

How to Tell Good Religion From Bad

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In the West, the fastest growing religious demographic is the “Nones.” Young people are rejecting traditional religions. Like old wine, traditional religion is going bad. We are looking for new wineskins. How do we tell good religion from bad?

Here is how: good religion empowers family life.

God’s Law is embedded in the heart and love of the family. This means that the measure of a religious tradition is the degree to which it honors family

relationships.

Honoring parents is the vertical dimension, and honoring brothers and sisters is the horizontal dimension of a true religious tradition. For example, the Ten Commandments. The first five are vertical—honor God and honor your parents. The next five are horizontal—honor your brothers and sisters.

Honoring God should never conflict with honoring parents. Jesus said that before you make your gift at the altar, attend your parents. To those who objected, he said: “You say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father or mother is ‘devoted to God,’ ...you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition.”

Just as Jesus placed honoring parents before religious tradition, he placed honoring siblings before religious tradition: “If you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.”

Jesus’ word to honor brother and sister is the exact Law that God gave to Adam and Eve. The Commandment not to eat of the fruit came when Adam and Eve were brother and sister. To honor God as brother and sister means to honor each other through sexual abstinence until marriage blessed by God.

Honor your parents, honor your siblings, honor your spouse... these are the essence of God’s Law and the measure of religion.

Religion that violates parent-child heart and brother-sister heart is religion that has gone bad, no matter how reasonable and righteous it appears. God has created new wineskins through True Father and True Mother Moon, a husband and wife God called to be True Parents. The new wineskins are the heart realms of family life. These fulfill the ideals and hopes of all religions. Let us give thanks to God for True Parents.

References: Exodus 20:1-17; Matthew 15:1-6, 5:23-24.