

Longing to Mimic The Rabbi Pt2!

Overview

I introduced the idea that is of Hebrew history. It was in their culture and it was their way of honoring the Word of the Lord. So when the teacher, being perhaps a rabbi, would read from the Word of God, he would do so standing. Then when he would prepare to disclose to the people that he just read to them his ideas about what that scripture meant, he would sit down and that chair that he sat in was known as Moses' chair. Why would they call it Moses' chair? Because what he had just read from the scriptures was from what's called the Talmud. No, I'm going to get myself mixed up. It was the first five books of the Old Testament. It was actually Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers in Deuteronomy – The Pentateuch.

The common understanding is, and there's hardly any debate on this, it was Moses that wrote Genesis Exodus Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. So if you're going to interpret, try and explain what Moses was trying to communicate, you'd be best to stick with that passage. He would sit down in what was called Moses' chair and there he would explain. Now, this is not uncommon even to this day, it's just done in a different fashion. Over the years I've had massive, like, tons of books. Most of them are known as commentaries, somebody commenting. And I gleaned a great deal from the commentaries. I did notice that if I was reading a commentary by ... any Lutherans here? ... Anybody going to get upset? If I was reading a commentary by a Lutheran, it would have a Lutheran flavor.

If I was reading a commentary that had been by somebody who was given to and was thrilled with Calvin, that's called Calvinism, there's a lot of denominations that really adhere to it. And it's really significantly different from our understanding of certain theological facets. But if you're reading somebody's comments that believe and hold to Calvinism, you'll see it throughout. And then, of course, there's the Baptists and they're good people. And you can pick up. So they give their Baptist flavor to it. They're commentating. So when the Pharisees sat down in the chair of Moses, he was just giving commentary. But Jesus was pretty upset with these fellows because they got a little carried away with their comments. And, you know, when you're reading the Old Testament laws, every one of us, I suppose, have had challenges by time trying to figure out, well, what does that verse mean?

Like an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. So does that mean I get to go to my neighbor and poke out his eye if I'm upset with him? You know, how far do you take this? Another question that might have come across an individual would be, thou shalt not kill. But what if I ended up killing somebody? It was just self-defense. 2 So you see, the rabbi would try to answer these questions. But they got pretty carried away and they went way beyond. Here would be a question

that he might try and deal with. You know, keep the Sabbath day holy. That means no work. Some years ago, April and I were very familiar with a wonderful family who attended a church where I was the leader. And I dare not mention their names here and now because I think there are people in that community that are tuning in today.

But as I share this, I bet if that's the way it is, they're thinking, oh, yeah, that was the family. One of the finest families in our church, but she did her cooking on Saturdays. She would not turn on the stove on a Sunday because it's the Lord's Day. Now, the truth be said, Saturday is actually the Sabbath. But we practice our Sabbath on Sunday. So she would not do any work. She wouldn't boil a kettle to make tea on a Sunday. No, that's work. I don't think she washed the dishes until Monday. She wouldn't dust. You know, if somebody spilled a great big bowl of blueberries on the rug, I suppose they just have to sit there till tomorrow. I don't know, but she could not do any work because it's the Lord's Day. So here's a question that maybe somebody might ask, is lighting a candle considered work? Am I allowed to light a candle on the Sabbath?

And maybe the wise old sage would say, if you really feel the necessity of lighting a candle, go ahead. Let's say that this is not that kind of a meeting. Let's say it's a council meeting and all the counselors, the mayors and all, the older men are all together. And somebody asks a question and an answer is given to maybe a simple question. It wouldn't be this one, but can I light a candle? If you've ever been to one of those meetings, one answer is given and somebody else follows up with another question, something like this. Okay, if we can light a candle, can we light ten candles as that is considered work? You'd say, isn't it getting a little silly? Yes, it is. Jesus said, you can't keep the law. You can't keep the law. You cannot do it. And in Jesus, the law of God is fulfilled.

Hello? So this was the challenge that Jesus had with these fellows. Not only were they messing around with flicking your pick and lighting a candle, but they went beyond that. They started coming up with rules and regulations that if it's the Sabbath and Sabbath starts on Friday night at six o'clock. Okay? So if that's the Sabbath hour, what if you happen to break it? You're not allowed to walk more than a kilometer, I think, on the Sabbath. So what if you're on your way home and your wristwatch is telling you, you've got two minutes to get home and you've still got about eight more minutes to work on your way to get home? Now you're in trouble because you're going to end up working on it. You say, Pastor Felt, you're talking so silly. No, I'm telling you how they lived on that day.

I'm telling you. So the people would say, that's kind of rude. That's difficult for us to live up to. This might sound familiar because I was raised in churches where we actually did have laws. I used to go and play pool, you know, the pool hall. When I was the assistant pastor in the church in Hamilton, if I got caught in a pool hall, I would have got instantly fired. That's the place of the devil. Really? I still win. I'm a reckless fellow. So the rabbis would come up with a solution. Don't get caught eight kilometers from home when the moment is coming. In fact, this rabbi would say, you need to start honoring the rabbi, not honoring the Sabbath, not at six o'clock. Get busy at 5.30. 5.30, cut it off. That was called a fence law. So you see there was a fence that you couldn't cross, which was the hour when the Sabbath started. But you have these rabbis who were adding 3 fence laws, additional fence laws, to keep you from breaking the rules.

So the challenge was if you were raised in Nazareth, this guy said, here's how you keep the Sabbath. But if you're over in another community, that rabbi would say, this is how you keep the Sabbath. How come these guys couldn't get it together? Because these rabbis were full of themselves. And this guy was never going to give up in a debate or an argument when somebody else is kind of like the Republicans and the Democrats trying to get along in their con, it ain't going to happen, brother. Because if one, if you give off an inch, you're going to have to yield a mile. So the challenge was this, that more laws and more laws and more laws were being put together. You're supposed to tithe. If you were a Pharisee, here's how you would function. If you found a Canadian dime on the street, which is worth about four cents American, but if you found the Canadian dime on the street, you, if you were a good Pharisee, would race over to the bank and you would get that dime turned into pennies, and then you'd race over to the, to the temple and you'd be walking in with your penny. It was all about being seen because you are righteous and you're proving the same by putting in your penny.

How come they even got into this? How, how come they got so far, far, far into it? It started in a good way. I read you now a verse of Scripture. It's found in Psalm 119, there's a few verses in that chapter. If you haven't read it in a while, take your lunch along, you're going to need it in order to get through to the end. But here's a glorious verse in Psalm 119, 103. How sweet are your words to my taste? Yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth. The Psalmist is saying, I love the word of God. I love it so much that it's like honey in my mouth. So this was the concept among the people who were known as the Hebrews. They love the word of God.

But you see, the word of God for them was Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. It was all laws. And so in order to keep the laws, I have to be extra-extra diligent. And this teacher is going to help me to be, he's going to help me walk the way. The challenge was in our desire to know the word of God, we got very, very carried away. So instead of the word of God being delicious to the test, delicious to the taste, the people of Israel ended up eating the recipe. They were devouring the words, but they weren't digesting the truth. The word of God says, Jesus said, you will know the truth and the truth will set you free.

The Jewish people would have said, nobody knows the truth like I do. But when Jesus said, you shall know the truth, he meant not up here, honey, in here. When you know the truth, when you identify with the truth, when you've digested the truth, then that truth will set you free. We used to sing a song when I was a kid. Every promise in the book is mine. How many sang that one? Every promise in the book is mine. Help me, Marnie. Every chapter, every verse, every line. I got news for you. Every promise is not yours. Pastor, that's on top. No, no, I've always believed her. Listen to David this morning. The promise is yours when you've digested it and you know when you're newer. That's where faith is released. You shall know the truth and that truth will set you free. There are people who know this book from cover to cover.

They would have struggled with the report that came this morning that through a prayer meeting in this very auditorium and prayer meetings in churches who were across the country, God answered and there was a miracle. There are people who can quote this book from cover to cover, but they don't believe 4 in the power, that kind of power and prayer. No, God doesn't work that way anymore. The promise is yours when you embrace it. No way did, where did you go, my

wife ran down the hall with the kids. No way could I say that's my wife until I stood at the altar. When we were getting married, her mother had taught her. There's three major things about getting married, my doll. Said, you have to remember there's going to be that marriage ceremony, there's going to be the altar, there's going to be the aisle to get there. You're also going to have to sing to him. And as April was walking down the aisle, I could hear her saying, aisle altar him. She was not my wife until I said, I do. The money's in the bank, but you're afraid to go and cash in and withdraw the money.

Here's a bank account, it's full, you've got to cash in honey. So don't be like these guys. Jesus said, be aware of these guys. He said, these guys will stand at the podium and they will read to you. But then they sit down and they tell you their interpretation of it. But Jesus said, the problem I have with these guys is they're interpreting for you, their interpretation of it. But if you watch them after they get out of the chair, they don't walk within their own laws. Big talk, no action. These are the guys he called them white suplecuris!. People get upset when they read Jesus saying, oh, you, you brood of vipers, you bunch of snakes in the grass, the white suplecuris!. You know what, the white suplecuris were?. What, paint the tomb so it doesn't look so sad and lonely. Jesus called people out like that. He's much as called them liars. Isn't that a terrible thing? He wasn't calling regular, ordinary people, those kinds of things.

He was taking on these guys, read it for yourself, go through the gospels. He only spoke hot, burning words to those who were more righteous than the rest of us. But the challenge was this, they did commit the word to memory. I mean, lock, stock and barrel, but it was not working in their hearts. So they were fake baloney. There was nothing beefy about them. So Jesus said, when he stands up here, he's reading the law of Moses. He dare not add one word to what he was reading from the laws of Moses. But when he sat down in the chair, he could add anything he wanted. And once he is determined as a rabbi, I've discovered what the truth is to him, the debate is over. I made up my mind and this is how it goes. The challenge was then that the rabbi would be sought after by others because this guy has such a great following and if I follow after him, I could have the life, the privileges and the spotlight of a rabbi also. So young men at the age of 13, if they've gone through 12 years of schooling and the local synagogue, they've learned Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, they learned that.

But now that they're turning 13, they go to the Passover if they want to go on in their studies under the rabbi. And now they would sit under the rabbi from the age of 13 to 18 and now they're going to learn the entire Old Testament, the Psalms and the prophets, the major prophets, the minor prophets, the books of wisdom and poetry, they learn it all. And they would try and impress this fellow, try and impress him. If they went on, they would try to impress him that they were worthy to become a rabbi. And if he decided that, yes, this is good, I like this kid, I think there's something in him, then the rabbi would say, okay, you can follow me. If that youngster decided to follow him, that meant that for about a good three to four years, he did nothing but serve the rabbi. He'd be putting shoe polish on the old boy's sandals.

He'd be doing his laundry. We're going to Jericho today and the young guy would have to carry his baggage. He would prepare his meals. He would prepare his bath. He was a servant. He had to prove 5 that he was worthy. And during this time, the rabbi would pour stuff into his mind and

into his heart because the rabbi wants this young guy to carry on his lineage. It's like a grandpa, rambling in the fact that he has how many grandchildren, how many people here are grandparents.

How many know how many grandparents you have? And don't you like to brag it up. We are the grandparents of 10 and 3. Great. I think 3, well, quite a few. This guy, this guy would want to brag that he had disciples and he loved to brag about this. Not only this, you've got to meet this young guy, you've got to meet him. He's learned everything that I taught him and he's so brainy and he loves the word of God. He considers the law of the Lord to be honey on his lips. He can't get enough. This young guy is surpassing me. Now I know that my design, my posture, my focus is being carried on by young men like him. And so this young man who's going to follow the rabbi, it's his desire to literally follow this man's model and imitate him as best as he can. By the way, Paul the Apostle spoke to his disciples who were the churches all over around the Mediterranean and he said, be imitators of me.

Listen to him. Be imitators of me, even as I am an imitator of Christ. When Paul was imitating Jesus, the great rabbi, then Paul was able to say, I imitate him. You've imitated me and we will have many, many, many, many great grandchildren. The fact that you are here this morning means that the whole concept of rabbi and discipleship has worked to this hour. Say amen or I'll go until three o'clock. It's an interesting question. Jesus at the age of five, the very latest, would have been taken by either Joseph and Mary, likely Joseph. He would have been taken to the local synagogue. Every community that had 10 or more families qualified for a synagogue. If you didn't have 10 families, 10 men with their wives and their children, if you didn't have 10 leaders, you could not have a synagogue. There were many synagogues. Over 400 of them were in Jerusalem by the time Jesus went up to the Passover at the age of 12.

Jesus was taken to the synagogue in Nazareth and there he sat under the reading and the interpreting of the word. At the age of 12, he was taken to Jerusalem and the word says, at the time of the feast, they, Joseph, Mary and Joseph, says, they went to Jerusalem to the feast as was their custom. This was the custom that Jesus got in on at the age of 12. That's the story where mom and dad had out riding a two-humped camel heading back to, you know how we get a two-humped camel? It's a committee's idea of a horse. Give me a break. So they're riding back to Nazareth on a camel or however they're getting there. And one of them says, how well did Jesus sleep last night? And the other says, I don't know, you were looking after it. No, I wasn't. This happened to us. We were having church in London back in the day. We got home Sunday night till 11 o'clock. The service went on forever.

We got home. April put the girls to bed, came and found me drinking a little cup of tea in the living room and she said, boy, the girls were whipped. She said they went right to bed. How did Davy do? I said, Davy, I don't know Davy. That's our son. I know, but I didn't put him to bed. What did you do with him? I didn't do it. I had to get in my car, go back to the church. Davy's asleep under the pew in the dark. Sound asleep. Jesus got left behind in Jerusalem. When they got back there, he's sitting in the temple and he's holding the priests and the local rabbis spellbound. He's asking them questions and they don't know how to answer him. And then he's offering back, would you accept this as an answer? They were blown 6 away at the age of 12.

How much he loved the taste of the word honey. Do you know where he may have actually got that taste? You say, well, it's Jesus. Of course he had the day. Wait, Jesus goes to school. He's sitting in the synagogue in the school there. The school happened in the synagogue and the teacher would show up that morning. This didn't happen every day, but this literally happened. The teacher would show up with a little honey pot. Everybody in the classroom knew that honey pot. Are you ready for this? The children always had a little slate that they could write things on, answers to the questions or whatever. And they knew what the teacher was going to do.

The teacher would hold the honey pot up and the teacher would read these words. How sweet are thy words to my taste. Yes, greater than honey to my mouth. The teacher would quote that off and on as the teacher walked up and down in the class and was putting honey on the slate of every child. And the child was licking the honey, licking the honey, licking the honey. And what was that all about? It was a beautiful illustration. You're here to learn the word of God. And when you give me an answer and write on that slate, you're writing down your understanding of the word of God. Let the word of God be to you like honey in your mouth. So you see, the whole Jewish culture, the whole Hebrew culture was based on the book. Where is your faith based on? Far too many people and the Pentecostals are the worst for this. Far too many of us are so enthralled with experiences.

Beloved, if your experience doesn't line up with the word of God, you ought to put it out to the trash bin. It's got to be in the Word. I don't know if it's in the Word, pastor. Get in the Word before you embrace it. Hello? Get into the Word and let the Word get into you. Let the Word get into you so much so that when you speak, you're speaking out of the abundance of knowledge in your heart. You love the Word of God. It's like honey to your taste. How's your Bible reading going? Pastor, please don't bring that up. How's your Facebook monitoring going? Oh, I learned a lot of things there. Of course, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy is always on page one. Don't think so. He didn't do the Word. Hello? Isn't it interesting, brother? You brought the story. I'm not probably the family's listening in.

Please don't be offended by this. But I was so intrigued when you told us a couple of days ago, the little fella's doing great. The little fella's doing great. And of course, the question went to my mind, how great is he? And the answer was, four years of age, he asked for his iPad. I'm not against that. This is a great learning tool and in the right hands and given the right guidance, it's glorious. Somebody should have got to this guy who sits in this chair, say, you love the Word of God, then don't treat it as a toy and don't treat it as political ammunition and don't use it as an iron bar to force people to identify with your concepts. It's absolutely amazing what we learn when we take the time to kind of drill down and find out what was going on. Really, what was the surrounding? When the people responded this way, when they responded that way, why were they responding in such a way? Rabbis believed, absolutely wanted to believe that what each of them taught, that was truth, that was truth. And they taught their young disciples to debate one another, go ahead, have at it, have a debate. And then if they got lost in the weeds, he'd correct them and say, now gentlemen, this is what you believe. Did you know that's what's happening in our universities today in Canada?

You don't go there, you don't go there to debate, you don't care, go there to think things through

and learn how to work through it. You know what's going on in our university? When you get there, you're being told by a professor, this is what you believe and if you don't want to accept this, you're in the wrong office. Free speech, free thought, it was in trouble way back then. There's nothing new about this. So Jesus warned us about the Pharisees and the scribes. He said, watch out for them. Don't trust their interpretations. There's another warning that Jesus gave about the Pharisees. He said, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. We have leaven today. If you had breakfast this morning with toast, you were eating leaven. It's, okay, I had the word and it's gone. Yeast, yeast leaven, same as my king. And what happens? Why do we put leaven or yeast into the mix of the bread? Because we want ladies help, but the men don't, you don't even know men. Ladies, this is your architect. Why do we put yeast in the bread so that it rises? Another word is so it gets all puffed up.

I love it when you bake bread. Your bread is so light and fluffy. Jesus said, look out for the Pharisees. They love the leaven. Puffed up. This is how the Pharisees lived. You see, they did not believe that righteousness was based on your heart, on your attitude, on how you bent yourself towards the Lord. That didn't matter. I know you're righteous by your works. I know you're righteous because you do it this way. I know you're righteous because you do it that way. How did I know you did it in a certain way? If you were a truly righteous man in those days living according to this guy's dictum, everybody knew when you were going on a, on a bit of prayer and fasting because you'd have, you wouldn't wash your face and you'd make yourself look so sober and so lonely and so troubled.

Somebody say, somebody ran over your dog. Like, because you see, no, it's okay. I didn't want to mention it, but I'm fasting today. Oh, yes. And so you see, as they fasted and as they ran into the house of the Lord and gave a penny out of every dime, they're trying to impress God. Remember Jesus is in the temple and he sees, he sees some guy go up and he puts in a pile of change into the, into the offering plate. And then there's a little widow that goes up and she gives a dime or a cause, some kind of a coin. And what did he say about the situation? He said, God is no respecter. He has no respect for the guy who went and jumped a, uh, dropped a lid about a change out of his multi million dollar bank account.

The Lord loves a cheerful giver, giver, and that woman gave everything that she had. But you see in the Pharisees eyes, he gave more than her. So he's more righteous. He prays more often than she does. So he's more righteous. And so these guys would spend half their days looking in the mirror. How do I look? Do I look righteous to you? They used to wear prayer shawls. So when they're walking along the street and they're wearing a prayer shawl, you know exactly where they're going. They're going to the temple to pray. How do you know they're going to the temple to pray? They're praying the prayer shawl. Do you know what they actually did in those days?

They would see to it that my shawls are bigger than your shawl. They had longer and longer. It was like ladies with braided hair. They had to keep it, like this poor guy, he's on his way to the prayer thing. The first thing he had to do is go and get in the healing line. What happened to you? I tripped over my prayer shawl and I banged my nose and I'm bleeding. Everything was about the look. And if you were a rabbi and a teacher, we're not going to listen to you until we find out who's teaching. What rabbi are you emulating? Jesus came along to some fishermen along the

seashore and he said, come and follow me. Don't be afraid to come with me because the burden I give you is so light you're going to love it. I'm not going to abuse you. I'm not going to go through silly antics and get you all mixed up with this, this is what you're allowed to do, this is what you're not allowed to do. You know, there's so much, there's so much sinfulness in our society today that ten commands fall pretty short. There aren't enough commandments in essence to cover the broad brush.

It's just absolutely incredible. Since thy word has I hid in my heart, that it will protect my ways. It's getting Jesus into my heart. Pursue Jesus who is, he is the Word of God. In the beginning was the word Jesus. The word was with God. Jesus was with God. The word was God. He was God from the beginning. So when you are getting into the word, you're getting into Jesus. Why are you getting into the word? So I can tell my friends I read the Bible twice a year. I never tell people how many times I read the Bible through. So many times you read it pastor, I don't want to discuss that because at times we ourselves can get into, I read, I was through the entire Bible this year.

And by the way, I can quote the Lord's prayer, you want me to show you? And we teach little kids to do that, say. Show grandpa how you can quote the 23rd Psalm honey. We actually teach them, teach them that if you can quote it, you've done good. Now it's good to train our kids and it's good to teach them to memorize, but why are they learning to memorize? It's good to sit the child down and explain to them, you be the teacher and share with your child what you know that you know that you know. To share with them divine truth. Children, they're not the future, they're the today. They're the today and there's so much coming against them by our now manufactured culture by the people that we voted in to protect us. They're not protecting us. They're bullying us.

Sorry. I've been going to get some red faces. When people don't like what I say on the internet, they send a red face, a red face, a red face. I try to make sure I get at least one red face per week. A couple of weeks ago, I got a lot of red faces. I said something about the White House and people went strange. Our children are being inundated by foolishness in the classroom. And how do we protect them? You don't protect them by telling them all the bad things are going to hear and all the bad things that are going to come towards them. Do you know how they train? I got to finish. Maybe? Yes. There's a clock up there. Do you know how they train people? I learned this years ago. I don't think things have changed. This was when the money was made out of paper. Now it's made out of plastic. I don't know. But when paper was actually made from real paper from trees, there would be fake money.

We always know that it is counterfeit. Do you know how they train bankers? This was a few years ago anyway. Do you know how they train bankers? How do they detect fake currency? I saw this happen in, I'm going to impression now. I landed in Harare Zimbabwe. I had Canadian money or American. It doesn't matter. And I went into an exchange, a foreign exchange. They have places where you go in and they'll exchange. So I handed it to this person. I got the money from the Bank of Montreal in Canada. The money was handed to me. So you assume this is good money. I'm in a currency exchange and I pass all these bills under the little wicked. They were probably \$50 bills. I don't know whatever. And watch this. This lady is picking up each one.

She didn't even look at it. She did this so fast. She picked it up. Go like that. Okay. No. No. There. There. She knew by the feel of it. She knew that this was authentic. How do they teach people to recognize the real thing by handling it and handling it and handling it and handling it and handling it and then when you pick up something that's fake, say, oops, something wrong with that one. How do we protect our kids against the filth and the rot that's being dumped on them today? Put honey on the slate and read them that verse. Psalm 119 verse 103, how sweet are your words, to my taste? Yes. Sweeter than honey in my mouth. Sweeter than honey in my mouth. Gracious Father, I pray, Lord God, that I will not be found guilty of being a teacher preacher of the word but not a devourer of the word. Not the recipe but actually eating the food.

Not getting excited about principles but actually letting the principles get a hold of my heart and my life so I can cry out. He's changing me. Jesus on the inside, working on the outside. Heavenly Father, help us to crave the word of God like we would crave our favorite food. Maybe it's not honey, maybe it's chocolate. Forgive us. Lord, may we sincerely crave, may we delight in your word as the psalmist and I do light in your word because your word is an expression of your heart. Your word is a love letter to me. It's not a harsh, harsh stick or a rod to beat me into submission.

It's a wonderful recipe to keep my heart pure and to cause me to love the fact that I'm part of the bride of Christ that when the trumpet sounds, I shall be found without spot and wrinkle and I shall enjoy the freedom of being with you forever and ever and ever. And then Lord God as grandparents and as great grandparents, I pray Lord that we'll seize every opportunity when appropriate to put honey on the slate to share with our little ones and help us Lord to be wise not to be like the ruthless rabbi pushing it down their throat, wagging our finger but rather with such gentleness. Lord, may we put the honey on their lips and may they taste and see that the Lord is good. Help us to be faithful grandparents. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Let's finish with this. Have faith in God. Have faith in God