

Beware the Leaven of Pharisees

By Henry Mahan

Bible Text: Luke 12:1-2

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Now let me read the text over in Luke chapter 12 and then I am going to go back to Matthew 23. But I want you to see this, the seriousness of the subject.

Our Lord uses the word “beware.” He said in Matthew, “Beware, beware of false prophets, avoid them, false prophets, dangerous men. Beware of them.”

And then, here in Luke 12, “In the meantime,” verse one, “when there were gathered together innumerable multitude of people insomuch that they trode one upon another,” there are just lots of them out there gathered around to hear him. “He began to say to his disciples...”

Before he addressed the crowd he looked at his inner circle. He looked at his 12 disciples of his immediate followers, first of all and said to them, “Beware. Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees.” And that leaven of the Pharisees is hypocrisy. “There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed. Things are going to be seen as they really are. And nothing hid that shall not be known.”

Now back to Matthew 23. As I read this 23rd chapter of Matthew a few moments ago you notice the cutting, the cutting words of Christ. He kept saying, “Hypocrites, hypocrites.” He talked about a generation of vipers, of snakes. How shall we escape the damnation of hell? Severe, cutting, critical words.

Now when our Lord spoke to sinners, publicans and sinners, he didn’t use words like that. When our Lord spoke to the publicans and sinners as far as I can judge his words were always of the tenderest nature. He said, “I am come not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” He said, “The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” He said to the woman that they found in adultery and brought to him to be stoned or judged, he said, “Neither do I condemn thee. Go and sin no more.”

Mr. Spurgeon was invited to preach before the House of Commons, the highest ranking men in the British government, I guess, the House of Commons, the parliament or something. And he brought a message, a severe cutting message on the evils of religion without Christ. Oh, he just up one side and down the other. And when he finished he said one of the men came to him, one of these lords in parliament and said to him, “Mr. Spurgeon,

I am not denying the truthfulness of your message,” but he said, “that message would have been more suited for Newgate prison than her majesty’s parliament.”

Mr. Spurgeon was never to be bettered or out done. And he looked at him and said, “My friend, that was the message for you men. If I had been preaching at her majesty’s prison in Newgate I would have preached on behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.”

So when the master spoke to sinners his words were always gentle, tender and kind. But when he spoke to religious Pharisees and leaders of religion whom he knew to be hypocrites, his words were words of condemnation and stinging rebuke, stinging rebuke.

Here in Matthew 23 he kept saying, “Woe unto you, woe unto you, woe unto you.” And then he said in verse 33, “Ye serpents, a whole generation of serpents, vipers.”

One preacher I heard said the word there—and I don’t know this is true—he said the word there was female snakes, capable of reproducing their own kind.

How shall you escape the damnation of hell?

Now, he said this and then he turned to his disciples in another passage and said, “Beware of this condition. Beware of this state, this condition. Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees.”

Now I am sure that every one here...this is the way I speak for myself and you always remember. I am not preaching down to you. I watch some of these preachers sometime and they give me the impression that they have got this thing whipped. They give me the impression that they are...that they got it all settled and signed and delivered and they are talking to you now, you. But I am not talking to you. I am talking to us tonight. And every time I try to preach if it doesn’t bless me it won’t bless you. If it doesn’t help me it won’t help you. If it doesn’t fit in me it won’t fit you. And I know that and I am sure that—and I say this from experience—everyone of us occasionally, some more or less, stand in doubt of ourselves, don’t we? Don’t you stand occasionally in doubt of yourself? And don’t you question occasionally your interest in Christ?

I know some of you have been at...you have been at death’s door some of you. Charlie, you have been there. Hef, you have been there. Cecil, you had a heart attack recently. Different ones, you have been faced with...this...this may be winding her up, you know. I may be going to meet God.

Now that has got to be a sobering time. That has got to be a time of I am rejoicing in Christ, I rest in Christ, but have I missed Christ? Now that’s got to be...there has got to be that examination, that going over this thing.

And Spurgeon said one time, “He who never doubted his state, he may perhaps, too late.”

I would rather be like Newton when he said, "Tis a point I long to know and oft it gives me anxious thought. Do I love the Lord or no? Am I his or am I not? Lord, decide this doubtful case. Give me some confidence and assurance in Christ. If I have never loved you before, let me begin today."

I don't give a hoot about a profession I made so many years ago. I am tired of people telling me when they got saved. I wish they would just quit saying that, "When I got saved."

I am interested in whom and not when. I am interested in whom, him, Christ, Christ, resting in him. Salvation is a person. It is not a profession. And I worry sometimes if we are not defending an old experience that is mighty old and it stayed old and it is moth eaten and rust covered and dust covered, an old profession. It is just not worth anything.

Is Christ my hope now? Is he my Lord now? Am I resting in him now? If I have a living union with Christ now it doesn't matter. I run into people all the time that keep wanting to defend that thing.

"Well, preacher, you're...I heard you come along preaching grace, but now I was saved before I heard the gospel of grace."

Were you now?

Well, what have you done when you proved that? I don't believe you can be saved without knowing the gospel of grace anyhow. And so you just go on saying what you want to. But why defend it? This is what I am saying. Why defend, why defend a profession? Why defend a decision? Why go back and try to prove something is real when it doesn't matter? It doesn't matter at all.

But one thing I know as I read this Scripture, there is one thing of which I am sure: The true believer, he needs to examine himself. Didn't our Lord say, "Examine yourselves whether you be in the faith?"

Give diligence to make your calling and election sure. If you do these things you will never fail. Do it now. Do it tonight. Do it tomorrow. Keep looking to Christ. Keep calling on Christ. Keep seeking the Lord. Every time you come to the table examine yourself. Examine yourself.

But I do know this. I do know this. The true believer, the true Christian is not a hypocrite. Now he is just not a hypocrite. He is not a hypocrite. He is a whole lot of things, but he is not a hypocrite. He fails in a lot of places, but he is not a hypocrite.

And I am going to give you these seven, eight or nine marks of hypocrisy. Our Lord right here when he said to his disciples, "Now, you beware of this leaven of the Pharisees." It is a leaven that leaveneth and it spreads. It is a deadly spreading disease. And beware of

it. And I am just going to work this over and as I do let's just search our own hearts and look into our own consciences.

And he says in verse two of Matthew 23, here is the first thing that our Lord mentions about Pharisaism. This is phony religion. It is not genuine. He says in verse two, "The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat." In other words, they have a profession. They are religious men. They are professing religionists. They are church men. They are even leaders, men in authority, men in leadership, men who are well thought of and men of renowned. They handle the things of the synagogue.

And he said, "What they bid you observe, observe." In other words, they were men who talked about the sabbath and the tithe and all these things were in...they were in...required in that time that they do these, you do them. But he said, "Do not be like them for," here is the first mark, "they say, they say, but they don't do?"

Now what is he saying here? He is saying this. Woe unto the man whose religion is only talk. It is an outward show.

I was preaching somewhere not so awful long ago and a preacher's son whom you do not know, a visitor was there, his father is a preacher he said. And he made this statement to the man sitting next to him when I got through preaching. I preached along this line, something along the genuineness of true faith, the genuineness of a real union with Christ. If any man is in Christ he is a new creature in attitude, in Spirit.

Now what we are talking about here when our Lord said these religious Pharisees they say and do not." He doesn't mean they didn't go to church. They went to church. He doesn't mean that they didn't tithe. They tithed. He doesn't mean that they didn't fast. They did fast. He doesn't mean they didn't pray. They did pray. They made pretense of long prayers. They prayed more than we pray outwardly.

He didn't mean that they didn't do these works of religion. They did those. But what our Lord is saying here is that they say, but they do not. Their attitude and spirit is where he is talking about them. That is where it is. That is where it is.

Look down here in verse 23. "Woe to you scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites. You pay tithe of mint, herbs, dill, plants, cumin. You have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith," the inward attitudes, the inward spirit. See what I am saying?

A man may be the first one at church every Sunday. He may carry a Bible bigger than anybody else. He may precisely give his tithe every Sunday. He may read. He may lead in prayer. He may teach a Sunday school class. He maybe doing all of these...saying all of these religious things. But the people that know him and the people with whom he has dealings are those he lives with and works with and they see a totally different person. They see a man who is not gentle and gracious, but harsh. We talk about believing in the grace of God. Let's live the grace of God. Let's show the grace of God. Let's show the grace of God.

We say that God is love and we say that we love Jesus. Oh, how I love Jesus. But we don't act like we love Jesus and his people. That is what I am talking about. We talked about the sovereignty of God. Let's live like we believe it. This is what I am saying. It is not just an outward show. They say and do not. Oh, they do a lot of things. But it is that spirit...

And this young man turned to the person next to him and he said, "That preacher rang my father's bell tonight. That preacher rang my father's bell tonight." He said, "My father is a very religious man and a doctrinal man, a Calvinist and my Father is a man who reads the Bible and has his devotions and my Father is a stickler for righteous living and all of these different things, but he is mighty hard to live with. And my mother is at the point of just about giving it up and throwing it in because he is so mean.

There is something wrong with that. You see, that his hypocrisy, a total hypocrisy. You see, one time Doris and I went down to the hospital to visit a preacher. This is a man who is one of the strongest preachers of sovereign grace that you have ever heard. He has preached right here in this pulpit and he could lay out sovereignty for an hour and a half. God is on the throne. Every little detail, every little feather that falls from the wings of the sparrow and lights on the ground is directed in its flight by the hand of God. Fear not, little ones, everything God does is for your good.

This fellow had a heart attack. We went down to see him. And by the time we walked in that room to the time we left we were depressed. He never smiled a time. He never rejoiced a time. He never said anything about God's will or purpose or sovereignty one time. He did nothing but complain and gripe and find fault and wonder if he was going to live or die and question God's judgment. It was like a mausoleum in there. Isn't that right? And we went out of there looking at one another and saying, "Where is God? Where is God?"

That is what I'm...they say. They use words like sovereignty and grace and love and mercy and all these things. Bu they don't do it. They don't do it. That's what he is saying here. They say and they do not. They do not. It is attitude and spirit.

You see, as a man thinketh in his heart so is he. That's what he is. Conviction is a heart work. Repentance is a heart work. Faith is a heart work. Love is a heart work. Knowledge of Christ is a heart work. And I'll tell you this. That is the place to begin.

Make me like Christ. Lord, make me like Christ. Don't let me by my spirit and attitude and my conversation deny the very thing I preach.

One time a fellow came in to, I believe, William Jay, John Newton and William Jay. They used to talk a lot together and John Newton said, "Do you believe that Mr. So and so is a saved man?"

And to which Newton replied, "I don't know. I have never lived with him."

That's a good answer. "I don't know whether he is saved or not. I have never lived with him."

"Well, you have been to church with him."

Well, that don't help me much. They say and do not.

What is the second thing? Look at verse five. And this is a heart searching. Watch verse five. "In all their works they do for to be seen of men." Now the religious fellow, the religious Pharisee, he doesn't care a whole lot for secret prayer. He cares a whole lot for public prayer and he makes much of public prayer. And he is willing to publicly pray, but the Pharisee doesn't care a whole lot for secret prayer. And he is very gung ho about public works. He likes to do things so everybody can see it. You can...you just...you can count on him. If you want something done where everybody can see it or if you want a gift given where everybody will know that he gave it, he is ready. But secret prayer and secret works and secret giving, he doesn't care a whole lot about that.

Turn to Mathew chapter six and let me tell you what I am talking about. The master is speaking here. And this is one thing that...one of the things for which I am grateful here is that the things that people give and the things that people do and the contributions that people make and the help that people are here in the kingdom of God that nobody knows about, nobody knows about. They...

You see, that's genuine grace when you do it for the glory of God only and you know that God sees it and God blesses and you do it for his glory and not to be seen of men.

Now listen to Matthew six. This is hypocrisy right here. Matthew 6:1, "Take heed that you do not your alms or your righteousness or your works before men to be seen of them. Otherwise you have no reward of your Father which is in heaven."

You wonder why that we don't put in the bulletin when somebody gives a special gift or why we don't list the names of those who give to the missionary or another. That is to be seen of men. That's...and every one of us are human, now. Every one of us is a human. And there is that little thing within us that says, "Well, if I do something I want somebody to know about it, you know. I want...every once in a while I could use a pat on the back." Well, I know we can and we need to do that. We need to thank one another. But let's don't do it for that purpose.

Read on. "Otherwise," he said, "You have no reward of your Father which is in heaven." God is not going to bless that kind of praying, that kind of giving, that kind of work that you do to be seen of men and to receive credit for men. "Therefore when you do your works don't sound a trumpet before you. Don't announce what you are going to do or what you have done or what you intend to do. Hypocrites do that in the synagogues and in the streets that they may have glory of men. That is what they are seeking. I'll say unto you they have their reward. When men praise them, when men thank them, when men

brag on them, that's their reward. That's what they did it for and that's what their reward is. But when you do alms or works or give or...do it secretly. Don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing that your alms may be in secret and your Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward you openly."

"Well, brother Mahan, it just...I just tell you we need...we need encouragement. We need someone to see us and someone to say thank you and someone to encourage us in our good works."

God sees us. God sees us. And our encouragement is his encouragement and our blessing is his blessing.

All right. Go back to the text in Matthew 23. I have got to move along. Let me show you the third thing here. But that's...that's this leaven of the Pharisees, to be seen of men. I see churches with names on the windows and names on the pews and names on the pulpit. Somebody did all of this, but there is no name up here. Somebody built this building and paid for it, but there is no names on it. See what I am saying? Somebody supports this, all of this work here, but there are no...there is no names, there is no credit given. That's not why we do it. That's Pharisee...

Look at verse six. "These Pharisees, these hypocrites love the upper most rooms at the feast. Thy love the chief seats." He said, "They like greeting sin the market place and they like to be called rabbi."

And, you know, the disciples weren't...they weren't totally free of this. Turn...hold that place and turn to Mark 10. Listen to this. Here's the disciples themselves, the Lord's inner circle. Listen to Matthew 10 or Mark 10, Mark 10. "And James and John the sons of Zebedee came unto the master and said unto him, 'Master, we would that you should do for us whatsoever we shall desire.' And he said to them, 'Well, what would you that I should do for you?'"

And what do you suppose these men are going to ask? "Lord, give me wisdom that I may be of greater use in the kingdom of God?" "Lord, give me an open door to preach your gospel?" "Lord, enable me to be of help to somebody?"

No, sir. Listen to them. "Grant, Lord," verse 37 of Mark. They said unto him, "Grant that we may sit one on your right hand and one on your left when you come in your glory."

And our Lord said, "You know not what you ask."

Look down here a little further at verse 43. "So shall it not be among you. Whosoever will be great among you shall be your minister. And whosoever of you be the chiefest let him be the servant. For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, to give his life a ransom for many."

I know there are a lot of...there are some of my friends who are...who are getting doctor's degrees. They have got on their bulletin now doctor so and so.

And you say, "Well, you don't have a doctor's degree."

I was offered one one time, an honorary. But that is lie the curl on the pig's tail. It don't add anything to the pig. And I'll be honest to you. I think it is detrimental. I think it is a phony air and I am being critical now, but I think it is a phony air. I think it is just what my Lord said right here. "Do not be called master." If you think that adds anything to you or contributes anything to you you have got another think coming. There's a whole lot of Pharisaism in that, being called reverend and doctor and master is in...and desiring the upper most rooms and the chief seats.

And I know that they tell me...they tell me this. They say, "Well, these credentials will open doors for you."

Whose doors? Whose doors? Since when did my God ever need a man to open a door for him? Since when did our God ever need credentials that men recognize to open a door for him to get the gospel in his [?]? I don't have those credentials and, by God's grace, don't intend to ever use them. But I am sure not liken for opening doors. That's right. God will open doors. If we will preach Christ, the gospel, God will open a door. I say that to every one here who has any aspirations to teach or preach.

You don't need...you don't need a title. You don't need credentials. You need Christ. You need the Spirit of God. That's all we need. That's all we need. But the door that God opened for John Bunyan was a prison door. And that's where they put him. And that's where God wanted him. And that's where he served the Lord. He wouldn't bow to these things.

I'll show you another mark of Pharisaism, verse 13. "Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites, you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men. You shut up the kingdom of heaven. You won't go in yourselves and you won't suffer them that are entering to go in."

I was out in California preaching and there was a young man. His name is...I forget his name. But he came to hear me preaching. He came three or four nights. And he told me the third night, he said, "I have been disciplined by my church for coming to hear you preach." He said, "The pastor told the people they could talk with me only about the Bible, but about nothing or no other subject, me or my family. Because I came to hear you he forbade me to come hear you preach."

And he is supposed to be a reformed preacher, too.

And then I got a letter from a few weeks ago and he said they have been excommunicated because they wouldn't repent for coming to that meeting.

You know...and I was in North Carolina recently and in a meeting and a young man told me, a young man in his...about 19 or 20 who comes there to the church where I was preaching. He said his mother and father are Baptists, they are southern Baptists. They are strong Baptists. And he is in college now, his first or second year and his father told him if he went down to that church where he is attending where they preach grace, he said, "I will not pay your college tuition."

That's pressure, isn't it? And he told his daddy. He said, "Thank you. I'll pay my own tuition, but I am going to hear the gospel."

What kind of...this hypocrisy and Pharisaism, now listen to me. This is Pharisaism that will use pressures and manipulation and leverage to keep people away from hearing what they want to hear. That is Pharisaism.

Paul Ruby. Some of you remember Paul Ruby? Moved to Ashland. Paul Ruby and his wife and two children moved to Ashland when I was pastor at Pollard. It is a true story, moved to Ashland when I was pastor at Pollard in 1952. I was preaching the gospel of God's grace and Paul Ruby worked down here in an office in town. He was a deacon in the church at Independence, Kentucky. His wife was a piano player. And so they transferred up here. And he came into the office the first day he was there and he asked one of the men in the office, a Baptist leader in this town, he said to, "Recommend a church to me."

And this man said...this is what he said. "There are seven Baptist churches in this town," he said. "Go to any of them, but Pollard Baptist. Don't go there."

Well, Paul went home and told his wife, he said, "There is a fellow down there that told me to go to any church in this town, but don't go right there and hear that man at Pollard." He said, "Let's go out there and see what he is saying."

This is a true story. You remember. They came. They came. And God saved both of them. God saved both of them. They lived right on here on Blackburn Avenue. And they came over here with us when we moved over here and they were transferred again and I haven't heard from them in a long, long time. But they live in another part of the state now.

But this is what this verse is saying. These Pharisees, these hypocrites, they won't enter the kingdom of God themselves by the grace of God and they don't want you to. And they are going to exert...parents will exert pressure on children. Yes, they will. Parents will...I tell you this. A person who really knows the gospel, believes the grace of God. He won't tell you where to go. No, he won't put any pressure on you. No, he won't. He will not. He will... He said, "If you are one of God's own, he will bring you. He will bring you." He is afraid for you.

I am not afraid for any of you. Go anywhere you want next week for church. You are welcome to go. But I do know this. If you have got a thirst, you will go where water is. If

you have got a hunger, you will go where food is. If you have got a need for Christ, you will go where Christ is preached. But these Pharisees can't stand it. And they are going to close the way. They are going to put every barrier in your way they can to keep you from hearing the truth of God's Word. That's what they'll do. They will put every barrier, every barrier.

All right. Let's watch the fifth one now, verse 15. "Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees. You are hypocrites." Here is another mark of the hypocrite. "You compass sea and land to make one proselyte."

What is a proselyte? A guy that left one religion and came to another. That's what a proselyte is. You proselyte somebody to your group. He says what you are doing. These Pharisees they wanted numbers. They wanted additions. They wanted a crowd. They wanted...they wanted prosperity. They wanted success. They wanted all these things and they went out and they just brought people in. They used every means and method they knew to get people to join their crowd and join their group.

Now then let me explain to you our position and then I'll go back to this other. We must and we will preach the gospel to every creature. That's what I did this morning. That's what I am doing tonight. That's what I do on television. That is what I do by tape. That is what I do wherever. I preach the gospel. I preach the gospel of Christ. I preach the gospel to anybody who will sit and listen to this gospel of God's grace, the gospel of divine visitation, the gospel of a perfect righteousness, the gospel of a sufficient atonement, the gospel of a risen Lord, the gospel of an interceding great high priest, the gospel of a coming king, the gospel of justification by faith. I preach it. But this I know. Only God can open this heart and reveal that gospel to the heart. Now I know that. Only God can bring a man to repentance. Only God can bring a man to faith. Only God can bring a person to love Christ, to look to Christ, to believe Christ, to trust God. Christ...only God can do that. I can't do it.

And therefore when I preach to people I leave them alone. I leave them in the hands of God. And that's not indifference. I believe that is real care and concern. The fellow that comes to you with his Bible and says...and tries to talk you into a profession of faith, that is not care and concern. That's covetousness. He wants your dollar. He wants your name. He wants your name. He wants your address. He wants you on the roll. He wants to report you as a statistic.

But the man who loves God and loves the word and loves the gospel and loves you, he will tell you what you are by nature. He will tell you who God is by grace and what Christ did on that cross. And he will leave it up to God to reveal it to your heart. But not these fellows.

He said, "They compass sea and land. Everywhere they can get a name or an address." Let somebody get sick in the hospital and all the preachers descend on him. Let somebody have a death in the family. All the preachers descend on him. Let somebody shed a tear and somebody runs to him to talk him into a profession.

I'll tell you this. The apostle Paul said, "My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved. That's where I'm...I'm not going to talk to you. I'm going to talk to him for you. I'm going to talk to you about him and then to him about you and pray that he will bring you to know him through the preaching of the Word."

Now, he will.

All right, look at...look at number six, verse 24. This is the mark of hypocrisy. He said, "You blind guides..." Here is another mark of hypocrisy. "You strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. You strain at a gnat and swallow a camel."

A friend of mine told me that he was...we were in college down in Tennessee down in Chattanooga. It has been a long time ago. And we had a fellow that was in school with us. He was a preacher. I was pastor of a little church out in the country and he was sort of the evangelist. And a friend of mine went out with him one Sunday to preach. They were going down somewhere in South Alabama to preach or somewhere down there. And they left early and they stopped to get something to eat.

And this preacher is about as wide as he was tall. His name was Dofus. And Dofus sat down and he ordered one plate of chicken, whole chicken and he ate that. And he said, "We got time for me to have another one." They ordered him another one and he was in the midst of devouring that and my friend looked at him and said, "Dofus," said, "What are you preaching on this morning?"

He said, "I am going to preach against smoking."

I had another preacher friend that was strong on tithing. That was his...that was his forte or whatever you call it, something. But that was really his thing. He was always preaching on people robbing God, robbing God. Will a man rob God? Matthew three. He just preached on that one. Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed me in tithes and offerings.

I went down to a doctor's office, an appointment one day and the doctor was talking to me and he said, "Do you know this particular pastor?"

And I said, "Yes, sir. He is a good friend of mine."

He said, "Well, I wish you would sometimes tell him that he owes me quite a number of bills that I have been trying to get him to pay for over a year."

I said, "You are kidding me."

He said, "No." He said, "He just won't pay his bills."

Now wait a minute. They're here. You said, "You blind guides. You strain at a gnat. You have got all these things that you are so particular on and you are so precise on and you are swallowing a whole camel." Do you see what I am saying?

These fellows crucified the Son of God and then they wanted to get him off the cross so he wouldn't defile their sabbath day. These fellows saw a man whom the Lord had healed carrying his bed and was carrying it on the sabbath day and they said...they ignored the miracle. They ignored the glory. They ignored the...what God had done. They said, "Why are you carrying your bed on the sabbath day?"

And I know some Baptists who are so particular on women wearing hats and people being baptized the right way and people doing this, that and the other the right way and they are very careless about a lot of the important things having to do with our relationship to God. And that's what our Lord said. That's Pharisaism. That's hypocrisy. Beware of that. Beware of that.

All right. Watch the next one here. This goes along the same line in verse 25. And lest I weary you, I'll move along. Verse 25. Our Lord said, "Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You make clean the outside of the cup and within you are full of extortion and excess."

I remember a story that Ronnie Trabat told here I thought was so good. I was out of town. He preached for me one time. I listened to the tape. And he told about in 1803 we...our nation purchased what is called the Louisiana Purchase, the land between the Mississippi River and the Rockies. President Thomas Jefferson was the president. I get an A on that, don't I? I remembered. I got it written down here. But he sent two men, Lewis and Clarke, out to explore this new part of the country that they had purchased. And they went and one of them had a black servant, Lewis or Clarke, one. You didn't even know which one he belonged to.

But Lewis and Clarke, one of them had a black servant. His name was York. And he was a devoted servant and this man loved him and he loved his master. But he took him out there into the West to explore the Louisiana Purchase and they got up one morning and York was missing. And they began to look for him. They were worried, tremendously worried about this old black servant named York. And they went out hunting him.

One man said, "Well, he has run away."

And he said, "No, he wouldn't run away. He just wouldn't run away."

And so he said, "Something has happened to him."

So they were looking and they started up a hill and they heard the awfulest yelling on the other side of that hill, the awfulest screaming and yelling and carrying on you have ever heard. And they rushed up the hill and they looked down. And these Indians had captured York. They had never seen a black man, never, never, never seen a man with coal, coal

black skin, never. And they had old York naked out in the middle of the creek with sandstone trying to get that black off of him. And they were going after it good. And he was screaming bloody murder.

That's what the Pharisees do. They try to clean up the outside.

York was a black man from in here. His blackness out here was because of what he was by nature. That's where he was black. He was black by nature. If he was a white man by nature his skin would be white. But since he was a black man by nature and you could take to peel it off, it would come back black because that is what he was in...by nature.

And that is what our Lord is saying here. Get a new heart. Get a new heart and these other things will be taken care of. And we could...I could stand up here and tell you what movies you can go to and what ball games you can go to and what restaurants you can eat out and how late to stay up and what television programs you can watch and what kind of card games you can play or...as opposed to other card games. You can play Old Maids, but you can't play Bridge and you can play Rook, but you can't play Poker.

You can play Poker if you want to. I don't care. I'm not interested in what you are playing. I'm interested in what you are thinking, what you are, what your spirit is, what your attitude is, what you think of Christ, what you think of his Word, what you think of...

And if that thinking gets straightened out, I guarantee you, your life will straighten out. I just promise you because I have discovered it and experienced it. It will straighten out your dealings. That's just all there is to it. It will straighten out your dealings. Yes, it will.

All right. Here is the last one. And this is down here in verse 29. He said, "You build the tombs of the prophets and you garnish the sepulchres of the righteous."

This is a pattern. It goes back through history. We have a tendency to brag on the dead and crucify the living. Did you know that?

Strangest thing, the longer a man has been dead, the greater he is. And this is especially true of preachers. I run into people every once in a while—now this is true—I run into people who actually sit at home on the Lord's Day and listen to brother Barnard's tape. They love Barnard, but they don't love the men who are preaching what he preached.

I found out many of them, Paul, didn't even know Barnard. Didn't even know him. Some of them were Barnard's [?]. I have known men, people, who stay home and listen to Shelton on the radio, but wouldn't support the local pastor who preaches the message of grace. Shelton is dead.

Now this is what he is saying and this is what I am telling you. Abraham...they bragged on Abraham and hated Moses. And then when Moses is dead they bragged on Moses and hated Christ. And then they bragged on Christ and hated the apostles. And then they

bragged on the apostles and hated men like Bunyan and Spurgeon and Whitefield and Knox and Luther. And now today they are bragging on those old Reformers and they hate the men who are preaching what they preached. That's the mark of a Pharisee, a man who lives in the past and brags on dead preachers and will not support the ministry of men who preach the gospel now.

That is exactly what they said. They say, "Well, we lived back there and we wouldn't have... Boy, I would have stood up for Bunyan."

Yeah.

"Man, Spurgeon could have counted on me."

Then let...brother Shepherd down there count on you, brother David, brother Paul, brother Bob, brother John, brother Charlie, huh? That's right.

One closing remark on this thing. You know, Hagar, when she found out that she had conceived by Abraham she despised her mistress. Her mistress was despised in her eyes. And he ran away from home. And while she was out there the angel of the Lord appeared to her and she made a statement. She said, "Thou God seest me. Thou God seest me. You see me. God sees me. He sees everything about me, what I believe, what I think, what I imagine."

While I am preaching this sermon, God knows my mind. My gift. This morning my...why I said what I said to you. God sees me. He is sovereign, searching, all knowing.... I have...God sees me. He sees me.

Do you believe that?

The only way a man can continue to play the hypocrite is to forget that, that God sees me. That's the only way a man can keep playing the hypocrite. He can't play the hypocrite and face the fact that God sees him.

"Well, so and so doesn't know..."

God knows it. God knows it. And while we may deceive men and even deceive ourselves, God we cannot deceive. We may die with the name of Christ on our lips and men may bury us in the hope of eternal life, but God is not deceived, just not deceived. And that's...he is where it is, not what anybody thinks.

And that's the reason in our...in our giving, in our works, in our alms in our prayers, in whatever let it be unto the Lord. It doesn't matter what men think.

All right. I hope that is helpful. Beware of the leaven of the Pharisee.