

# (Clip) Looking For Loopholes to Avoid Unwanted Duties

by Tim Conway

---

*This sermon emphasizes the difference between a Christian perspective and a Pharisaical mindset, focusing on the pursuit of perfection and internal transformation rather than legalistic adherence to rules. It challenges the notion of seeking the limits of conduct to stay within God's grace, highlighting the need for a heart transformed by Christ's love and righteousness.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:48, Matthew 5:3, Matthew 5:4, Matthew 5:6, Matthew 5:8, Matthew 5:20, Matthew 5:44, Matthew 6:1, Matthew 6:16, Matthew 7:21

**Topics:** "Heart Transformation", "Grace vs. Legalism"

---

## Description

This sermon emphasizes the difference between a Christian perspective and a Pharisaical mindset, focusing on the pursuit of perfection and internal transformation rather than legalistic adherence to rules. It challenges the notion of seeking the limits of conduct to stay within God's grace, highlighting the need for a heart transformed by Christ's love and righteousness.

---

## Transcript

Can I do this and still be... That is the question of the Pharisee. Can I get away with this and still be in the place where God's not going to get me? That is the Pharisee question. Where the Christian views this... No, I don't want to see how close to the fence I can live.

I want to see how close to perfection I can get. And that's what he says, be perfect, because your father is perfect. And we don't need to get all hung up over this if we have failures in our life.

Because even Peter, as a child of God, is saying, they're trying to even wrestle with this. Is it seven times? I mean, Lord, show us where the fence is. Oh, guys, it's so limited.

When he says 70 times 7, you recognize the word 7 has everything to do with perfection. Peter might have even thought, you know, 7, oh, that's great. No, 70 times 7. You've tithed, rich young ruler? No, no, no.

Give it all away and give to the poor and come follow me. You see, it's radical because it's internal. This is what the Sermon on the Mount is all about.

Questions. People want to know the limits of their conduct and still be inside. That is not a Christian question.

And if that is a question you keep asking, it's not a Christian question. It's a pharisaical question. And I'm not saying a true Christian can't ask that pharisaical question.

But you just need to recognize, brethren, where we're at. Because as we go through the sermon, I'm just going to ask this as we go through it. You know, you have to confront Jesus' words individually.

I know this. Am I perfect? No, I'm not perfect. But I can tell you, at the age of 25, something happened in my life where God broke me and I was poor in spirit.

In other words, I recognized I needed Christ desperately because I didn't have anything to offer God spiritually. I was bankrupt and I was broke. Did I shed tears over my sin? I did.

Blessed are those who mourn. Meekness has to do with humility. Is there still too much pride left in me? Yes.

But did something altogether different happen where I fell at the feet of Christ? Yes. Did I have a hunger and a thirst for righteousness? Yes, I did. Has it always maintained the most intense level? Not always.

But is it radically different than what was there before? Yes. Is there a desire to love people, not just to give down to the scent when it comes to tithing? Yes. Do I want to have all my goods at God's disposal for the sake of God's people? I do.

I mean, what you're going to have to ask, and I'm not saying all this out of pride or to belittle anybody else. I'm just saying, look, I have to face Scripture just like you do. And I can look at this and say, I'm among the blessed because this has happened to me.

Now, if you've got ears to hear Christ, what happens is as you hear Him, will the imperative kick in where we recognize what really pleases Him, is that we not even be angry, we not even lust, we don't do our praying to be seen, our giving to be seen, our fasting to be seen. You see, we hear this and the Spirit of God, we even hear the warnings. You know what God said to His people? I'm going to put the fear of God in them so that they don't depart from Me.

And so one of the things that happens, we hear about, you better pluck out that eye or it's better for that to happen than to be thrown into hellfire. And you know what the warnings of God do to the children of God? They make us step back from the edge because He puts His fear within us. And I feel that.

I don't feel like, oh, I better do that to get saved. I better do that to make sure God doesn't get me. No, I recognize while God is very serious about that, and it is fearful, that is a very fearful warning, and I don't want to get close to that edge.

And I'm going to plead with Him. He gives me the grace to pluck these eyes out. You see, when the question you're asking all the time is this, what are the limits of my conduct that I can still be on the inside? Pharisee.

That is entirely pharisaical. Because basically what that is, the question you're asking is about the law. You're no longer guided by Christian ethics.

It's now pharisaical ethics. Ethics has to do with living out the moral realities in your life. And what drives the Christian? The indicative drives the Christian life.

The Pharisee, the imperative drives the Pharisee's life. That's the difference. Can I do this and still be in? People that ask that, they haven't understood the Christian faith.

Because what that person is wanting to do is be fenced in by law. What defines my conduct by law so that I can still know I'm on the inside? What are the limits to which I can be dominated by sin and still be on the inside? They're always looking for that. They're always asking that.

How much can I practice sin? How much can it be habitual and I'm still on the inside? I said, brethren, that's the wrong question. It's entirely to misread the gospel of the kingdom when you ask those questions. Jesus is saying there's no security in that.

This excerpt was taken from the full sermon, The Question a Christian Should Never Ask, from message number one in Tim Conway's series on the Sermon on the Mount.

---

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/kkB6p3hzkNc.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/tim-conway/clip-looking-for-loopholes-to-avoid-unwanted-duties/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**