

## Are You A Plant To Be Rooted Up?

Jesus said in Matthew 15:13-14, "But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." After being told that He had offended the Pharisees, Jesus uses two images which would offend them even more. The first predicts the rooting up of any plant the heavenly Father has not planted. Israel often saw herself as a plant God had planted (Psalm 1:3; Isaiah 60:21), and the prophets turned the image against them. Isaiah saw Israel as a vineyard treated perfectly by the Lord yet she did not produce anything good (5:1-7). Jesus is saying that the Pharisees, the leaders of the Jews, are not truly part of God's planting.

The second image may depend on a title some Jewish leaders apparently took on themselves. They had the Law, they reasoned, and therefore they were fit to serve as a "guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness" (Romans 2:19). Jesus disputes this claim; in His view they were "blind guides of the blind" and "both shall fall into the ditch." Though the Pharisees and teachers of the Law had the scriptures and interpreted them in the synagogues, this does not mean that they really understood them. On the contrary, they were blind and failed to comprehend them. Jesus said, "Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?" (cp. 23:16-17). Jesus' denunciation presupposes that anyone who truly understands the "commandment of God" (v. 6) will discern who He is and follow Him. Jesus said in John 5:39-40, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." The Pharisees did not follow Jesus; so they did not understand and follow the Old Testament scriptures.

What about you? Are you a part of a religious group that God did not "plant" in the New Testament?

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