

Hypocrites in the Bible

by Bill McLeod

The sermon emphasizes the importance of being fully committed to Jesus Christ, either being hot or cold, and not being lukewarm, which is a state of being neither fully committed nor fully distant.

Duration: 17:26

Scripture: Matthew 2:16, Matthew 7:21-23, Matthew 10:33, Mark 5:28, John 7:46, John 12:42-43, Acts 2:22

Topics: "Hypocrites"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a personal experience of being invited to call on a couple living together without being married. Despite the man's bad reputation, the preacher manages to have a conversation with him and leads both him and his wife to Christ. The preacher emphasizes the importance of not making light of the things of God and not rejecting Jesus' rule over our lives. He also highlights the need for training and understanding in living a Christian life, using examples from the Bible such as King Herod and the lukewarm church in Revelation.

Transcript

Good to be here. Did you come praying, or did you come to have a good sleep? You know, George Whitefield said, if he ever saw anybody sleeping in his meetings, he would roar and clap his hands so loud it would shake the building, and he'd tell the people, I didn't come here to hear you snore. I came here to preach the gospel.

Well, I'm here for the same reason. Good to be here again. Thank you for praying.

There are, as you know in the Bible, numerous cases of people who heard the gospel and said no to Jesus. At the same time, there are numerous places in the Bible where people said yes to Jesus, and God has led me to bring this kind of message today, beginning with Herod. King Herod, when he heard the three wise men, he should have been happy, he should have been rejoicing.

He wasn't. He was very sad. And the moment he heard that Messiah had been born, he started laying a plan to murder him.

Very hard, tough, sinful man. A king, but not worthy of a crown. Then Pilate is another one.

He did try three times to get the Jews to change their opinion about Jesus. He could have saved him, but when he saw that a tumult was made, the Jews were getting very angry. They wanted to crucify him, and

he saw if he didn't go along with the flow, he'd have some kind of a riot.

And the last thing he wanted was a riot, because then his leadership might be questioned by Roman authorities above him. So he finally came in. His wife said, she sent him a message, I had a dream, and it was about this man Jesus.

And so she begged her husband not to have anything to do with him. Well, he had to do something, and finally he let him go to the cross. The Pharisees and the Sadducees, they were two religious groups among the Jews in those days.

The Pharisees believed too much, and the Sadducees believed too little. The Sadducees didn't believe there was any kind of a resurrection. They didn't believe there was any life after death.

On the other hand, the Pharisees believed there was not only resurrection and life after death, but they believed that angels would be resurrected too. Well, there's no hint anywhere in the Bible about angels dying and requiring a resurrection. So both groups were wrong, and both groups were in power, and both groups did not want any Messiah coming and displacing them.

So somebody said they always had a bunch of little Pharisee Sadducee dogs barking at Jesus' heels, trying to stop him, trying to catch something he might say that they could misinterpret and get him in trouble. They were there all the time. Then we have people who possessed, who professed, but did not possess.

Christ said, many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, haven't we prophesied in your name, and in your name cast out demons, and in your name done many wonderful works? And he said to them, well, I never knew you. I don't know what you're talking about. And there are people who profess salvation who don't possess it.

They don't have it. They've missed it, maybe through faulty teaching, but for some reason or other, they didn't get it straight. And there's numerous places in the Scriptures where Christ warns some, I just don't know you people.

Who are you? Then it says in John chapter 12 that among the chief rulers of the Jews, listen carefully, many believed on him, but they did not confess him, lest it should be put out of the synagogue, for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. The religious leaders of the Jews at that time had agreed among themselves that if anybody confessed that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, he would be automatically kicked out of the synagogue. Now these chief rulers, there's all the evidence in the world that Jesus was Messiah, for example, it says in Acts chapter 2, that Christ was approved of God by the miracles and wonders and signs which he did.

How could they deny it? How could they miss it? Raising the dead, healing the sick, every kind of disease was healed by Christ. Sick people are only to touch his garment and they were healed. So thousands of people had experienced healing.

They heard him preach and they said of his preaching, never man spoke like this man. And they couldn't figure it out because he hadn't been to the schools of his day. He got his doctrine from God his Father.

They didn't understand that. And so the chief rulers persuaded intellectually, but not willing to go the whole way. So we can do the same.

We can make the same mistake, believe the Bible is true. You know, Churchill in England, the great political leader, he believed the Bible was inspired of God. But there's no evidence it was ever converted.

Billy Graham spent, I think, an hour with him by his request one day, but Billy never felt he should share with other people what they had talked about. The only thing was this, the first question that Churchill asked him was this, is there any reality in religion, Mr. Graham? So he didn't know where he stood, even though he believed the Bible was the Word of God. In Matthew 22, we read of some other people when they heard, they made light of it.

There are millions of people doing the same thing today. They make light of it. These are the more important things, getting an education, getting a good job, finding someone to marry.

Many other things can intrude here. So they made light of it, it says, and they went their way, not God's way. Don't ever make that mistake, making light of the things of God.

Luke 19, some people sent a message, and the message was, we will not have this man to rule over us. We don't want him. Get rid of him.

We don't want him. They wanted to go their own way, do as they had been doing, live as they had been living, so we don't want him. You know, it's kind of a sad case will be the innkeepers.

There's no room for Jesus at the inn. Had the innkeeper known who would be there, I'm sure the story would have been totally different. He never had a clue, and you couldn't really blame him.

We don't know whether the inn was really packed full or not. He maybe didn't want to have some people there and maybe should be having a baby in their inn. We don't know what he was thinking about.

But we do know that he missed it, and sometimes we miss it too. I once talked with a man, 85 years old, not a Christian. So I asked him this question, when did you first hear the gospel story about Jesus? And he thought a minute, and then he said, when I was 14 years old.

And I said, and you haven't received him yet. Oh, he said, I'm planning to do it. I'll get it done someday.

But you know, he never did. Some people plan to get saved at the 11th hour, and they die at 1030. That was his problem.

So now, today is the day of salvation. Right now is the time, not tomorrow. You may not have a tomorrow.

So then Felix, Felix heard him, and he said to him, well, when I have a more convenient time, but it says in the context that he hoped he'd get some money from Paul. Because in those days, if you were a prisoner and you had a few bucks, you could almost always buy your way out. And Felix thought this guy, he's well known, he's probably got some money.

And so he put him off, hoping that over the months that lay ahead, that this guy Paul would get, you know, would really get some idea about bribing. So he was not really concerned about the gospel, the way to heaven. That didn't concern him at all.

What concerned him was the opportunity of making some bucks. And sometimes, you know, in our materialistic society today, the big thing is making bucks, legally or otherwise. I was once invited to call in a couple who were living in common law, and they warned me that the guy had a bad reputation.

Anyway, I called, and he wasn't home. And so she started to close the door, and I asked her a question, and she stopped closing the door, and I finally got in. And she was very nervous.

And suddenly, he walked in. And he comes barreling over to me, and he says, who the H-E-L-L are you? I said, chum, you better sit down. Because when I tell you, you're going to fall over in a faint.

What? What are you getting at? I said, sit down, chum. So he did. And who are you? Well, I said, I'm a gospel preacher.

And you know, he sat there a minute, and then he swallowed that, but he didn't get mad. And I led him to Christ and his wife. And a few days later, they asked me to marry them, which I did.

But his reputation was so bad, he couldn't get a job anywhere. The unions wouldn't even touch him. He showed me where he'd been shot in a gang fight one time.

So he was bad news. Then one day, his wife phoned. She was crying, asked if I could come and counsel with him, so I did.

He'd been offered a job in Vancouver at \$50,000 a year. But it was a dishonest job. And he wanted to go, although he was a believer.

He didn't know much yet. And here's what she said, I'd rather have you working at a minimum wage, serving gasoline or something, than making \$50,000 in Vancouver. And he looks at her and says, you must be crazy.

And she says, no, you're the crazy one. But you know, he was a young Christian. There was a lot he didn't know.

And he learned, finally, and came to a point where he was truly living a godly life. But thank God, he could have said no, but he said yes. And some people would likely have questioned whether he was a real Christian or not.

You don't get it all at once. You get salvation all at once from your sins. But you may not understand how to live a Christian life without some training.

How can you know, unless you are trained? They learn to say in church, in Revelation 3, 14 to 18, the big thing there was this, that she was lukewarm, materialistically doing very well, lots of money, lots of prestige probably too. But God said, lukewarm. He said, you're neither hot nor cold.

And I'll spit you out of my mouth. I mean, it's kind of a strange way for God to put it, but at least we can understand what he meant. Lukewarm.

You can't be lukewarm about Jesus. There's no way. Because God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.

And if you're lukewarm about that, you're in trouble about eternity. Cold or hot, but not lukewarm. If you're cold, perhaps, you can be warmed up.

But there are millions, I'm sure, in our churches today. Dr. Tozer, as you may know, he felt that not more than 20% of the people in the average evangelical church were truly born again, born of God. I don't know

how he figured this out.

I guess just from his wide experience as a traveling preacher and so on. I don't know. Maybe he was right.

Certainly, there are some. I had a pastor assisting me in Saskatoon, and we had to ask him to go. He made friends of two or three families, spent all his time with them.

And the deacons saw it, and I saw it, and we finally had to ask him to go. He was upset, as you can imagine. Young man, great song leader, gospel magic with children, and all of this.

And then the revival came some years later, and the same young man phoned me and said this. Last night, God showed me, I've never been born again. I want to come to Saskatoon.

Can you help me? I said, come. So I came, and I got some men together, and we prayed with him. And he called on God.

As long as I live, I can't forget what he said.

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