

Pharisaism: Its Roots and Fruits

A deeper look at this entrenched plant

Lest we make the mistake of thinking that the Church is the first and only captive, or target for that matter, of the fallen realm and its schemes, it behooves us to take a look backward before we go any farther forward. How did we get here? Because we need to understand, on the most fundamental level, what this world is all about if we are to discern where we go from where we are. And we will say without equivocation that this world is about one thing and one thing only. It's about the future. God is in the process of creating for Himself a Bride, a recipient for His endless fount of love, a beneficiary ready and willing to receive His kindness. And He also wants a companion, one who is *like* Him, who will love Him unreservedly and will continue to love Him as He deserves to be loved for eternity. That is the sole reason He made the world. It's why He made man. And it's why He tested man. God desires a proven Bride, one He can bless and fellowship with for eternity. One who will never forsake Him. Bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh (figuratively speaking), an intimate companion with whom He can share His great wealth and on whom He can pour out His great love.¹

God does not *need* mankind. He's not lonely. But He *is* love, and love longs to be expressed. And in this case, God desires to give His love to one who, like Himself, is pure, holy and righteous and who will one day be a mirror or reflection of His own glory. Together they will rule this universe, a benevolent Monarch and His Queen.

In order to achieve that end, He had to conceive and execute a complicated and flawless plan, step by step. He had to create, test, redeem and refine the object of His love without ever manipulating it. He had to first make it in His own image, with the capacity of free will (and in a form that He would be willing to share for eternity);² allow it to fail when tested; then pay the penalty for its failure out of that very same love, ransoming it back from the jaws of death; and finally give it another chance to choose righteousness, holiness and truth, but this time from a place of fallenness. In other words, to choose Him and *His* righteousness after having tasted the alternative and the pleasures of sin. In a very real sense, every human born in this world has his very own Garden of Eden experience, and makes his very own choice whom he will believe and whom he will serve.³

¹ The cross was profound evidence of God's great love for mankind, but one day that love will be consummated in some particular way with His Bride. That is the love about which we are speaking, and that is the future to which we aspire.

² See our in-depth treatise on the creation story at <http://www.grace-n-truth.com/13theories>. Primarily the first four chapters.

³ Those who do not live long enough or do not have the capacity for such choices will not be held accountable, for they are like infants. God will either bring their spirits back to live again in new bodies during the latter years of the Millennial

God knows that without the freedom to rebel, obedience has no meaning, morally speaking. And without choices, *love* has no meaning. In order for our choice (to love and obey God) to be genuine, it has to be voluntary. It has to be durable. And it has to be demonstrated. And that's what this life affords us. The opportunity to choose and to demonstrate that our choice is authentic. When we choose God from a place of fallenness, humbling ourselves and admitting our fault and our desperate need of salvation, we have the best chance of enduring in that choice. And if we endure to the end, we shall be saved, according to Jesus Himself.⁴ That is what this life is about at present. Choices. It is a test. Will we choose God and His love, or will we choose Satan and Self as our gods, as Adam did?

God gave man one command in the Garden and told him that his life depended upon his obeying it. Then once the man was sufficiently acquainted with God's character, He allowed another suitor to come into the man's domain and present an alternative and very attractive⁵ proposal: *not only would the man not die if he disobeyed His Maker, he would in fact become a god himself.*⁶ He would become "like" His Maker, knowing good and evil. This proposal, or choice, was proffered by Satan himself in the guise of the "cleverest of the beasts of the field."⁷ Adam chose to embrace and submit to the word of the serpent over the word of his God and in so doing, he became the devil's slave. The Bible tells us that we are "slaves of the one we obey" and Adam surrendered himself and his dominion that very day to the arch-enemy of His Creator. And that very day he also became mortal⁸ and began the long but inexorable decline that leads to death.⁹

Ever since, mankind has been locked in a deadly dual with this one who is all about usurping God's throne and stealing His "intended" in any way and by any means possible. Whatever God wants and values, Satan is all about destroying or commandeering. It didn't start with the Church. It started in the Garden. And the arch-deceiver continues his work individual by individual, never losing sight of his goal: deception, usurpation and rule.

reign (interesting concept) so that they may be tested, or absolve them purely out of grace and mercy based on the finished work of Christ.

⁴ And then we shall be purified utterly, transformed into His likeness at the Bema Seat judgment where all remaining dross will be burned away.

⁵ though false

⁶ This lie was what gave God legal rights to a "do-over." Satan cheated. God chose the time and place for the do-over and in the fullness of time became the Second Adam (Man in unfallen flesh in full fellowship with His Creator), who was tested and tried and did not sin, qualifying Him to act as our Redeemer.

⁷ By enticing and possessing one of the beasts of the field, Satan inserted himself into the earthly creation, so that Adam actually "obeyed" one of his own subordinates (the serpent over which he had been given dominion), and the highest or "cleverest" creature to-boot, and thus Adam became a slave to all of creation. He lost his authority over the natural realm, and Satan, because of both Adam's and the serpent submission, became the god of this world. Jesus could calm the storm and dismiss demons because He was not a fallen son of Adam and therefore not under the dominion of Satan. Jesus had no fallen human father. (Original sin is passed through the father.) He was a son of God. *The Son of God.*

⁸ "in the day that you eat of it, you will surely die." (Gen. 2:17)

⁹ For a more thorough exposition of this perspective, see www.grace-n-truth.com/13theories.

But the devil also works through nations, through organizations, and through a vast network of false religions (many or all of which he himself founded). In the case of Israel, he worked through all three simultaneously, via a nationalized religious organization of synagogues. In order to create a false faith in works righteousness, he did his best to turn the Temple sacrificial system into a religious routine run by self-righteous relics.¹⁰ And alongside it he managed to raise up a regiment of royal wannabees to rule the people through the Sanhedrin and the synagogue system.

Who were these men and how did they come to hold so much power over God's people? In Jesus' day, the educated and aristocratic classes who ran the synagogues, the Temple and the Sanhedrin were looked upon by the people as having God-given authority and qualifications for leadership and teaching. They were respected, often titled and wore distinctive clothing or paraphernalia. The terms we use for them in this book are the same ones that were used in Jesus' day: Pharisees, Sadducees, Scribes or Lawyers, and Herodians.

What do these specific terms mean and how important is it to understand who these men were? For us, identifying the modern equivalent of this group and leaving it behind has been a key to experiencing success in our Christian walk. So let's look. Who were the Pharisees, Sadducees and Herodians, particularly in the days before Jesus came on the scene? What were they like? How were they regarded by the common people? This is critical if we are to understand Jesus' perspective and His warnings.¹¹

Here are some simple definitions of terms used in Jesus' day:

- **Pharisees:** men who governed the synagogues and were most influential over the people. Though conservative in their approach to doctrine (inerrancy of Scripture, acceptance of

¹⁰ Isaiah 1:11-14, 21-23 “‘What are your multiplied sacrifices to Me?’ says the Lord. ‘I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed cattle. And I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls, lambs, or goats. When you come to appear before Me, who requires of you this trampling of My courts? Bring your worthless offerings no longer; their incense in an abomination to Me. New moon and Sabbath, the calling of assemblies—I cannot endure iniquity and the solemn assembly. I hate your new moon festivals and your appointed feasts, they have become a burden to Me. I am weary of bearing them...How the faithful city has become a harlot. She who was full of justice! Righteousness once lodged in her, but now murderers. Your silver has become dross, your drink diluted with water. Your rulers are rebels, and companions of thieves; every one loves a bribe, and chases after rewards. They do not defend the orphan, nor does the widow's plea come before them.’”

¹¹ But just for the record, as far as Jesus was concerned there is no significant difference between these groups, including the chief priests, or for that matter many of the religious Jews sitting in the synagogues. He regards them as one common group. For evidence, in Luke 11:39-53, Jesus is railing against the Pharisees, when one of the experts in the Law interrupts and says, “*Teacher, when you say these things you insult us also.*” Jesus immediately responded, “*And you experts in the Law, woe to you....*,” accusing them publicly of the exact same crimes as the Pharisees (e.g. murdering the prophets). The result: “*The Pharisees and the teachers of the Law began to oppose him fiercely and to besiege him with questions, waiting to catch him in something he might say.*” (Luke 11:53-54) There are dozens of such incidents. In various places Jesus warns His disciples against the leaven of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians (Matthew 22:16-18; 16:5-12; Luke 12:1; Mark 8:15, 12:13-15). We have chosen the phrase “Pharisaic religion” to describe the system that fuels each of these groups.

core tenants of Judaism), they were the progressives of their day in applying Scripture to present realities and accepted both the written and oral law. (In contrast, Jesus rejected the oral law, which bugged them.) They held to limited free will, believing that we will be judged and held responsible for our decisions and actions. They also espoused the resurrection of the dead, the existence of angels and demons, salvation through obedience to the law, and were basically apolitical though they ultimately opposed Herod.

- **Sadducees:** these were the aristocrats who many scholars believe managed and dominated the Temple and the sacrificial system and associated with the high priests. They were conservatives in that they accepted only the written law (Pentateuch) and rejected the oral or traditional law including the Prophets and the Writings. But they were liberals in that they did not believe in life after death, angels or demons. They were more politically oriented than the Pharisees, materialistic and protective of their privileged positions.¹²
- **Scribes:** religious scholars, lawyers in the Law. (Many scribes were also Pharisees.)
- **Herodians:** an aristocratic Jewish political party that supported Herod and thus the Roman government.
- **Elders:** the term “elders of Israel” denoted a political office, and they exercised authority over the people. (The term was adopted by the Church in the New Testament.)
- **Sanhedrin (Council):** the supreme judicial and administrative council of the Jews, made up of Sadducees, Pharisees, scribes and elders. In ecclesiastical history (after A.D. 325) the word “Council” is used to denote an assembly of pastors or bishops for the discussion and regulation of church affairs.

We do not include the Levitical priests in this list because the priestly role was a legitimate one, given by God to the sons of Aaron as a type of the future Church (just as the High Priest was a type of Christ, though these offices were later corrupted).¹³ God designed the Levitical system to administer the Temple and its sacrifices and feast days, all of which served as typology for His own coming as the sacrificial Lamb and our perfect High Priest.¹⁴ Until the Temple was destroyed

¹² The Sadducees as a sect died out after the destruction of the Temple in 70AD because their teachings and authority were inextricably linked to its existence.

¹³ The priesthood was an inheritance, in other words—a picture of the Church’s inheritance. It was not predicated on educational achievement, political connections or material success by its members, but purely on lineage. And just as Christ, our High Priest, is the Son of God, we, the Church, are His adopted sons, and our lineage is what qualifies us as priests to God.

¹⁴ Jesus in fact fulfilled the typology of the spring feasts of Israel on the very day of the feasts at His first coming. He died on Passover, was buried on the Feast of Unleavened Bread, rose from the dead on First Fruits and sent the Holy Spirit to His disciples on the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost). He will fulfill the remaining three fall feasts at His second coming, also on the very days of those feasts.

in 70 AD, the Levites were mediators for the people, and their livelihood was supplied through the national tithe, by God's design.

The pharisaic system with its network of synagogues, on the other hand, was an overlay on this God-prescribed plan.¹⁵ ¹⁶ But there is no provision in the Old Testament for funding a parallel system such as this, nor any instructions for another organizational structure to be built alongside the Levitical one. And it seems clear from Scripture that God never intended this system to emerge. Nevertheless, this was the foundation on which Pharisaism rested. Without it there would have been no structure through which the Pharisees could assert their self-appointed authority. This extra system fits perfectly though with the concept of leaven, something added that God never intended. It's not healthful, either in bread or in God's program, but it certainly has a way of making things more attractive to the flesh.

In any case, it does not appear to have produced robust fruit for the Kingdom of God. After all, it was the leaders of this very system who rallied the people to reject their Messiah...a perfect picture of the blind leading the blind. Why? There's an old saying we are all familiar with: "Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely." This system invested power in the "leaders," the educated, the elevated, and that power eventually led to a prideful resistance to the One they most professed to be honoring and seeking. Bottom line? They didn't want to yield their vaunted position, especially in favor of an upstart from Nazareth of all places. Jesus wasn't "one of them" and He went to great lengths to drive that point home, and worse yet, to invalidate their credibility among the people. That was a big no-no. The fact is, insecure men exalt themselves, and they will go to great lengths to eliminate or silence those who threaten their tenuous, feigned and misplaced self-confidence.

A LITTLE HISTORY

Though this book is not a treatise on *first-century* Pharisaism and we don't claim to be experts in Judaica, we can at least share a few rudimentary speculations here about the Pharisees' beginnings. It is a complicated and somewhat disputed history, but maybe it will help us discern how we got where we are today.

¹⁵ It likely emerged in some form during the exile when Levitical worship was not available, but continued once they returned to the land of Israel and rebuilt the Temple.

¹⁶ Since Israel continued under the domination of foreign powers after the Babylonian captivity (586 – 516 BC), first by Persia, then Greece, then Rome, the Davidic monarchy was never reinstated. Consequently, when they returned from Babylon under the auspices of the Persian king, the various priestly and pious classes gradually assumed greater political authority over the people and also vied for power among themselves. The Sadducees tended to ally themselves with the various occupiers (though they opposed Herod) and thus were not as popular with the people as the Pharisees.

The Pharisee class is believed by some to have arisen during the Babylonian captivity (586-516 BC), and, by others, some time after the return to Israel from exile. Still others believe they only came to prominence during the time of the Maccabean Revolt in the second century BC. They were at times variously a political party, a social movement and a school of thought among Jews during the Second Temple era (536 BC to 70 AD).

The origin of the synagogue system itself is also in dispute, some saying these “houses of prayer” arose quite naturally in Babylonia for a displaced congregation of worshippers as a means of perpetuating Jewish thought and tradition in exile. Not having a Temple in which to carry out their religious duties, there quite naturally may have arisen an alternate system that could act as a placeholder and substitute for the centrality of the Temple. Others say they arose shortly after Judah’s return from captivity. In any case, we can be fairly certain that the Scribes and Pharisees ran the synagogue system in Jesus’ day. Some say they confined themselves primarily to Jerusalem. Whatever the case, these houses of prayer were augmented by separate “houses of study.” After all, maintaining the distinctives of the Jewish people was, in part, dependant on the ritual practices that defined them as a nation, but also on the perpetuation of a common knowledge of the Torah.

Since Israel was under the domination of foreign powers continuously after the Babylonian exile, first by Persia, then Greece, then Rome, the Davidic monarchy was never reinstated. Consequently the various priestly and pious classes assumed greater political and religious authority over the people and also vied for power amongst themselves. The Sadducees were not popular with the people because of their alliances with the various occupiers, so they were often forced to bow to the pharisaic position in matters related to the Law or else lose what little stature they had among the people.

Both the Sadducees and Pharisees were members of the Sanhedrin and debated matters of legal import. Some scholars assume, based purely on speculation, that the Sanhedrin was dominated by Sadducees. The Pharisees, although popular and respected, had no political power. Rather, they only had the power of persuasion.

Pharisees were educated men but not aristocrats like the Sadducees. There was a lot of overlap between the Pharisees and the scribes or lawyers, however, who debated and opined on the requirements of the law for the people. Because of this leadership role, they were almost universally revered and acknowledged as essential guides and champions of Jewish society. They were considered the most expert and accurate expositors of Jewish Law. They were trusted and admired by the masses, favored above the Sadducees and other sects who exerted political influence in Israel.

The Pharisees viewed all Israel as priests and thus responsible to obey standards of purity, tithing and Sabbath keeping. All Jews in their ordinary life, and not just the Temple priesthood or Jews visiting the Temple, they believed, should observe the rules and rituals of purification. However, they did not think all adult males were capable of comprehending the Scriptures. That task was delegated to the educated, believing it could not be left to the masses to discern for themselves God's intentions for them. They needed to be taught by those who had special talent and insight.

The Pharisees also held to the Oral Law, which they maintained was initially given to Moses on Mt. Sinai along with the written code. (The Sadducees disagreed and opposed it.) The sages believed that the transmission of the Oral law was an ongoing process however, and that by participating in this ongoing process, rabbis and their students were actively participating in God's ongoing revelation. They did not view revelation from God as a single act, nor the Torah as a fixed text. The rabbis believe that Moses was essentially a rabbi and that the Messiah will be one also. They also believe that God wears phylacteries¹⁷ and the court of heaven studies Torah, even arguing about the same questions.

This arguing and debating over textual questions is the heart of Rabbinic Judaism today,¹⁸ the successor to Pharisaim (which term was phased out after the capture of Jerusalem in 70 AD to minimize sectarianism), the goal of which is to transform all of Israel into an academy where the whole Torah is studied and kept. It is believed that the redemption of Israel depends on full attainment of all Jewry to the complete revelation of Torah, just as exists in heaven.

Because Judaism is inherently noncreedal (other than its adherence to monotheism), it is difficult if not impossible to reconstruct Pharisaimic theology. According to Wikipedia, there is actually no set of beliefs that Jews are required to espouse. They emphasize laws rather than beliefs. An apostate is not one who abandons core beliefs, but who does not follow traditional customs or requirements for conversion. In fact, in Jesus' day, "the most important divisions among different Jewish sects had to do with debates over three areas of law (marriage, the Sabbath and religious festivals), the Temple and purity. Debates over these and other matters of law continue to define Judaism more than any particular dogma or creed." It is this emphasis on head-faith and ritual practice rather than heart-faith and relationship which was at the crux of Jesus' castigation of these men.

¹⁷ Phylacteries are small boxes containing scripture verses that are wrapped onto various parts of the body with thongs.

¹⁸ According to Wikipedia: "After the destruction of the Second Temple (in 70 AD), the Pharisaimic sect was re-established as [Rabbinic Judaism](#) — which ultimately produced normative, traditional Judaism, the basis for all contemporary forms of Judaism. ...The relationship between the Pharisees and Rabbinic Judaism (exemplified by the [Talmud](#)) is so close that many do not distinguish between the two.

In any case, these were the men the Jewish populace had entrusted with keeping the faith pure and leading them in right conduct. So if that's what these men were all about, making sure that Jewish distinctives were passed along to the common people and maintained, why was Jesus so bugged by them? What's wrong with teaching the Scriptures and making sure the people follow them? We can answer that question with the operative word: leaven. The synagogue system fits perfectly with the concept of yeast, something added that God never intended. It's not healthful, either in bread or in God's program, but it certainly has a way of making things more attractive to the flesh. And the flesh is all about exalting and satisfying self. Though these men were leaders of the people, diligent in study and committed to the Scriptures, their motives were mixed and it took Jesus coming on the scene to expose that. They were power-hungry among other things, but the common people apparently did not recognize this. They looked up to them as repositories of truth and righteousness and they feared their authority. Jesus saw through their façade and was not willing to play their game. Thus His obvious rejection of them.

What was God's original intent then, if not the formal, "religion of the Book" approach that the Pharisees developed? From what we've been able to discern, fathers were to instruct their children as they went about their daily lives, passing on the history of Israel's relationship with Yahweh and Yahweh's expectations of them as His chosen people. Here's how Scripture says it:

"And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up...and you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates...And when your son asks you in time to come, saying 'What do the testimonies and the statutes and the judgments mean which the Lord commanded you:' then you shall say to your son, 'We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt; and the Lord brought us out from Egypt with a mighty hand...So the Lord commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God for our good always and for our survival, as it is today. And it will be righteousness for us if we are careful to observe all this commandment before the Lord our God, just as He commanded us.'" (Deut. 6:6-9, 20-21, 24- 25)

Jesus himself modeled this relational approach with His own disciples. He taught them daily as they walked in the way, as they sat down and rose up. They learned while living and doing. What a contrast to the pharisaic way: book learning, memorization, formal schools, degrees. Jesus wanted none of that. He promoted none of it. And He did not choose those who did. In fact He castigated them with severe language. And yet still, they didn't wake up, clearly blind to the truth that unless one is converted like a little child, one cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven. (Mat. 18:3) Humility, trust, a contrite heart, a teachable spirit: these are the true marks of a believer.

So not only will the “*wise and learned*” approach not work, God won’t *let it* work. He personally takes it upon Himself to make sure no one comes to Him this way. You can struggle and strive all you want, for years on end, but that is not how one enters the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus was exceptionally clear on this.

“At that time Jesus answered and said, ‘I praise Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou didst hide these things from the wise and intelligent and didst reveal them to babes. Yes, Father, for thus it was well-pleasing in Thy sight.’” (Matthew 11:25)

This verse would seem to indicate that not only does God not reveal things to the wise and intelligent (in their own estimation),¹⁹ He actively *withholds* from them His revelation and insight. Why? Because arrogance produces blindness, and it precludes its opposite, humility. Humility is required to receive anything from God. Instead He gives it to “babes” (the humble). And yet “*the wise and intelligent*” (those who think they know) are the very people, on balance, that we choose to pastor our churches – those from whom God says He will hide the truth! Don’t miss this. Do we have a difference of opinion with God? Who is right, Jesus or the Pharisees?

Is it unreasonable to suggest, then, that this religious system of the Sadducees and Pharisees was a carefully crafted scheme of the underworld to derail, dilute or pervert God’s original design which invested responsibility in fathers for passing on the faith (thereby keeping them on their spiritual toes), by substituting a man-centered, knowledge-based system that blinded people to the true condition of their own hearts? We think not.

It is this emphasis on head-faith, ritual practice and legal compliance rather than heart-faith and relationship that is at the crux of Jesus’ rebuke of these men. God is interested in an experiential love relationship with His people, not an academic one, and always has been.

Contrast this system and its emphasis on divisive peripheral issues, legal wrangling and formal education with Paul who thoroughly distanced himself from this crowd. Clearly, God did not choose someone to represent Him and administer His Church who immediately impresses the carnal mind.²⁰ He chose someone whose passion for God was exemplary and genuine, and who was willing to change course entirely, no matter the cost, when his errors were exposed. He chose someone who was willing to appear a fool to the world for the cause of Christ. Paul threw away his credentials and said he was determined to know nothing among them but the cross of

¹⁹ A friend once declared: “that’s hardly fair! It’s not my fault I’m smart! You mean God made me smart and then holds me responsible and withholds truth from me?” No. The wise and intelligent are those who think they know, and thus are blind. A truly wise person knows he doesn’t know, and is able to humble himself. It is arrogance which is the real issue here, not natural intelligence.

²⁰ See 2 Cor.10:10.

Christ and Him crucified.²¹ His aim: to preach the gospel, “*not in cleverness of speech, that the cross of Christ should not be made void.*” (1 Corinthians 1:17) In other words, he made every effort to get rid of leaven in his own life.

Clearly Satan does not want to have to deal with any more “fools for Christ” than he has to. So he does his best to “educate” us; to convince us that we must be “wise and intelligent” to do the work of ministry. That we must have formal instruction and book learning. That the “school of Christ” is not sufficient to form mature and qualified leaders.

Indeed, what made the *apostles* suitable candidates for *their* privileged calling if not “being with Jesus”? Did it have *anything* to do with being formally educated? No. They were know-nothing hicks for the most part. But their childlikeness was authentic (even if imperfect) and opened their hearts to hear from God. This is the essence of the New Covenant: that God will teach us Himself (Jer. 31:31-34). Even Jesus was instructed by the Father²² and it is available to us, too, if we are seeking Him in childlike humility. The fact is, godliness is more caught than taught, and *that* primarily incarnationally and experientially rather than didactically.²³

The interesting thing is that even though Satan has a master plan to commandeer or destroy God’s intended and even though he deceives those who volunteer for his training program, God never gave the Pharisees a pass. He never treated them as if they were tragic victims in a celestial scheme, but as collaborators and perpetrators and that’s what we want to explore in this book. Jesus didn’t excuse their behavior because of Satan’s machinations or deception. That is a striking and *devastating* point. One we must pay careful attention to if we are to successfully navigate our own calling.

There is a spiritual force at work behind this leaven then. Pharisaism in the Church is a demonic implantation. It has attempted to take over the Church since its infancy and in the fourth century it more or less succeeded. A marriage occurred between church and state under Constantine that continues to this day, to one degree or another. This union still holds much of the true Church captive, especially in the West where it first took hold. Captive to human methods, religious hierarchies, false doctrines, pretentious structures, worldly strategies and errant goals.

²¹ 1 Cor. 2:2

²² Is. 50:4-5

²³ In fact, it is difficult if not impossible to reach and reprogram the heart through the mind. The heart is engaged through experience as well as educated through experience, relational or otherwise. Sharing one’s experiences with God has more impact on other people and on our own children than lecturing them about bible passages or doctrine. And that was God’s intention for His people.

To the extent that a church is leavened, to that extent it will be ineffective, meaning it is to one degree or another unsatisfying, powerless, spiritually empty, relationally handicapped, harassed, helpless and without true shepherds. Its true resources are wasted or undiscovered. Gifts go unused, light is snuffed out, and needs are not met.

The title of this book is Leaven and the Spirit of Religion, because it is the spirit *behind* the system that Jesus indicted that we are also seeking to understand. We'll look at that in more detail the next chapter.

K.C.