



THE THREE LEAVENS

"We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the things freely given us by God. And we speak about them not with words taught by human wisdom, but with words taught by the Spirit, describing spiritual realities in spiritual terms."
- 1 Cor 2:12

Leaven can represent a type of influence, mindset or way of thinking that affects the way we understand and interact with God and the world around us. Jesus warns against two corrupting leavens (Herod and Pharisees) and teaches us about the leaven of the Kingdom of Heaven.

THE LEAVEN OF HEROD (AND PONTIUS PILATE)

Refers to the machiavellian mindset of both Herod the Great and his son Herod Antipas in which man is at the center (politics in negative sense). Four main attributes of the Leaven of Herod are:

1. ***Practical Atheism (Mt 14:5)***
2. ***Deception & Misrepresentation (Mt 2:8)***
3. ***Mockery (Mt 23:11)***
4. ***Manipulation & Coercion (Mt 2:16, Mk 6:14f)***



FEAR OF MAN
MT 14:5, MK 6:20, JN 19:8

THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES (AND SADDUCEES)

"Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees..." Mt 16:6

Refers to the hypocritical mindset in which God is said to be at the center of everything, but in fact, God is far from the heart. Because God is not known on a personal level, he is powerless in their lives. Five main attributes of the Leaven of the Pharisees are:

1. ***Unbelief in the Power of God (Mt 12:24)***
2. ***Externals Over Relationship (Mt 23:27, Mk 7:6)***
3. ***Spirit of Condemnation & Judgment (Mk 3, Jn 8-9)***
4. ***Performance-Based Mentality (Lk 12:1f)******
5. ***Resistance to Conversion of Heart (Mt 26:29-31, Isa 43:1)***



FEAR OF MAN
MT 21:26, 21:46;
MK 11:18, 11:32, 12:12;
LK 20:19, 22:2

THE LEAVEN OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD (MT 13)

God's very life. His perspective. God's disposition toward all things and people. God Himself. The Kingdom of Heaven is wherever the Heavenly King is. The Kingdom of Heaven is not merely a place we hope to get to one day; it is, as Jesus says, "in your midst" here and now (Lk 17:21). Some key characteristics of the Leaven of the Kingdom of Heaven are:

1. ***Identity is Rooted in Sonship / Daughterhood (Mt 4)***
2. ***Disposition of Beatitudes (Mt 5)***
3. ***Childlikeness & Innocence (Mt 18)***
4. ***Honesty & Purity of Faith (Mt 17:20)***
5. ***Fearlessness in Proclaiming the Gospel (Acts 2:14f)***



FEARLESSNESS
JESUS' ENTIRE LIFE & MINISTRY
THE APOSTLES AFTER PENTECOST
ALL OF THE SAINTS



OVERCOMING THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES

“Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves.” - 2 Cor 13:5
“The fear of man lays a snare, but he who trusts in the LORD is safe.” - Prov 29:25

We will always mistreat what we misdiagnose. If we want to be sure that our mind, heart, sight, hearing, and discernment systems are all healthy, we need to look in the mirror and hold our hearts over the fire of the Lord’s love to let Him burn away anything that is getting in the way of us loving one another as He has loved us. Remember: The Lord never condemns us, rather, He convicts us of sin and righteousness (Jn 16:8). This exercise is a ministry-focused examination of conscience. For each prompt, rate yourself on a scale of 1 - 5, 1 being “Never” and 5 being “Consistently.”

1) I am often more aware of what is wrong with other people, ministries, parishes, churches, etc., than what is going well or being done right.

2) I tend to think about others’ perception of me more than God’s perception of me.

3) I tend to feel guilty, that I can never measure up to the Lord's standards for my life.

4) I get encouraged when my ministry looks better than others.

5) I tend to express criticism and condemnation of viewpoints that I disagree with more than I ask clarifying questions.

6) I tend to feel relieved by the fact that I have finished my prayer time and spiritual responsibilities.

7) I tend to think that the fruitfulness of ministry is contingent upon the environment or season of ministry.

8) When I’m in relational ministry contexts, I tend to talk more than I ask questions.

9) I tend to be more excited about what God did in the past than in what He is doing in the present.

10) I tend to be more comfortable explaining a problem than praying into the solution.

11) I tend to think that my role in evangelization is more of a passive one, where I’m called to simply live a good life and intercede for others from afar.

12) I tend to think that my value and worth is contingent upon my ability to effectively minister to those in my spheres of influence.

The Lord Jesus wants us to be free from any fallen mindsets that we have inadvertently adopted or any lies that we have come to believe about either the Lord or ourselves. Turn to the Lord in prayer and break free of those mindsets, renounce those lies and declare the truth using the following format:

***“Lord Jesus, in Your Name, I renounce the lie that _____,
and I declare Your truth that _____. Amen.”***