



Comment

Scripture

Prologue

Today we Christians often shy away from being associated with a religion. But is it biblical to deny Christianity as a religion? Or is it rather wise to distinguish between the neutral noun of 'religion' and the more negatively connoted adjective 'religiosity'?

We are warned in the Word of THEOS against being overly or falsely religious, but nowhere are we instructed not to regard Christianity as (the only true) religion. Instead, we will see in this study that James speaks about a **pure and undefiled religion** for which we should strive.

Religion

Negative passages:

Now all the Jews know my manner of life from my youth, that had taken place from the beginning among my own people and in Jerusalem, having known me for a long time, if they are willing to testify, that in accordance with the strictest party of our religion [neutral; simply referring to Jews; G2356 ΘΡΗΣΚΕΙΑ threskeia: ceremonial observance: - religion, worshipping.] *I lived as a Pharisee* [negative, referring to an extreme within a formerly perfect religion].

Act 26:4-5

Religious leaders in rebellion against THEOS.

And there were certain of the scribes there sitting, and reasoning in their hearts, 'Why doth this one thus speak evil words? who is able to forgive sins except one - THEOS?' *And the Pharisees* went out immediately with the *Herodians* and began to conspire against Him with regard to how they could destroy Him.

Mar 2:6-7
Mar 3:6

And Sadducees - who say there is no resurrection - came up to Him and began to ask Him ...

Mar 12:18

Self-made religion and superstition.

And Paul, having stood in the midst of the Areopagus, said, 'Men, Athenians, in all things *I perceive you as superstitious* [G1174 ΔΕΙCΙΔΑΙΜΟΝΕCTEPOC deisidaimonesteros: more religious than others: - too superstitious]; for passing through and contemplating your objects of worship, *I found also an erection on which had been inscribed: To theos - unknown; whom, therefore - not knowing - ye do worship*, this One I announce to you. 'THEOS, who did make the world, and all things in it, this One, of heaven and of earth being KYRIOS, in temples made with hands doth not dwell, neither by the hands of men is He served - needing anything, He giving to all life, and breath, and all things.

Act 17:22-25

If you have died with CHRISTOS to the elemental spirits of the world, why do you submit to them as if living in the world? "Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch," which things are all meant for destruction by consuming according to human commandments and teachings, which things although they have, to besure, an appearance of wisdom in self-made religion [G1479 ΕΘΕΛΟΘΡΗΣΚΙΑ ethelothrēskia: voluntary (arbitrary and unwarranted) piety, that is, sanctimony: - will worship, self-imposed worship, self-imposed religion] and humility and unsparing treatment of the body, do not have any value against the indulgence of the flesh.

Col 2:20-23

Religious feasts not prescribed by the calendar of THEOS, and therefore offensive to THEOS.

Then he built the houses on the high places, and he appointed priests from all walks of life who were not from the sons of Levi. Jeroboam also inaugurated a religious feast in the eighth month on the fifteenth day of the month [not stipulated by THEOS], like the religious feast which was in Judah [...] He inaugurated a religious feast for the Israelites, and he went up to the altar to offer incense.

1Kin 12:31-33

This verse only appears as a rebuke of extra-biblical feasts in the Greek OT, and has been manipulated in the Proto-Masoretic text included in our Bibles.

O house of Israel [...] 3 Ye who are approaching the evil day, who are drawing near and adopting false sabbaths; 4 who sleep upon beds of ivory, and live delicately on their couches ...

Amo 6:3

3 You that put off the day of disaster and bring near a reign of violence!"

Mani-pulated Text; Hebrew OT

"But now, because you have come to know THEOS, or rather have come to be known by THEOS, how can you turn back again to the weak and miserable elemental spirits? Do you want to be enslaved to them all over again? You carefully observe days and months and seasons and years."

Gal 4:9-10

Feasts - according to THEOS' will (but Old Covenant = rather nailed to the cross).

And this day shall be to you a memorial, and ye shall keep it a feast to KYRIOS through all your generations; ye shall keep it a feast for a perpetual ordinance. [...] And if ye should enter into the land, which KYRIOS shall give you, as He has spoken, keep this service. 26 And it shall come to pass, if your sons say to you, What is this service? 27 that ye shall say to them, This Passover is a sacrifice to KYRIOS, as He defended the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt ...

Exo 12:14-27

And on the fifteenth day of this month is a feast; seven days ye shall eat Unleavened Bread.

Num 28:17

And for the seven days of the feast he shall offer as whole-burnt-offerings to KYRIOS seven calves and seven rams without blemish daily for the seven days; and a kid of the goats daily for a sin-offering, and a meat-offering.

Eze 45:23

Positive passages:

If any one doth think to be religious [G2357 ΘΡΗΣΚΟC threskos: ceremonious in worship (as demonstrative), that is, pious: - religious.] *among you, not bridling his tongue, but deceiving his heart, of this one vain [is] the religion; religion* [G2356 ΘΡΗΣΚΕΙΑ threskeia: ceremonial observance: - religion, worshipping.] *pure and undefiled with the THEOS and FATHER is this*, to look after orphans and widows in their tribulation - unspotted to keep himself from the world.

Jam 1:26-27



	Comment	Scripture	
Religious Attitudes	Acting behavior.	<p>... you shall not be the hypocrites [people who make a religious show]. For they are fond of the synagogues and of the corners of the squares, standing to pray, so that they might be seen by men.</p>	<u>Mat 6:5-6</u>
		<p>And all their works they do to be seen by men. For they broaden their phylacteries and enlarge the fringes. And they are fond of the best company at the feasts and the best seats in the synagogues, and the salutations in the markets, and to be called 'Rabbi' by men.</p>	<u>Mat 23:5-7</u>
	Envious behavior.	<p>But the Pharisees were claiming: "He is casting out the demons through the ruler of the demons."</p>	<u>Mat 9:34</u>
		<p>"Tell us, by what authority you are doing these things ...</p> <p>Now the high priest rose up and all those who were with him (that is, the party of the Sadducees), and they were filled with jealousy. And they laid hands on the apostles and put them in the public prison.</p>	<u>Luk 20:1-8</u>
	Exclusionary behavior.	<p>... do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as father [religiosity based on genealogies only].' For I say to you that THEOS is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones!</p>	<u>Luk 3:8</u>
	Oppositional behavior.	<p>... the Pharisees and the legal experts rejected the purpose of THEOS for themselves, because they had not been baptized by him.</p>	<u>Luk 7:29</u>
		<p>The officers replied, "Never has a man spoken like this!" Then the Pharisees replied to them, "You have not also been deceived, have you? None of the rulers or of the Pharisees have believed in Him, have they? But this crowd who does not know the law is accursed!"</p>	<u>Joh 7:46-49</u>
	Overly religious behavior.	<p>Then Samuel said, "Is there as much delight for KYRIOS in burnt offerings and sacrifices as there is in obeying KYRIOS? Look! To obey is better than sacrifice; to give heed than the fat of rams. For rebellion is like the sin of divination; arrogance is like iniquity and idolatry ...</p>	<u>1Sam 15:22-23</u>
	<p>And having noticed many of the Pharisees and Sadducees [overly religious teachers who taught extra-biblical laws] coming to his baptism, he said to them: "Offspring of snakes! Who admonished you to flee from the coming wrath?"</p>	<u>Mat 3:7</u>	
	<p>And they were watching Him closely to see if He would heal him on the Sabbath, in order that they could accuse Him.</p>	<u>Mar 3:2</u>	
Superficial behavior.	<p>This people honors me with the mouth, yet have their heart far away from me. And in vain they worship me, teaching as doctrines commands of men.</p>	<u>Mat 15:8-9</u>	
Addition of 1500+ Oral Laws to Scripture.	<p>Then came to IESOUS Pharisees and scribes from Jerusalem, saying: "For what reason do your disciples overstep the oral tradition of the presbyters? For they do not wash the hands whenever they might eat bread."</p>	<u>Mat 15:1-2</u>	
	<p>Abandoning the commandment of THEOS, you hold fast to the tradition of men." And he said to them, "You splendidly ignore the commandment of THEOS so that you can keep your tradition."</p>	<u>Mar 7:8-9</u>	
	<p>... you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or his mother, thus making void the word of THEOS by your tradition that you have handed down, and you do many similar things such as this."</p>	<u>Mar 7:11-13</u>	
Related Concepts	<p>Elemental spirits Refers to extra-religious teachings of Jews and Gentiles.</p>	<p>... when we were children, we were enslaved under the elemental spirits of the world. But when the fullness of time came, THEOS sent out His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order that he might redeem those under the law, in order that we might receive the adoption. And because you are sons, THEOS sent out the SPIRIT of His SON into our hearts, crying out, "Abba! (Father!)" so that you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, also an heir through THEOS. But at that time when you did not know THEOS, you were enslaved to the things which by nature are not THEOS. But now, because you have come to know THEOS, or rather have come to be known by THEOS, how can you turn back again to the weak and miserable elemental spirits? Do you want to be enslaved to them all over again?</p>	<u>Gal 4:1-9</u>
		<p>Beware lest anyone take you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world and not according to CHRISTOS ...</p> <p>If you have died with CHRISTOS to the elemental spirits of the world, why do you submit to them as if living in the world?</p>	<u>Col 2:8</u>
			<u>Col 2:20-23</u>

