

The Pharisee



# TEEN TREE OF LIFE

## The Doctrine of Arrogance

### Part 4

### January 20, 2019

Before you begin, ask yourself a very important question: Do you believe that Jesus Christ died on The Cross for all of your sins? If you answered yes, you will need to be sure that you are filled with The Holy Spirit. How do you do this? You name

your sins to God The Father in His Son's Name. This is called rebound. As a Christian, you must rebound any time you sin. This is taught in 1JOHN 1:9: *If we confess our sins [directly to God], He [God] is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Now, if you have never believed that Jesus Christ died on The Cross for all of your sins, all you have to do is say to yourself that you believe in Him and you are saved! The Bible verse which teaches us this is ACTS 16:31: *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved."*

In last week's Teen Tree, we studied arrogance and authority, learning that authority has been delegated by God to four Divine Institutions which are part of Divine Establishment. They break down this way: the authority you have over yourself to make your own choices; the authority a husband has over his wife; and the authority parents have over children. We are now at the fourth Institution which is the government's authority over its citizens. The Government has authority over its people to protect their freedom, property, and life: ***Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God. So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished. For the authorities do not strike fear in people who are doing right, but in those who are doing wrong. Would you like to live without fear of the authorities? Do what is right, and they will honor you. The authorities are God's servants, sent for your good. But if you are doing wrong, of course you should be afraid, for they have the power to punish you. They are God's servants, sent for the very purpose of punishing those who do what is wrong. So you must submit to them, not only to avoid punishment, but also to keep a clear conscience. (ROM 13:1-5)***

America has the greatest constitution the world has ever known but it demands integrity on the part of the people of this country. Sadly, today, the majority of our citizens lack integrity and have no respect for authority. When people are arrogant, they reject authority and eventually can become self-righteous. Self-righteous people are very confident and full of themselves – arrogant! They are also intolerant of other

people's opinions and behavior. They think they know it all. And bear in mind that this group of people also includes believers!

When self-righteous people reject authority, it results in moral degeneracy. (Degeneracy is defined as the process of declining.) Moral degeneracy leads to privacy being destroyed through gossiping, maligning, judging, jealousy, bitterness and hatred. Self-righteous arrogance results in the destruction of freedom through crime, drug addiction, violence, and the attempt of self-righteous people to impose their evil beliefs on others.

Our Lord condemns self-righteous arrogance with respect to legalism in **(MAT 23:16-22 The Message Bible)**: ***“You’re hopeless! What arrogant stupidity! You say, ‘If someone makes a promise with his fingers crossed, that’s nothing; but if he swears with his hand on the Bible, that’s serious.’ What ignorance! Does the leather on the Bible carry more weight than the skin on your hands? And what about this piece of trivia: ‘If you shake hands on a promise, that’s nothing; but if you raise your hand that God is your witness, that’s serious’? What ridiculous hairsplitting! What difference does it make whether you shake hands or raise hands? A promise is a promise. What difference does it make if you make your promise inside or outside a house of worship? A promise is a promise. God is present, watching and holding you to account regardless.”*** Legalism is man’s pointless attempt to gain salvation or to continue in God’s Plan by way of some system of “do’s and don’ts.” In last week’s Teen Tree, we studied “good works” which are what many so-called religious people think they can do to please God. “Good works” are human good which they do to please God or get Him to like them.

Legalism is ignorance of God’s Word and Divine Power. A great example of legalism is the pompous attitude of the Pharisees and scribes is given in the passage above. This is what Jesus Christ said to His disciples and the crowd earlier in **MAT 23:1-9** ***“The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses; therefore all that they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds; for they say things and do not do them. They tie up heavy burdens and lay them on men’s shoulders, but they themselves are unwilling to move them with so much as a finger. But they do all their deeds to be noticed by men; for they broaden their phylacteries and lengthen the tassels of their garments. They love the place of honor at banquets and the chief seats in the synagogues, and respectful greetings in the market places, and being called Rabbi by men. But do not be called Rabbi; for One is your Teacher, and you are all brothers.”***

Self-righteous arrogance, along with legalism, concludes that God’s Plan succeeds or fails on the basis of human works rather than on His Grace. And, remember, grace is God working on our behalf. So, legalism establishes false standards and measures on the basis of self-righteousness. Legalism also teaches that spiritual success depends on complying with these false standards. Legalism teaches salvation through keeping the Law. WRONG! Look at what the apostle Paul wrote: ***So where does that put us? Do we Jews get a better break than the others? Not really. Basically, all of us, whether insiders or outsiders, start out in identical conditions, which is to say that we all start out as sinners. Scripture leaves no doubt about it: There’s nobody living right, not even one, nobody who knows the score, nobody alert for God. They’ve all taken the***

**wrong turn; they've all wandered down blind alleys. No one's living right; I can't find a single one. Their throats are gaping graves, their tongues slick as mudslides. Every word they speak is tinged with poison. They open their mouths and pollute the air. They race for the honor of sinner-of-the-year, litter the land with heartbreak and ruin, Don't you know the first thing about living with others. They never give God the time of day. This makes it clear, doesn't it, that whatever is written in these Scriptures is not what God says about others but to us to whom these Scriptures were addressed in the first place! And it's clear enough, isn't it, that we're sinners, every one of us, in the same sinking boat with everybody else? Our involvement with God's revelation doesn't put us right with God. What it does is force us to face our complicity in everyone else's sin. But in our time something new has been added. What Moses and the prophets witnessed to all those years has happened. The God-setting-things-right that we read about has become Jesus-setting-things-right for us. And not only for us, but for everyone who believes in him. For there is no difference between us and them in this. Since we've compiled this long and sorry record as sinners (both us and them) and proved that we are utterly incapable of living the glorious lives God wills for us, God did it for us. Out of sheer generosity he put us in right standing with himself. A pure gift. He got us out of the mess we're in and restored us to where he always wanted us to be. And he did it by means of Jesus Christ. God sacrificed Jesus on the altar of the world to clear that world of sin. Having faith in him sets us in the clear. God decided on this course of action in full view of the public—to set the world in the clear with himself through the sacrifice of Jesus, finally taking care of the sins he had so patiently endured. This is not only clear, but it's now—this is current history! God sets things right. He also makes it possible for us to live in his rightness. So where does that leave our proud Jewish insider claims and counterclaims? Canceled? Yes, canceled. What we've learned is this: God does not respond to what we do; we respond to what God does. We've finally figured it out. Our lives get in step with God and all others by letting him set the pace, not by proudly [arrogantly] or anxiously trying to run the parade. (ROM 3:9-28 The Message Bible)** Self-righteous arrogance seeks to impose its standard on others by judging them for not complying.

Then, there is pseudo (fake) morality which is used by apostate Christians as a substitute for the Christian way of life. (The word apostate describes a person who abandons his or her religious faith and principles.) Now, being moral is something both believers and unbelievers should be; however, being moral is not the Christian way of life. This is because something higher is produced through God's Grace Policy and the availability of His Divine Power. But what's the difference? Well, morality is the function of the human race living under the laws of Divine Establishment which include certain laws which God has ordained for the survival and freedom of the human race. Christianity doesn't reject morality **but** remember this very important principle: anything the unbeliever can do is not the Christian way of life. Arrogance, from the cosmic, system produces believers who think their system of morality pleases God and as we've learned, it doesn't!!

{to be continued}