

FENCES
Grow Up, Part 5
November 28th, 2010

As Christians we often make “extra” rules to follow if you want to be counted as highly _____ or truly _____

These “extra” rules add to what is clearly laid out in the Bible as if we are helping God out with an abundance of _____

These “extra” rules do little or nothing to tame the anger, lust, temptations, and just plain selfishness residing within _____

If these things were so important, why didn’t God spell them out in the _____?

These “extra” rules become sort of a _____ around God’s fences to make sure we don’t get close enough to the edge to fall over a cliff called Sin

Colossians 2:20-23 (NIV) “Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: ‘Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!’? These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings. Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.”

These “extra” rules/fences look like a higher degree of spiritual commitment, but in reality, they do nothing to restrain _____ or develop _____

Two Major Potential Problems With “Extra” Rules/Fences

1. Instead of protecting us from sin, they may _____ the odds that one will go over one of God’s fences
2. They often end up _____ off the very people Jesus came to reach

It’s human nature to _____ the boundaries

The extra fences we put up cause some to fail to realize there are other fences not to be _____ with

Some learn the hard way – having climbed over our extra fences with no _____, they leaped over God’s fences only to realize too late that His warnings are never _____

The “extra” rules/fences we add to Christianity don’t _____ people to God; they _____ them away

Many non-Christians think that _____ becoming a Christian, they have to first prove their worth and commitment by _____ like a Christian

By focusing on an area of life in a non-Christian which is out of alignment with Scripture, we can send a subtle message: _____ up your act, and _____ you can come to God

The first century Jewish Christians wanted Gentiles who desired to become Christians to also be good _____. The leaders of the church said _____
Acts 15:1-2,5-7,19 (NIV) "Some men came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the brothers: 'Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved.' This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question... Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, 'The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses.' The apostles and elders met to consider this question. After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them: 'Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe... Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of the disciples a yoke that neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear? No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.'...[James, the leader of the church in Jerusalem said] 'It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God.'"

Once you become a Christian, God's standards are _____

Meeting these standards is not something a non-Christian is asked to do _____ following Jesus

After accepting Christ, living out the Christian life isn't something we achieve on our _____

This is the work of the _____, who provides us with the power & motivation. We just follow His _____ (*See 11/7 message "How Does Spiritual Growth Happen"*)

By letting the Bible speak for itself while avoiding any "extra" rules/fences, we will reach people who want nothing to do w/Christianity – or at least what they _____ was Christianity

God doesn't make _____. He got the Bible _____ the first time. Nothing was _____. Nothing was _____

Our "extra" rules/fences aren't _____ & often are even _____

Rather than producing God-_____ spirituality, our "extra" rules/fences are more likely to produce pride, arrogance, and self-sufficiency
Proverbs 30:5,6 (NIV) "Every word of God is flawless; He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him. Do not add to His words, or He will rebuke you and prove you a liar."

My Next Step Today Is...

- There are "fences" I've built in my Christian life that I need to take down because they have led to pride
- I will stop trying to "help God out" by adding things that appear as "extra" rules and regulations that aren't in the Bible
- I will not put up "fences" that would hinder someone from coming to know Christ
- I will memorize Proverbs 30:5,6
- I/we plan to help with cleaning the church on Sun, Dec 19th