

Those Pesky Pharisees Again!

Notes for 18 Jun 2022

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Background

Subject	Matt	Mark	Luke	John
Those Pesky Pharisees Again!			11:37-12:12	

It's purity again folks!!!!

External purity, because that's what folks see. After all, if we get the externals right, what a marvellous testimony to others, that we are assiduously following what the Lord commands, therefore representing Him. After all, by keeping these commands, by definition, we may not be sinless, but we must be pretty close. If not the Gold Certificate, we at least have the Silver.

These Pharisees had their list of fundamentals and their reasons for following them. After all, they had their experts in the law. (Michael Gove would have a field day).

In Matthew 5, Christ was rigorous with the law, yet, in our studies, it is hard to find an example where he pressed home a charge of technical breach of the law. Instead, he pushed us to be forgiving to the sinner, generous to the poor, and compassionate to the mentally and physically troubled. He constantly draws my attention to the ultimate, strategic goal; to love God with all my heart and my neighbour as myself.

[Luke 11:37-44](#)

Why did they crave religious status in their society through externals?

Isn't this status thing equally a problem in our current secular society?

[Luke 11:45-52](#)

The lawyers are at it again! Our current crop of lawyers in the UK have made life almost unbearable with their avalanche of health and safety regulations. Sensing the legal/religious climate of 2000 years ago, it was ever thus.

What's the problem with burdening people with so much legal guidance in religious matters? Surely it was done with the best of intentions? Or was it to flaunt their power?

[Luke 12:1-3](#)

Meanwhile, when the crowd gathered by the thousands, so that they trampled one another... What inference can you draw from this scenario? "Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees, that is, their hypocrisy"

"Sincerity makes the very least person to be of more value than the most talented hypocrite"

Charles Spurgeon

[Luke 12:4-7](#)

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, when sentenced to hang after his alleged plot in the attempted assassination of Hitler in July 1944, so impressed his jailers that they were prepared to help him escape. He refused. Why?

Is the bit about the sparrows and the counting of the hairs on your head hyperbole?

[Luke 12:8-12](#)

The unforgivable sin again. It appears he was aiming this comment at a number of the Pharisees. Please explain!

At times, in 21st century Britain, I have attempted to portray to people that the Christianity in which I believe is valid, relevant, and has at its heart a God of grace, love and forgiveness. Frequently, I appear to fall at the first or second hurdle. Is this because of a combination of cognitive deficiency and lack of faith?

What does it mean that "the Holy Spirit will teach you at that very hour what you ought to say"? Can Virtual Vestry contributors give examples of where this has occurred in their past experience?