21st Century Pharisees

Jesse LaRue · Matthew 21:28–32

INTRODUCTION

- To be hypocritical. To say one thing and to do another. To basically be an actor, to put on a front, a face, a facade.
- It's easy to pronounce a harsh judgment on others because they don't. And that makes us feel better about ourselves, doesn't it? So here's my question this morning. Can we sometimes be 21st century Pharisees?

1 The Parable of the Two Sons

Matthew 21:28–32

- A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, Son, go and work in the vineyard today. And he answered, I will not. But after he changed his mind and he went.
- And the father went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, I go, sir. But did not go.
- Truly I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you.

2 The Fig Tree: Leaves but No Fruit

Matthew 21:18–22; Hosea 9:10; Joel 1:7

- Seeing a fig tree by the wayside, he went to it and found nothing on it but only leaves.
- They had all the trappings of spirituality. Again, they looked good on the outside. They had leaves, but no substance.
- Israel may have had the leaves of activity, but not the fruit of repentance and obedience to God.

3 Not About Our Words, but Our Actions and Hearts

John 14:15; John 14:21; John 14:24

- It is not about our words. It is not even necessarily about our beliefs, but it is about our actions.
- It is not even just about our actions, but also about our hearts behind the actions.
- What motivates us to do what we do? Is it fear or love? Pride or humility. Service or selfishness.
- We cannot claim to be doing the will of God, make it look so to others, and then not fully do it.

4 Three Problems the Pharisees Had

Matthew 23:1–12; Matthew 23:13–28

- The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat. So practice and observe whatever they tell you, but not what they do. For they preach, but do not practice.
- The first problem, verses three and four is that they say things and do not do them.
- The second problem is that they do their deeds to be noticed by men, verses five through ten.

- And the third problem is that they did not realize that greatness was found in serving.
- They only cared about appearances. They did not care about the heart.

5 Are We in Danger of Succumbing to These Same Woes?

Matthew 23:27–28; Hebrews 6:6

- Do we tell others what to do? And then not do them ourselves.
- Are we keeping others out of the kingdom by telling or implying to them that they will never be good enough?
- Are we binding that which God has not bound?
- Just because that's the way we've always done it, doesn't mean it's the only way.
- Yes. The observances are important. But the reason behind it is equally as important.

6 If I Do Not Have Love

1 Corinthians 13:1–3

- And if I have prophetic powers and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.
- If I give away all I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.
- All that we do must be done out of love for God and for others.

THE CHALLENGE

So what are you doing this morning? Don't be a Pharisee. Be a disciple, a follower of Christ. Do his will.

MY NOTES