

The Shutting up of the Kingdom

Matt. 23:13

Introduction:

- A. Two families find Opyland shut at end of long journey.
- B. Likewise, many Jews had kingdom door shut by religious leaders.
 - 1. Some intimidated by their power.
 - 2. Others turned off by their brand of religion.
 - 3. Jesus and John opening, Pharisees shutting.
- C. Professed Christians' brand of religion shuts up kingdom to many.
- D. Things of the Pharisees that tended to turn many off:

Discussion:

- I. Their Mere Lip Service (vv. 1-3; Matt. 15:9)**
 - A. Must transcend mere words (Matt. 7:21; 1 John 3:18)
 - B. People watch what we do more than what we say.
- II. Their Lack of Self-application (v. 4).**
 - A. This caused God's name to be blasphemed (Rom. 2:21-24).
 - B. This will turn people off to our message.
 - 1. Our children
 - 2. Our friends.
- III. Their Public Relations Religion (vv. 5-12; 25-28).**
 - A. Outward/public display differed from inward/private reality.
 - B. When people see past the front they are turned off.
- IV. Their Hair-splitting Loopholes (vv. 16-22; Matt. 15:5).**
 - A. Religious people devise loopholes.
 - 1. Mark 16:16 doesn't say "he that is baptized not..."
 - 2. Acts 20:7 doesn't say "every" first day.
 - 3. Bible doesn't say must attend EVERY service.
 - B. Such loophole hunting gives religion a bad name.
- V. Their Selective Obedience (v. 23-24)**
 - A. Lord did not fault them from strictness - but inconsistency.
 - B. Partial obedience is really no obedience (Jas. 2:10; King Saul)

Conclusion:

- A. Many would not enter the kingdom, no matter what.
- B. Make no mistake about it, such adverse influence shuts many out of the kingdom.