6:5-6
    - Giving - 2 Corinthians 9:7

Every religious act becomes an empty ritual when it does not reflect the reality of our heart...but i am not advocating more meaningful rituals. Read Colossians 2:6-3:23...

**implication:**

if the heart is what defines worship or sin then...  
every religious activity can become sinful with the wrong heart attitude  
and every neutral activity can become worship with the right heart attitude

From the book Total Truth by Nancy Pearcy:

*In his book [Roaring Lambs](#), Bob Briner describes his student days at a Christian college, where the unspoken assumption was that the only way to really serve God was in full-time Christian work. Already knowing that he wanted a career in sports management, Briner writes, "I felt I was a sort of second class campus citizen. My classmates who were preparing for the pulpit ministry or missionary service were the ones who were treated as they would be doing the real work of the church. The rest of us were the supporting cast."*

*The underlying message was that people in ordinary professions might contribute their prayers and financial support, but that was about it.*

You see, every 'holy' activity can become secular and godless, and every neutrally secular activity can become worshipful and God honoring.

**Application:**

for the non-believer - repent -you need a new heart.

for the believer - read 1 Corinthians 10:31 -

Christ did not come to make us religious but to make us righteous- no action is neutral so do all you do for the glory of God

Read the following three articles and discuss how to tangibly apply this message to your lives.

<http://www.desiringgod.org/sermons/worship-god--2>

[http://www.relevantbibleteaching.com/site/cpage.asp?  
cpage\\_id=140025988&sec\\_id=140001239](http://www.relevantbibleteaching.com/site/cpage.asp?cpage_id=140025988&sec_id=140001239)

<http://www.myheartsmisson.com/tag/washing-dishes-can-be-worship/>