

Beware of Hypocrisy

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Date: 25 October 2015

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[0 : 00] Amen. Well, take your Bibles, would you, this morning, and open them to the Gospel of Luke, Luke chapter 20.

And this morning, we're going to be able to finish chapter 20. As we're kind of moving through this Gospel, getting closer to the end of it, and yet still a little more time to really work our way through this wonderful Gospel, the longest of the four Gospels.

Luke chapter 20, we're going to finish chapter 20 and then really move on into chapter 21. So as you notice, the text really takes us across that kind of almost natural barrier that has been included in Scripture, and that is the chapter divisions.

You do know that the chapter divisions are artificial. They are not a part of the inspired text. I kind of feel sometimes I need to explain that. Neither are the verse numbers as well.

Those were added much, much, much later. Luke, when he wrote his Gospel, he didn't have chapters, didn't have verse numbers. And so sometimes the chapter divisions are a little bit unfortunate because it causes us to think that because we're in a new chapter that there's a new subject.

[1 : 31] But in the case of our passage this morning, it is the same subject that we are seeing at the close of chapter 20 on into chapter 21.

So, starting with chapter 20, verse 45. I didn't give you the verse number, did I? Verse 45, and then we'll carry on into chapter 21 and verse 4. So listen as I read our passage this morning.

Then in the hearing of all the people, he said to his disciples, Beware of the scribes who desire to go around in long robes, love greetings in the marketplaces, and best seats in the synagogues, and the best places of feasts, who devour widows' houses.

That's quite a contrast, isn't it, from some of those other things. Devour widows' houses. By the way, let me just interject here because I didn't plan to even discuss this in the course of the sermon. This wasn't really needed. Very likely that the scribes, primarily Pharisees, owned property. And so the idea here behind this is actually foreclosing on poor widows.

[2 : 45] So you can see here, here are the list of things that they love to receive, love to have. They love a certain way to be thought of, and yet, really, they're scoundrels.

They devour widows' houses. And here's really the point. For a pretense, pay attention to this part of verse 47. For a pretense, make long prayers.

These will receive greater condemnation. And then going on into chapter 21. And he looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury.

And he saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites. So he said, Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all.

For all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God. She, out of her poverty, put in all the livelihood that she had.

[3 : 48] All right, so there's our passage for this morning. Our subject, and you can already tell, already tell by not only your bulletin, but the screen here, our subject is, in a word, hypocrisy.

Hypocrisy. And certainly not a pleasant subject. Would you agree with me? Hypocrisy. Not one of those that you come to church to hear about and get warm feelings about, because this is a very serious subject.

A very serious subject. And we cannot just pass over it. Jesus dealt with it here in this passage, of course, as we shall see. As well as, really, the Gospels talk about it quite a bit.

In the course of Jesus' ministry, it comes up quite often. Hypocrisy. And so we can't pass over it. Jesus deals with it. He deals with it very strongly. Sternly.

As we shall see. Now, admittedly, though, because you heard me read the text, and hopefully you were reading along in your Bibles, Luke does not use the word hypocrisy.

[4 : 55] So the word hypocrisy doesn't appear anywhere in the passage. And yet, hypocrisy, I assure you, is the subject. Is Jesus' subject?

Now, Luke uses an alternative word here that essentially means the same thing. And you might have noticed it. There, the close or the end of verse 47, the word pretense.

At least that's how it is translated in the New King James Version. If you have a King James or NIV, I think both of those use the word, or the idea of to show, for a show.

New American Standard, folks out there, you notice in your Bibles, it says, for an appearance's sake. For appearance's sake. It all means the same thing, doesn't it? To pretend to be something or someone you're not.

All right? That's hypocrisy. That is the essence behind the idea, or the idea behind the word hypocrisy. Now, when we get to, if we were to go over to the gospel account given to us by Matthew, in fact, I would ask you to do that.

[6 : 02] If you want to turn to Matthew chapter 23, last week I had us read Matthew's account in the passage we studied last week. I'm going to read a portion of it here this morning, just so that we understand what the subject is.

And it's put even more strongly in Matthew's account. So if you want to look at Matthew chapter 23, and let me just begin reading with verse 2.

Chapter 23, verse 2. The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Jesus is saying to His disciples, the scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat.

Therefore, whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do. Do not do according to their works, for they say and do not do.

For they bind heavy burdens, hard to hear, and lay them on men's shoulders. They themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

[7 : 06] All right, so you see the idea here, can't you? It's very vivid. But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries.

These little things that hold scripture verses. Broad and enlarge and the borders of their garments. And they love the best places at feasts and best seats in the synagogue.

Greetings in the marketplaces. And to be called by men, Rabbi, Rabbi. You know, a really great term of respect. Or address of respect. But you do not be called Rabbi, for one is your teacher, the Christ.

And you are all brethren. And then skip on down to verse 13. But woe to you, scribes. So see, Matthew inserts quite a bit more here in this particular event or occasion than Luke does.

Luke doesn't give us all of this, but we know that Jesus said these things. He said in verse 13, But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees. Hypocrites. Pretty strong, isn't it?

[8 : 12] You look at verse 14. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees. Hypocrites. Verse 15. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees. Hypocrites.

Verse 16. Woe to you, blind guides, who say, whoever swears by the temple, and goes on with the reason why he is calling them a hypocrite here.

You can skip on down to verse 23. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees. Hypocrites. Are there any doubt about the subject here? No doubt. In fact, one more, a couple of them, three more times.

Verse 25. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees. Hypocrites. Same thing in verse 27. Same thing in verse 29. So over and over and over again, Jesus calls the scribes and Pharisees, what does he call them?

Hypocrites. All right, you see, we're listening. Hypocrites. Very clear. There's no mistaking it. And so, the idea here, in Jesus' teaching, and the thing he is wanting to teach here, is about the subject of hypocrisy.

[9 : 19] And even though Luke does not use the word hypocrisy, uses a different word, an alternative word, that is the subject here. And then when you go outside of this passage, and the other accounts, the parallel accounts in Matthew and Mark, and you kind of broaden your view out to the entire gospel record of Jesus' life and ministry, you're going to find that he had absolutely no tolerance whatsoever for hypocrites.

None whatsoever. In fact, and we get this from Luke's account, clearly, Jesus levels his strongest condemnation, his strongest rebuke on the hypocrites of his day, the scribes and the Pharisees

specifically.

This is the brand of hypocrisy he is wanting to point out here, and he is condemning it. He had no tolerance for them. No, seemingly no mercy for them.

No compassion. And yet, comparatively, over and over, you find Jesus responding with compassion and grace to all sorts of sinners, adulterers, and prostitutes, and tax collectors, and thieves, and the like, but not for the hypocritical scribes and Pharisees, and no tolerance for them.

No mercy, seemingly. No compassion for them. In fact, in Matthew 12, verse 34, Jesus called them a brood of vipers. That's pretty inflammatory.

[10:55] Brood of vipers? Call them a bunch of snakes. Now, why? Why would he? Well, that's part of what we want to see, what we want to learn in this passage this morning.

Now, I want to give you a caution. We would be making a colossal blunder if we were to just simply confine what Jesus said about hypocrisy to his day, to the scribes and the Pharisees.

We would be making a big mistake if we do that, and even think that. What Jesus says about hypocrisy is for today as well, and for the church today.

And that's why Jesus says, or gives, rather, a strong warning to his disciples. You know, I've heard it said a few times, I've heard people say this, you know, sometimes you'll invite a person to church, here's kind of the scenario, and that person will say, well, I'm not going to go down to that church where all those hypocrites are.

And usually the response in that little scenario is, well, you'll go to the ball field and sit there and watch a ball game with a stadium full of hypocrites. You know, that's kind of how it goes.

[12:05] But you know what? The people in the stadium are not the hypocrites. They're just living their life the way they want to, no bones about it. The hypocrites are in the church.

Those who are guilty of the kind of hypocrisy that Jesus is talking about are not those who are claiming to be pagan and living a life that way.

They're those who are claiming to be Christian. You know, on the inside, there's something entirely different. It's hypocrisy. And so Jesus is giving a strong warning to his disciples, his disciples then and now about the dangers of hypocrisy.

Beware of hypocrisy. So I want us to look at the text and I want to consider, have you consider three problems with hypocrisy. Problems really is a too mild a word to use here.

Warnings. Two warnings about hypocrisy. And here's the first one. Hypocrisy is an infectious contamination. It is an infectious contamination.

[13:24] The three Gospels, again, that include the account, this particular account, in their narrations, are the synoptics, the three synoptic Gospels, the Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

They all include this particular account there. And in all three accounts, they indicate that Jesus was speaking so that everyone could hear. All right?

It was not keeping this private in the sense that, you know, he just excluded all others. All were hearing this and he intended for everyone to hear it. And yet, we learn from Luke that Jesus was speaking primarily to his disciples.

Yeah, that's what it says. Verse 45. Then, in the hearing of all the people, by the way, that would have included the Pharisees as well. You know, those who are planted in the crowds to try to catch Jesus at his words.

We've been studying that the last few weeks. That would have included them. But in the hearing of the crowds, it says here, he said to his disciples. So, he's speaking to his disciples.

[14:29] So, you say, well, all right, so this lesson on hypocrisy is for believers. Well, not necessarily so. I've explained this a number of times in our course of studying through the Gospel, Gospel of Luke, that oftentimes when Luke includes the words disciples, this group of people, he's not necessarily talking about those who are believers.

There were believers and unbelievers in this mix of what is kind of generally called disciples. There were some who were genuinely following Jesus.

His apostles. But really, not all of the apostles were true believers, were they? Like Judas. In fact, Judas is probably the example of the hypocrite in the group.

But in the disciples, that broad group, there were some who were believers, some who were not believers, some who were just kind of taste testing, some who were very interested, kind of caught up in the mystique of the whole thing.

And yet, though they followed him places, they were not all yet believers. And so Jesus is speaking to his disciples directly, but he wants everyone to hear.

[15:41] And his target is the disciples. And what he is about to say will be a warning to them, this group, that we must assume includes some hypocrites.

A warning to them, but at the same time, a rebuke for the scribes. A rebuke to them. He says in verse 46, Beware of the scribes.

Now, the word beware is a pretty strong word in the Greek language, and it means literally to pay close attention. It means actually to be on your guard constantly, to watch out for the hypocrisy of the scribes in your group.

Watch out for that. And the form of this verb is an imperative, so it's a command. He's not just giving a warning, a suggestion.

This is a command. Look out. Be on the watch for this. And it's also kind of in the form of a continuous kind of action. So he's talking about a continuous vigilance in looking out for hypocrisy.

[16:54] There is an extreme danger, he would say. There is something you need to be looking out for. And to be constantly on your guard against against the hypocrisy of the scribes.

Their hypocrisy is pervasive. It's infectious. And therefore, their hypocrisy is a contagion that you need to be looking out for.

It's extremely dangerous to you. Now remember, Matthew records Jesus saying, I read part of this a moment ago, in Matthew 23 and verse 2, he said, the scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat.

Now what does that mean? It means they had a place of authority. And it was to some degree deserved. I mean, they had a place of authority and they had to be respected.

It was a place of influence, place of leadership within the structure of Israel's government, religious government. But then he warns his disciples in verse 3, therefore, whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do.

[18:06] So you need to obey them. You need to follow their instruction. But, do not do according to their works. It's kind of interesting.

Don't do what they do. For they say and do not do. We can understand that, can't we? He's talking about hypocrisy. And so, do as they say.

They are your leaders. What they teach, what they say, but not as they do. And really, this is the essence of hypocrisy, isn't it? It's saying one thing and doing another.

It's saying you are one thing and then really, the reality is you're something entirely different on the inside. That's hypocrisy. Now, the word hypocrisy comes to us from the Greek, of course.

In fact, it just kind of crosses over into the English language. Hypokriti, is the Greek word, so you can hear hypocrite out of that word, and its basic meaning is a stage actor.

[19:09] That's why I put this little image up here, the image of the tragedy and comedy masks, you know. It's, the whole idea behind the word hypocrisy is play acting, to be a stage actor.

And so, what the hypocrite claims to be, he or she really is not. Right? We know that. We understand the word hypocrisy.

A hypocrite is living a lie. Attempting to justify ourselves, this is hypocrisy, attempting to justify ourselves, attempting to make ourselves look righteous and spiritual, attempting to cover up our sin in order to make ourselves look spiritual in the eyes of others.

Play acting. it's living a lie. Someone has said that hypocrisy is like a straight pen. It's pointed in one direction, but it's headed in another.

Think about that. Is that good? That's hypocrisy. And hypocrisy is infectious. An infectious disease. Because, why? Because it feeds the flesh.

[20:19] That's why. And we like to feed the flesh. Or rather, flesh loves to be fed. And so, we want to be accepted. We want to be praised.

We want to be thought of as better than we really are. We want to be thought of in a good light. We want to be thought of, especially within the context of the church, we want to be thought of as having it all together spiritually.

And every single one of us are susceptible to that. And to some degree, every one of us are guilty of hypocrisy. Because we put on a false front.

Sometimes. We don't want the truth necessarily to be known. Now, that is not necessarily just in and of itself the hypocrisy of which Jesus is teaching or speaking about.

But we all like to be accepted. We all like to be thought of in a good light. And it all starts out kind of small. But it never stays that way, does it?

[21 : 19] It never stays small. And think about the scribes, what's said of the scribes. As he describes them as hypocrites, they desire to go around in long robes. As they like that kind of position of respect.

They love greetings in the marketplaces. That's not just saying, hello, how are you doing, you know, scribe. It is honoring them as they come, you know. And they love the best seats in the synagogues.

And they love the best places around the table, at the feasts, at the banquets and so forth. But now listen, we need to understand this.

These desires that are really inherent in every one of us, these desires are not in and of themselves the sin of hypocrisy.

It begins there. And the sin of hypocrisy begins with an unhealthy desire to keep these honors no matter what the cost.

[22 : 25] No matter what it takes. No matter what we've got to hide to keep it. Because we're convinced that if a person really knew the truth they wouldn't like us.

Wouldn't accept us. Wouldn't honor us. Wouldn't think good about us. And so it begins then with this inordinate desire to keep those good thoughts about us and to hide those sinful things that are true of us.

True of us but if known we're convinced would bring about the loss of the honor. Loss of those good thoughts about us. Change people's opinion about us.

Thoughts about us. And then to begin to perpetuate these honors or the receiving of them, continual receiving of them, through play acting.

Play acting the character of someone we are not. Eventually, this is the diabolical side of it. Eventually, believing the lie ourselves.

[23 : 30] See, this is hypocrisy. And ultimately, I get this, the true sinful me becomes increasingly sinful. Because I'm not dealing with it.

I'm hiding it, covering it. So the true sinful me becomes increasingly sinful, while the phony righteous me becomes more and more righteous.

Really, self-righteous. Because it's a sham. It's not real. And the great tragedy is, if unchecked, at some point, we will eventually believe the sham about our sins.

And become blinded to the truth. It's kind of like the Rolex watch I once owned. I don't have it anymore. I'll take mine off just so you can imagine this is a Rolex watch.

You used to have a Rolex watch. I really did. Aren't you impressed? Some of you have Rolex out there. I had a Rolex watch, and it was given to me, it was a gift to me, given to me by my son.

[24 : 41] Chris, he gave me a Rolex watch. Gave his dad a Rolex watch. And, you know, that's pretty impressive. And he gave it to me after he returned home from a mission trip in Mexico.

What? And he gave that watch to me, and I said, son, a Rolex watch?

How much did it cost you? It cost me \$10. And yet, I want to be honest with you.

You know, I got to thinking, maybe it is really a Rolex watch. Maybe it is. I mean, it looks like one. I mean, it's got, you know, Rolex there on the face of it.

A crown, you know, the diamonds studded around where the numbers go. And, you know, on the stem, it has that little crown on there.

[25 : 50] On the back of it, it said Swiss made. And I got to kind of fantasizing that maybe it really is a Rolex, a real one.

And I was proud of it, and I would wear it so people could see it. You know, I'd be at a meeting or something, and I'm just being honest with you. I don't want to be hypocritical.

And I, you know, I'd have it out there so you could see that Rolex. We even had people comment on it. One time we were walking through the mall in Nashville, I remember several years ago, and one of the kiosks out there, you know, how they try to get you to come, and I'm about 30 paces away, in this kiosk, they clean watches.

He said, hey, I'll clean your Rolex for you. I'm really proud of that. I just kind of got to thinking, well, you know, maybe, maybe it is.

And I'd rather believe that it is, and I'd rather have other people believe that it is. But one day it stopped working. And so I said, well, stop going it, stop working.

[27 : 07] And so I took it off, took the back off. You know what it said on the inside? Made in China. That's right. What a disappointment.

Hypocrisy. It's an infectious contamination. Start small. You just start believing, or rather actually it starts by receiving honor.

People thinking a certain way about you because of something you've done or said and maybe some smart thing you've said about scripture. Boy, it's a you really start small and then, you know, it gets bigger and bigger and the accolades.

I mean, they don't have to be big accolades, you know, just from people with respect or peers of ours and we begin to like that. It's just very natural to like that.

That in itself is not the sin, just part of our sin nature perhaps, but that's not the overt activity of sin. We like that and we allow that and yet there is something true about us that we are beginning to hide.

[28 : 22] And more and more we have to hide that because we're convinced that if they knew, they differed us. And it's even more diabolical than that as we shall see.

But it's a contagion. It's an infectious contamination. Second, a serious condemnation. This is where we really get serious.

No more funny stories about Rolex watches. A serious condemnation. Jesus said in chapter 20, verse 47, you, rather, these will receive what?

Greater condemnation. That's pretty strong. And why? What makes the sin of hypocrisy worthy of greater condemnation?

Well, that's what we want to talk about. In the first place, hypocrisy is pride. It's pride. That's what makes it deserving of a greater condemnation because pride is a root sin.

[29 : 30] It is really the root sin. You want to trace all of your kind of struggles with sin back to one thing? It is always pride. Pride.

And the various manifestations. It's pride. And pride then spawns so many other evil sins in our lives. Adrian Rogers used to say, pride is number one on God's hate parade.

It is. Pride is what made the devil the devil. That's at the core of it. And the fruit of pride is a lying tongue.

And that's what hypocrisy is. A lying tongue. A living a lie. It's a lie. It's a facade. It's a sham. It's a deception. It's lying.

And Jesus said of the scribes in John 8 44. Because Jesus is very serious about this. This thing of hypocrisy and pride and lying. He said, you are of your father the devil and your will is to do your father's desires.

[30 : 38] He does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character. For he is a liar and the father of lies.

That's a stinging indictment. to the scribes. So are you beginning to see why Jesus was so intolerant of hypocrites and of hypocrisy in general?

Compare that, I mentioned this briefly a moment ago, but compare that with this. Think about the Samaritan woman at the well. You know that story.

And Jesus was so patient with this adulteress and also think about Zacchaeus. Jesus was so gentle and so gracious with this dishonest tax collector.

And think about the woman that was going to be stoned by these Jewish men. To be stoned there. And think about this. Jesus was so forgiving of this prostitute.

[31 : 47] what she was. And think about Mary Magdalene. Jesus showed himself so powerful in her life in behalf of Mary Magdalene who was a demon-possessed woman before Jesus got a hold of her.

Think about one of the men crucified beside Jesus there on Calvary. And Jesus was so gracious and merciful to this career thief.

And think about Saul before he became Paul. Apparently not all Pharisees were hypocrites. Paul was a Pharisee. And Jesus was so merciful to this persecutor of his church.

And we could go on and on and find examples of this in Scripture. But when he is in the presence of hypocrites there's no tolerance. Seeming to no mercy.

In fact we see his full fury and harsh indictment of hypocrite. You think it's serious with Jesus? He has no mercy for hypocrisy, no toleration for hypocrites.

[32 : 59] You will receive the greater condemnation. And those are words speaking of hell. There's no way around it. And not only hell but the hottest place in hell.

The greater condemnation. And here's the reason why hypocrisy is a sin that keeps people from the one thing they must have to be saved.

Repentant faith. You know how hypocrisy keeps you from that. You're not dealing with sin. You're hiding it. You're obscuring it. You're keeping it.

Hypocrisy keeps you from your only hope. repentance and faith. Hypocrisy keeps a person from that. They can sit right in the church.

Hiding their sin and the very thing that they must do. Open their hearts to Jesus and repent of their sin and trust in him to forgive and to save.

[34 : 05] That's the one thing they cannot do because they're hypocrites. from admitting who you are really are spiritually. Sinners.

From admitting what you really need eternally. That's what hypocrisy keeps you from. Which is what? Forgiveness. You can't give forgiveness by hiding your sin.

And it keeps you from seeking what you need from the one who has the only remedy for your sinfulness which is Jesus.

It keeps you from his salvation. You understand why Jesus hates it so much? Hypocrisy! It's a sin that makes you think you are alright when you're not.

this is serious. Hypocrisy keeps you from opening your heart to Jesus.

[35 : 15] Laying your sin before him. Without hiding it, without obscuring it, without alibying it, to open your heart to him and then pleading for his mercy and grace.

Hypocrisy keeps a person from that. And yes, Jesus deals graciously with sinners who openly admit they are sinners. But Jesus, when he comes in contact with sinners who are trying to pretend that they are not sinners, he is very harsh.

Very harsh. Because they have a disease that cuts them off from the only remedy for sin. See how serious hypocrisy is?

It's an infectious contamination. A serious condemnation. And one more, an obvious contradiction. There's an obvious contradiction here with hypocrisy that we should all see. And this moves us into chapter 21 and there's a clear indication grammatically and some other indicators as well that this story about this poor widow woman is a part of Jesus teaching on hypocrisy.

[36 : 36] That there's a continuation from chapter 20 into chapter 21 so the chapter break is unfortunate. Mark in his account, Mark 12, 41, noted that Jesus, then Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and he watched.

Luke tells us that, and we read this, that here in verse 1 of chapter 21, he looked and he saw.

This is key to understanding the relationship between these two passages. Chapter 20 on into chapter 21. He watched, he looked, he saw.

What did he see? What did he observe? Well, he was observing a very common everyday activity in the temple, giving of offerings. See, the treasury, that's how Luke translates the treasury there in verse 1 is simply a reference to the offering containers that were placed in the temple, various places.

And there were a number of these. in the temple area, primarily in the court of women. You know, the temple was made up of a lot of different, several different courts, the court of Gentiles, the court of men, the court of women, the court of men, and so forth.

[38 : 08] Now, the court of women didn't exclude men. It wasn't the idea that only women could be in that court. It was the only court in the temple where women were included, were allowed in.

You can have a problem with that if you want to, ladies, but that's just the way it was. And so in the court of women, there would be many, several of these receptacles, these treasuries as it's called, and these containers were made of metal and they were quite large and they kind of had a lid or an opening on top that fanned out kind of like a trumpet.

And they were placed in strategic places in the court of women and then people would come by and they would drop in their offerings, you know, for the temple, offerings to the Lord.

All right. Now, Jesus was always aware of his surroundings. I mean, if you read through the Gospels, you understand that. I mean, aware of his surroundings in terms of using his surroundings as sermon illustrations, teaching illustrations.

and such and examples and so forth. And so Jesus is teaching, right? And possibly because this was quite common with the rabbis and they would have their students, they didn't have teaching time always in classrooms like we would think of it.

[39 : 41] They walked. They'd sit and walk and their entourage, they would have their entourage and they would be listening. And so here's Jesus, I think, at this point, walking around as he speaks, as he teaches.

And his disciples are close in around him, a group around him, and the crowds are also there following and listening, and that would include the Pharisees.

And Jesus, as he's teaching, he walks near one of the treasury receptacles. Mark even tells us he sits down by one. So he's sitting there, he's continuing to teach, and while he's teaching, he's watching.

Watching the people dropping their offerings. Kind of picture of it. Now, I know that this text is typically used to teach a lesson on tithing.

It really is. The poor widow woman has become kind of poster girl for sacrificial giving. The widow's might. And, perhaps, there is an application.

[40 : 52] Implication. Giving. For tithing. Actually, as a pastor, I would love, I would love for this to be a proof text for tithing.

Why is that? Because then I could demand that everyone give your entire livelihood to the church. tithing. That's what happened here. So, if we're going to make this a lesson on tithing, then that's we can't just take what we want and leave the rest of it.

Certainly, there's some application here for sacrificial giving. Absolutely. That's not the main intent of this.

It's not really what it's about. That Jesus' subject is hypocrisy. He's not moved to a different subject.

And this, you know, this was more than just a casual observance of people putting money in the offering plate and then making certain informed judgments about each one's personal sacrifice.

This was much more than that. For Jesus to say what He said about the rich givers and what He said about the poor widow woman giver, for Him to say what He said about them, His sight had to have gone much deeper than just what was visibly observable.

[42 : 27] It had to go much deeper. I mean, really, how did He know how much each person gave? How did He know that? really more importantly, how did He know the measure of their gift in relation to their individual wealth?

How would He know that? I'm talking here about the rich people as well as the poor widow who gave her her might.

How did He know that the woman, I mean, I should think of this a lot, how did He know that this woman put all of her livelihood that she had, that she put all of that in there?

How do we know that? Well, yes, dear brother, He is God. And so He just knows, right? Dear people, that's exactly the point.

Apply that to hypocrisy because this is what Jesus intended. Apply His sight into the deepest regions of the heart.

[43 : 39] Apply that to the subject of hypocrisy because you know it applies, don't you? If Jesus can see what these rich people and this poor woman were giving and then make some judgment about the measure of their sacrifice, if He can see that, then He can see how much you give.

and the measure of it according to your means, the measure of your sacrifice.

If He can see that in this woman, He can see it in you. Right? That's another lesson. Let's take that a step further. If Jesus can identify a hypocrite from someone who is real like this poor widow, that's the point.

if He can identify a hypocrite from the one who is real, this poor widow, then He can see whether or not you're real. And I'm real.

He can see that. Anybody deny it? Of course, it's obvious, isn't it? And if He knows, if Jesus knows the truth about who is putting on a show in their religious activity, whether it's tithing or anything, then He can see whether or not you're putting on a show.

[45 : 03] And we know that, don't we? Sure we do. And if we're really paying attention, it should be blatantly obvious that you cannot fool God.

You cannot fool everyone else, perhaps. And really, that's an illusion as well. You cannot fool God. So hypocrisy doesn't work.

Huh? So what? It doesn't work. It really, if we knew the truth, doesn't work with anybody. We're not really fooling anybody.

Not on the long haul. We're certainly not fooling everyone. But when it comes to God, we're not fooling Him at all, ever. Hypocrisy does not work.

It's an obvious contradiction to what we know is true about God. He sees everything. We know that. He knows everything.

[46 : 09] Don't we know that about God? Jesus said in Luke 8, 17, for nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to life.

That's frightening, isn't it? it's frightening to all of us because we all have a little measure of hypocrisy. And it's such a contradiction for us to think that somehow God doesn't know or maybe it doesn't matter or maybe He's just so gracious that He'll just kind of give us a buy on that.

If Jesus can see, can take His valuable time, now think about this. If Jesus can take His valuable time to watch a poor widow woman give a fraction of a penny in the offering plate and He notices that, then there is no sin in your life that He cannot see.

we know this, don't we? Therefore, hypocrisy is an obvious contradiction. It makes no sense whatsoever.

Hypocrisy is utterly vain with God. Again, the worst of it is this. thinking that you can cover your sins from others and living that way, that that be your way to cover your sins from others will at the same time keep you from going to the only one who can cover your sin.

[48 : 02] That, of course, is Jesus. serious. Serious. Beware of hypocrisy.