

The Futility of Hypocrisy

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Date: 29 June 2014

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[0:00] Let's get right to it.

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Let's get right to it. Let's get right to it. Let's get right to it. teachers and workers, BDS and vouchers. But so several times we had packed into one room that we did mission, quite a number of children had reminded me of this situation in Luke 12 verse 1.

Numerable number gathered together, trampling on one another, trampling over one another. It was kind of like that situation. And then, you know, it says here that Jesus began to say, so he began to speak.

And I've been trying to, I can relate to that because suddenly there is, you know, or at least initially uttered bedding with all of the kids, hearing people.

[3:15] And trying to speak over that is quite a tall order sometimes. Although the kids really were, by and large, quite behaved this week. Really were. I'm just saying that because maybe some of them were in it.

Or better yet, some of the parents were in it. But to speak over them is sometimes a challenge. And so you can kind of imagine Jesus trying to speak over this crowd of people.

And it really is interesting. I mean, here he is preparing to teach, to give his instruction. And we don't really know where he is. If it's Ploians in Judea someplace.

And the Bible says there is this innumerable multitude. That's how it's translated in the New King James Version.

Innumerable, excuse me, innumerable multitude. Easy to get your tongue twisted. I'm trying to say that. Gathered around Jesus. So there was a whole flock of people there.

[4:18] Gathered around Jesus so that they could hear what he had to say. Matter of fact, the words innumerable multitude. That's two rather large words in the English language.

Really come from one small word. Relatively small word in the Greek. It is the word *murios*. From which we get our word *myriad*. It's not a word that we use very often.

But I think we've heard of it. And when we say a *myriad* of people. We're talking about a countless number. And so that was kind of the idea. But in the Greek language, *murios* was a specific word for a specific number.

As a matter of fact, it was the highest number they had a word for. And it was 10,000. That's the highest number they had a word for. 10,000. So *murios* means 10,000.

And since it is plural here in the text, that means tens of thousands. That's a lot of people. Tens of thousands. Maybe 20,000. Maybe 30,000.

[5:19] Maybe 40,000. People. We don't really know. They were just uncountable. But there were at least 10,000, I think. And don't get that. They were just kind of spread out all over the place.

We get the idea that they had crowded around Jesus. Crowded together around Jesus. And they were tripping over one another and trampling upon one another. So that they could get close to Jesus and be able to hear what he had to say.

And here's the strange part. I don't know if you think this is strange. I do. I do. Here's the strange part. Jesus, I mean, here they are, all these people.

Jesus decides to speak to his disciples rather than speak to this crowd of people. And they're all there. All ready.

All chomping in the bin, so to speak. Hear what Jesus has to say. They're even climbing over one another. Jesus, rather, he decides to speak directly to his disciples.

[6:23] That's what the Bible says. He began to say to his disciples, first of all. Now why? Why take this occasion to speak to his disciples first rather than speaking with this, you know, huge crowd of people who are ready to hear?

I think the answer is revealed in the subject. Subject of what Jesus has to say. The subject matter of what Jesus is going to teach his disciples.

Because we find that out very quickly, Jesus wanted to warn his disciples about the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. That's the subject matter here.

You might remember last week, if you were here last week as we finished up chapter 11, Jesus had effectively drawn out the Pharisees to reveal, expose them for what they really are.

And he, so to speak, took the gloves off. And he took them head on and pronounced six woes.

[7:31] Six imminent judgments upon the Pharisees and the co-lawyers or the scribes or the experts in the law. Because, you see, the Pharisees were fakes.

They were frauds. And we already know that, don't we? Because we've got enough migrants and we understand the Pharisees. We know who they were and what they did and what they did to Jesus.

And so we don't have to be convinced about that. But we do need to understand that the people in Jesus' day thought differently about the Pharisees. They highly revered the Pharisees.

Respected the Pharisees. Maybe even on the very edge of worshiping the Pharisees. They're leaders and they certainly did not appreciate what Jesus had to say about them and to them.

And the reason is because they were completely, completely fooled. Completely fooled by the hypocrisy of the Pharisees.

[8:39] And I think that's why there was this huge crowd now. I mean, right after that. And I think, you know, we're just supposed to this occurred pretty close to the woes that Jesus pronounced.

Pretty close to that time. Maybe even in the same place. And so they wanted to hear what Jesus had to say. He had gone on a line on sand, so to speak. And so the people wanted to hear what Jesus was going to say next.

And this crowd, I think we should understand, was agitating somewhat. I think they were on the verge of even hostility. These were not friendly faces that were crowding around Jesus.

This crowd had been blinded by the ritualistic religionism of the Pharisees. The hypocrisy of the Pharisees.

That's a perfect backdrop for a serious teaching time for Jesus' disciples. I think Jesus was saying, essentially, saying to his disciples, Look at these people.

[9:48] They gathered here. Look closely at these people here. You know what is going on here. You know what is happening to them. They have been deceived.

They have bought into the hypocrisy. They have bought into the religiosity of the Pharisees. And it is completely bogus.

And worse than that, it is damning. It's something insidious. They have to say, look, look, look at these people. What's happening to them is diabolical, it's insidious, and it is infectious.

Infectious. Extremely infectious. It is the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, and you too are in danger. of this. What perfect time to speak on the subject to his disciples because they had a living testimony a living illustration of it right there all around him.

You too are in the kingdom. So beware. Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees which is what?

[11:07] Hypocrisy. It's hypocrisy. And I say to you that the same danger exists for Jesus' disciples today.

For us here today. Jesus was speaking to his disciples not speaking to our believers. And so believers can succumb to, buy into some measure of hypocrisy.

Very common sin among believers. And Jesus wants you to be warned of the sin of hypocrisy.

Hypocrisy is all around us. He can't go anywhere and not see it.

It is, and really that's just a proverbial tip of the iceberg because hypocrisy by its very nature, by its very definition, is something that's hidden. It's hidden.

It's something you don't see. You only see the outside. You don't see the inside. And it's the outside the hypocrite wants you to see. Hidden inside.

[12:11] The inside. It's the hypocrisy. That just falls. So it's all around us and it constantly wants to be in us and wants to rule us.

So let's see what Jesus teaches us about hypocrisy. First of all, what I would call the strong forewarning against hypocrisy. The strong forewarning.

Here are Jesus' disciples. They are new believers, relatively speaking. I mean, really, even in time, very new, very young in their faith.

Jesus is teaching them and he's forewarning of hypocrisy. And it's a strong forewarning. Look again at verse 1. Beware or be on your guard against the hypocrisy, the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

I heard about that one. A man and a woman who stopped by the McDonald's and went through the drive-thru and ordered their brunch. And so when they got out of the window, they paid for their order and the young man behind the window handed them their bag and they drove on their way.

[13:33] Well, they got down the road a couple of miles and they opened up the bag and noticed instead of hamburgers and french fries, there's a big one of money. A bunch of cash. And evidently, the young man who had been handed them the morning's receipts there at the McDonald's.

Well, the man saw that and immediately turned his car around and went back to the McDonald's and to the shock of the restaurant owner. and, uh, and, but this man handed over the money and he proudly explained, I brought the money back to you because I'm a Christian.

I'm a Christian and I teach Sunday school in my church and I'm a vegan in my church. And so God wanted me to bring this back. I have to bring this. What Jesus teaches. And the manager was so utterly impressed and overjoyed that he called the local misbaker to come by and interview the couple and take some pictures of them to which the man strongly, strongly objected.

And when the manager of the restaurant insisted upon him he finally took him aside and he said, let me explain something to you. I'm a married man and a woman in the car is not my wife. Funny?

Hypocrisy. In its Galatians form hypocrisy. It's much more subtle than that usually with most of us. Hypocrisy.

[15:04] Claiming to be one thing and even proud of it claiming this one thing on the outside but being something quite different on the inside. It's hypocrisy.

And that's the basic meaning of the word hypocrite by the way. Our English word comes almost directly from the Greek language. which is the word hypocrites. Hypocrites, you can see how that comes hypocrite, hypocrisy.

And the basic meaning of the Greek word is a state act. In fact, we can't be used in that context. A performer.

A pretender. Pretending. A person who pretends to be something he is or she is not. That's the Hebrew Greek.

And the worst kind of hypocrisy is religious hypocrisy. Right? That's the worst kind. This is the most damning. That is pretending to be spiritual. Pretending to be moral and righteous and a lover of Jesus and devoted to Jesus when in reality you're none of those things like that.

[16:16] hypocrisy. That's hypocrisy. You see, learn this about hypocrisy. At the heart of all hypocrisy is self-righteousness.

Which is not righteousness at all, is it? At the heart of it is self-righteousness. And self-righteousness you can liken it to a bottomless cup.

And so you just keep pouring and pouring and pouring into the cup and you're never able to fill it up. And the same is true in the hypocrite's life. You keep pouring yourself.

You keep pouring yourself into yourself and that is of nothing. Nothing in you. Nothing plus nothing always equals nothing.

It's self-righteousness. What we need is God's righteousness. What we must have is the righteousness of Christ. Which is the only righteousness that is real. We need something that is real.

[17:22] Not something that appears to be real on the outside. It's something that is real on the inside. Now the Pharisees of course were experts at looking real on the outside.

That's what we need to know about the Pharisees. We know nothing else. They were experts at it. They had it down to a science. It was an art form. They had devised numbers and numbers of hundreds of little laws and procedures and such that were all designed to make a person look holy. Themselves primarily but also they were trying to help the people to look holy to act holy. Even if this is the insidious part of it to feel holy. To think of yourselves.

To have some sense of satisfaction that your own kind of self righteousness is real somehow. But it's bogus.

It's bogus. And again worse than that it is death. Jesus said of the Pharisees in Matthew 23 verse 27 Woe to you scribes and Pharisees hypocrites for you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly but inside are full of dead men's bones and all unclean.

[18 : 53] Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men. You appear righteous to men. Not to God but to men.

But inside you are full of hypocrisy and get this lawlessness. Lawlessness. What a confirmation issue to the Pharisees.

I mean they were the ones who were the experts on the law supposedly. They were the ones who were maybe the self-appointed guardians of the interpreters of the law.

The ones who applied the law to the people's lives. And they were the ones who presumably it was their ministry to help the people obey the law.

And for Jesus to call them lawless is incredible. They were fakes. That's it. They were frauds.

[19 : 55] They were ignorant. And here is the insidious part of this of hypocrisy. Jesus said beware of the leaven.

The leaven of the Pharisees which is the hypocrisy. And Jesus used a very common thing leaven. The yeast as a metaphor.

A metaphor of hypocrisy is used as a metaphor for other things as well. But quite often it's used as a metaphor and Bible for sin. In this case hypocrisy. And so the idea is of course that just as leaven or yeast very quickly permeates the entire amount of dough, the hypocrisy of the Pharisees will, if allowed, very quickly permeate your life.

So it is what guides you. the whole basis for your Christianity is hypocrisy. And it starts small enough to think usually.

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 5-6 a little leaven leavens the whole word. Just a little leaven. And so you maybe feel a little empty inside.

[21 : 21] So you're experiencing a kind of emptiness. Something missing in your life. Or maybe you feel a guiltiness. Because it's a sin in your life.

But instead of repenting, instead of brokenness before God, instead of opening your heart to God to effect real heart change, real heart worship, instead of that, you turn to religious activity.

That's how it begins. You just kind of sort of double up on your religious activity. Double up on religion. And initially, as long as you feel pretty good about yourself.

You can cherish it. And on Monday, you feel a lot better about yourself. but it doesn't always last. You know, dissatisfaction then sets in again. Or guiltiness sets in again. So what do you do? It just adds to your religious activity.

[22 : 34] Add more to it. And here's the principle. Barrenness always produces busyness. Barrenness produces busyness, and busyness always produces barrenness.

Remember that. Barrenness always produces busyness, and busyness always produces barrenness. For barrenness, it's insidious, it's infectious.

That's what Jesus is teaching us here. the more barren you are spiritually on the inside. The more religion and ritual you tend to add to your life to make up the difference to answer the void.

And the more religious outwardly you become, the more barren inside you become. It's infectious. And eventually, because there is a limit to how much religious activity you do, you then become very pragmatic in your thinking. You then begin to believe the lie of hypocrisy that what you are outwardly is all that really matters.

[23 : 47] What people see about you spiritually, what people hear you say, which is not really true at the heart, but they hear you say, that's all that really matter.

And so you keep pouring and pouring and pouring yourself into yourself. It is the leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy.

And this is tough stuff because it hits everyone the strong warning against hypocrisy. And then Jesus begins to, I think, reveal the cure.

The cure for hypocrisy is the second I want you to notice the sheer futility of hypocrisy. The sheer futility of it.

Jesus, I think, wants all his disciples, not only his disciples, they're that day, but all of us. He wants us to know that hypocrisy is just a sham.

[24 : 55] It's a sham. We may feel really good about it. Others may, in feedback, make us feel a little good about it, but it's a sham.

It's empty. Futile. the nature of Christ. And Jesus did not put it up clearly, but the first two, for there is nothing covered that will not be relieved.

Nothing. Nor hidden that will not be known. Therefore, whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light.

And what you have spoken in the ear and inner rooms, like a closet, will be proclaimed over the house. I say this is really very clear.

Interesting how you do it to clean. It's really crystal clear. Bottom line is everything about you, everything about me, even those things that I think I have affected with you, will one day be exposed.

[26 : 08] Everything exposed. I say one day I think primarily Jesus is pointing to judgment. The believer judgment sees Christ.

Everything will be revealed. Someone has said that hypocrisy is really just a cover-up. and all cover-ups are really just delayed failure and postpone judgment.

That's hypocrisy. And sometimes hypocrisy is revealed in this life. We hear about it all the time. sometimes a person will leave or think hidden and he's very good at hiding it for a long, long time, covering up the truth.

Sometimes they're laughing and no one knows, no one knows of the hypocrisy. I mean, no one knows. Even the hypocrite has been so self-deceived that he or she thinks everything's alright. Then it comes out. It comes out. Be sure your sins will fight you. It comes out. The truth comes out. But even if it does not come out in this life, Jesus is guaranteed that it will in the end.

[27 : 40] He says that ultimately, finally, in the end, everything that you do and say and feel, everything that's in your hearts, in the dark, in the inner rooms, will one day be displayed for all to see.

That's pretty scary. There's nothing hidden. Isn't that what Jesus said? Nothing. Nothing hidden.

Everything will be exposed. And you think about that. Think about that. If you are play out in your faith, I know. Play action for everyone around you, family, friends, church.

If you're play acting, you're faith. If you're putting on a show of spirituality but living in a life of hidden sin, then one day it will be revealed in the light of God's glory.

You can count on that. It will. Jesus said there is nothing covered hidden, that will not be revealed. Do you believe that?

[28 : 53] Jesus said there is nothing hidden, nothing hidden that will not be known. Do you believe that? I'm thinking that that truth alone ought to terrify the in the great.

Sadly, it doesn't we're just getting to the human. This is not the human. And that's why Jesus added something else in the final this morning.

The sure fix for hypocrisy. It's a sure fix. I don't believe Jesus is saying that if you just warn people that in the end their hypocrisy is going to be revealed that they will repent of it.

And they will be cured of it. I don't think that's what Jesus is saying. It's not enough just to inform people the infectious nature of hypocrisy. It's not enough just to warn people of the futility in the end.

The futility of hypocrisy. What you have to do is give them a sure cure. A remedy. solution. A sure fix.

[30 : 14] And so let's look deeply into what Jesus said because we really have to look quite deeply. He's continuing the same subject in verse 4. And I say to you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that have no more that they can do.

What does this have to do with hypocrisy? The implication is that the people here in Jesus' day, these masses of people, these Jews, they were going the way of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees because they feared them more than they feared God.

They respected the Pharisees more than they respected and revered God. Let me add this, they cared more about what man thinks, about their holiness, than about what God knows to be true. And God does know it always does. You see, with the disciples in Jesus' day, to go, you know, kind of go against the teaching of the Pharisees, to go against the hypocrisy of the Pharisees usually led to death.

I mean, if you weren't going to, you know, follow the man-made laws of the Pharisees, then you probably wouldn't get out of here. That's what happened to Jesus. I mean, on the surface, that's what the Pharisees were up to.

[31:56] Now, for us today, it's not so much the fear of death from man in this country. For us, it is probably Christ to believe it.

We're still a fear of man, about what man thinks. A fear that we would always be evaluated to be spiritual and holy and valuable that way about man.

It's pride and it's praise to man that is motivated. The desire to be thought of as spiritual, religious, is a strong motivator than it leads to his promises.

And it all comes under the head in the fear of man. But Jesus said, what you need to do is replace that with something else. something far more serious.

What would that mean? Fear of God. The fear of God. First Bible, but I will show you whom you should fear.

[33:13] Fear him who after he is killed has power to cast him to hell. Yes, I say to you, fear him. God is he talking about Satan.

Satan has no such power. Satan can't even get himself out of hell. He's different. I'm about God. I'm about God.

And then let me add a positive side to this, and then we'll put all this together. Verse 7, God keeps track of it.

God of it. Some by addition, some by subtraction. But God keeps track of it.

And the point of it is not that God is counting the numbers of your hair. The point of it is that God knows you that well. Inside and out, and he cares about you.

[34:13] That's what we originally put all back together. Look at verses 6 and 7 all together. Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? I mean, actually, eight sparrows in that day, really poor had to eat sparrows.

Not a lot of meat there, but it's really cheap food. And not one of them, not one of these sparrows, is forgotten to forget. God cares about the sparrows.

also, I say to you, wait, wait, excuse me, verse 7, but the very ears of your head are all numbered. Do not fear, therefore, you are of more value than any sparrows.

Do not fear. Do not fear man, do not fear God. You're more valuable than sparrows, and God cares about that.

fear. This is really amazing, and here's the idea. The sure fix for hypocrisy, put all this together, the sure fix for hypocrisy, for false devotion, false religion, is to refuse and choose.

[35:30] Refuse and choose. That's what it always comes out. Refusing and choosing. It's like Matthew's dog says, love that dog.

And if he grabs a shoe, you're not going to get that shoe from him. you're not going to get it from him if you reason with him or command him or certainly not try to take it away from him.

You're not going to get it. But if you throw a ball as correction, he'll drop the shoe and chase after the ball. He's a really smart dog. What he does is some refusing and choosing.

That's what he does. And so here's the fix for hypocrisy. Refuse the fear of man and choose the fear of God. Or put it another way, more positive terms, refuse the love of man and respect for man and choose the love for God, reverence for God.

That's what we must do. Someone has put it this way. There is no hypocrisy in your life that can be controlled and expelled simply by someone saying stop it.

[36:57] It's not going to work that way. But there is no hypocrisy in your life that Jesus and his gospel is not bigger than. And when you begin to have in your heart a desire for Christ, for fellowship with the living God through Christ, and when this becomes the thing that you want and crave more than anything else, then eventually all idolatrous hypocrisy will bow before it.

It's refusing to choose it. Let the life of Moses speak to this reality. Hebrews 11:24, by faith Moses, when he became a babe, refused.

He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, which was a lie, right? He was not the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He refused that.

Choosing, say, refusing to choose, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin. That's all hypocrisy has to offer.

It's the passing pleasures of sin. Esteeming or valuing the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt before he moved to the Lord.

[38 : 20] He didn't refuse him to choose it. He chose Christ. And that's the sure fix for hypocrisy.

Because when your soul desires, it's Christ. Then there is suddenly no need to put up the front so that people think the highway of your spirituality.

You need to do that. You need to lie. You need to hide it. Like we said last week, the inside face and the outside face. There's no reason to hide it.

There's suddenly no desire to please man and man only, including yourself. No need for that. You care only about pleasing God.

you care only about what God is and others. About who you really are in the inner heart.

[39 : 24] Is that what you care about? Thank you.