

Characteristics of Pharisees - 3

by Zac Poonen

A Pharisee is someone who fears the opinions of people, loves money, thanks God that they're better than others, trusts in their own righteousness, and looks down on others.

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Scripture: Psalm 139:23

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Description

This sermon delves into the characteristics of Pharisees, highlighting the dangers of judgmentalism, hypocrisy, jealousy, and legalism. It emphasizes the need to focus on personal repentance, mercy, and genuine faith in God rather than rituals or traditions. The message calls for a transformation of the heart to reflect Christ's love and compassion towards others, especially the lost sinners.

Transcript

Music Music Let's pray, our father as we come around your word again, let your spirit rest upon us. It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh profits nothing. Lord, teach us to live in the spirit, to be led by the spirit in all things in our life.

Father, have mercy upon us, we pray. Open our eyes and refresh us and strengthen us through your word. We pray for a spirit of prophecy.

We pray for the spirit to rest upon us mightily in this time bringing life and light. We trust you, we lean upon you, we know those who trust in you will never be disappointed. That anyone here who is trusting the Holy Spirit to give him life this morning will not be disappointed.

We believe that. Thank you father, in Jesus name, Amen. Okay, we are going to continue with our study on characteristics of Pharisees.

In the last two sessions we covered 33 characteristics. Some of them are similar to others but yet there can be some aspect that we see in one which we don't see in the other. So we need to see, focus on them and these are things that we need to meditate on when we go back so that we can think more and look at our own life.

I want to say one word of warning. When you listen to this, remember, God gives us his word to give us light on ourselves. Not to find out Phariseeism in somebody else because if you do that you will be the

biggest Pharisee of all.

But if you can see the Phariseeism in yourself then you won't be a Pharisee. So we turn to number 34, signs and marks of a Pharisee. A Pharisee fears the opinions of people.

Matthew chapter 21 verse 26. He is afraid of what people will say. Particularly people in his own group.

You see the Pharisees were not afraid of what the Romans and the Greeks and the Gentiles say. But people in his own group. What will people in my church say about me if I do this? It means they are not free from the opinions of people.

I believe that many many elder brothers do things and say things because they are concerned about what will people in my church say about me if it is like this. Many people want their children to behave properly not for the glory of God but because they are concerned about their own testimony in the church. What will people in the church say about me if my children are like this? And they pick all types of silly rules on their children and make it difficult for their children for their own honor.

I remember an incident in my own life about 17, more than 17 years ago. When my eldest son was finished school and he had applied for college. And he got admission into IIT here in India.

And also to a college in the United States. And I said well son whichever, which do you want to go for? He said well dad I would like to go to the college in the US because they have given me a full scholarship. I said fine.

So he was so surprised that I would allow him to go. I said why are you surprised? He said what will people in the church say that Zak Foonan sent his son to the United States? I mean it is a little more common now but 17 years ago it was a strange thing to do. Because even a lot of elder brothers in those days believed it was a sin to go to the gulf or to the US or something like that.

And people have gone there themselves later. But those days they were Pharisees of the Pharisees who thought these things were sin. So I told him that will only test whether I am free from the opinions of people.

That's all. And I am free. I can assure you that.

I couldn't care less what anybody thinks. I am not going to let my children live according to the rules that Pharisees around me have made. I am going to let them grow up in liberty.

I believed that 17 years ago. I believe it today. Many of us we lose our children because we are concerned about the opinions of people.

I am not talking about sinful things. It is not a sinful thing to go to the US even if 25 elders think it is a sinful thing. That's their business.

You wait till their children get an opportunity to go. They will send their children. But when it is somebody else's children they will make rules.

These are the Pharisees of the Pharisees. And I want to say to all of you. Please don't let your children suffer because of the stupid Phariseeism of some elders around you.

Who make rules for your children which they will never make for their own. Remember that. Let them judge you.

Die to their opinion. I am crucified with Christ is the central verse of Galatians. Which is the great book on freedom from the law.

And the center of that message on freedom from the law in Galatians is I am crucified with Christ. I am free not only from Christ he says in Galatians 6.14. I am crucified to the world. And I want to read that verse to you in this paraphrase Galatians 6.14 says like this.

For my part I am going to boast about nothing but the cross of our master Jesus Christ. I am not going to boast that my children don't go to the US or that your daughter doesn't wear ornaments. These are not the things.

I am going to boast in the cross of our master Jesus Christ. Because of that cross I have been crucified in relation to the world. I have been set free.

Listen to this. I have been set free from the stifling atmosphere of pleasing other people. This pleasing other people is a stifling atmosphere.

It's like a room full of bad air. And you want to get out and get out into the open. I am set free from the stifling atmosphere of pleasing other people.

Fitting into the little patterns that they dictate for me. Many people sitting here are living for the opinions not of the worldly people. Not of people in other denominations but what will people in your church say.

That proves you are a Pharisee. So Matthew 21.26 it says they would not answer Jesus because they were afraid of the people. Again in verse 46 it says when Jesus said something to them they wanted to arrest him but they were afraid of the people.

They were not afraid of the Romans. Not people in other denominations but their own group. What will people in my own group say? What will my fellow elders say? Listen.

Ask yourself what God will say. Full stop. And you will be free.

If you add to that what will God say and what will brother Zach say. You will be in bondage. I want to set you free.

Some of your other elders may not set you free but I'd like to set you free. You can be assured of one thing. I will not judge you.

Even if all my fellow elders judge you. I give you my word I will not judge you. You can send your child to the moon if you like.

I will not judge you. That's your business. Don't let somebody else run your life.

Don't let somebody else mess up your children's future by trying to dictate rules to you. You wait and see if that person's child grows up what he does. All his rules will change.

These are the bunch of hypocrites and Pharisees of the Pharisees I have seen in our midst. If you live by their rules you will destroy yourself. Because they don't follow those rules when it comes to their own

children.

They are extremely partial to their own children. It's rare for me to see an elder brother who is completely free from partiality to his own family. I wish we had more of them.

Maybe 5% of our elders are free from partiality to their own family. I've seen repeated examples everywhere. So don't listen to them.

I thank God I never bothered about any of their opinions right from day one. That's why I've been a free person. I want to encourage you to be free.

You dear parents. Don't lose your children with all the silly legalistic rules that other people have made. Don't fear the opinions of people.

Luke chapter 16 and verse 14. Number 35. A Pharisee loves money.

Now many people when they think of Pharisees they don't think of love of money as one of the characteristics of a Pharisee. But it is one of the clearest marks of a Pharisee. He'll be so legalistic about so many silly little rules.

But when it comes to money he's an absolute lover of money. Luke chapter 16 it says, Now the Pharisees who were lovers of money listened to what Jesus said and scoffed at him. What did they scoff at? When Jesus said in verse 13, You cannot love God and wealth.

You cannot serve God and wealth. Ah! They said, what nonsense. Look at us.

We are serving God and money. They scoffed at him because they were lovers of money and they thought they could love God at the same time. I want to say to you.

If you miss out all the other 49 characteristics and you have escaped all 49. The Holy Spirit will catch you at this one. And say, here is the proof you are a Pharisee.

Any one of these 50 characteristics will mark out a man as a Pharisee. That's why we have preached as much against loving money as we have against judging people in the church through the years. It's not a new message.

You cannot love God and love the things of this earth at the same time. You can use the things of the earth. Do you know that God gave us things to use and people to love.

But unfortunately, the world they love things and use people for their own advantage. That is the world. They love things and use people.

Jesus came to turn the world right side up and taught us to love people and use things. Use things to bless people. That's the greatest thing.

It doesn't matter if you can deny yourself something so that somebody else can have it better. That's how Jesus lived. And I have seen one thing.

Some of the biggest legalists in our churches and a lot of them are elder brothers. They love money like anything. How do I know? By their fruit you shall know them.

They stack up money but they are legalists when it comes to little little rules for other people. But they are fantastic lovers of money. They go after money wherever they can get more.

They will even neglect their responsibilities in the church to make more money because their mind is always on that. And they are Pharisees only towards other people. Making rules for other people.

That is why I say to the general congregation please don't just swallow everything your elder says. 95% of them I've discovered are legalists. Don't follow their silly rules unless you want to mess up your own life.

Come to the freedom in Christ and if you see 5% area where he is following Jesus follow him in that area and forget all the other areas. It's very very important. It's sad that it has to come to this but after so many years I'm just sick and tired of all the legalism and the judgmentalism and the silly little rules that all types of people have made through the years which they've imposed on others.

Now I'm not against they're keeping it themselves. Yeah. So that's just another indication of Pharisees and we've spoken a lot about that.

We don't want to continue on that. Number 36. Luke chapter 18 and verse 9. He thanks God.

A Pharisee thanks God that he's better than others. And Luke chapter 18 you know the story of the Pharisee and the tax collector. There are number of points we can see here.

The first of all that he thanks God that he's better than others. Luke 18 verse 9. He told this parable to some people who were trusted in themselves and he said in verse 11 God I thank you. Luke 18 verse 11.

God I thank you that I am not like other people. Now he didn't say this. You know it says here he prayed to himself.

He was saying in his heart. None of us will openly stand up and say God I thank you. I'm not like people in that group and the other group because you lose your reputation for humility.

We all want a reputation for humility so much we'll never say that in public. But in our heart we think oh thank God I'm not like those other people who behave like that who dress like that. You know you've heard me use this example supposing a man comes home and his wife is absolutely angry and furious and yells at him and screams at him and he stands there like a holy man keeping quiet doesn't lose his temper quietly goes away and thinks in his heart Lord I thank you I'm not like my wife who is losing her temper.

I've got victory over anger. You know your wife may be a million times better than you in God's eyes at that moment because she lost her temper and nobody can lose their temper and not be convicted about it. Afterwards she will repent.

But you you will never repent of your parasitism. And she is more acceptable to God at that moment than you who think I thank God I've got victory. Yes you overcame anger you got out of a ten foot pit called anger and you fell into a thousand foot pit called spiritual pride.

Is that victory? To come out of a ten foot pit to fall into a thousand foot pit but your wife is still in the ten foot pit and you are in the thousand foot pit who is better? I mean ask a kindergarten student they'll tell you who is better. There's a lot of this. You know spiritual pride is like an onion.

Have you tried peeling an onion? You take off one layer I've finished with the onion. Really? There's another layer underneath. You take off that one there's another one underneath.

You take off that one there's another one underneath. You've heard the story. If you haven't heard it I must tell you.

Most of you may have heard this I've said it before. The Sunday school teacher who taught the story of the Pharisee and the tax collector to people to the children and said you know the Pharisee said I thank God I'm not like the tax collector. Isn't that bad children? Thank God we are not like the Pharisee.

And we laugh at that and say thank God we are not like the Sunday school teacher. It's an onion. Layer after layer after layer you can't get to the bottom.

Be honest. I'll tell you something I've discovered. There are two sins I'll never be free from till Jesus comes.

Pride and selfishness. It's layer after layer. It's become much thinner in my life.

Both those areas. But I discover lots and lots of areas in my life and I'm determined before Jesus comes to make that onion as thin as possible. Selfishness and pride.

If you're working on it and you acknowledge it there's hope for you. If you imagine that you're free from selfishness and pride God have mercy on you. Please don't be an elder brother anywhere.

That's all I ask you. You'll destroy your church. Okay.

Number 37. A Pharisee is one who trusts in his own righteousness. That means his own self-produced righteousness.

Again Luke chapter 18 verse 9. This parable is for those who trusted in themselves that they were righteous. Now, there is a righteousness which is by faith which is a gift of God. And there is a righteousness which I can produce myself.

And the difference is this. The way to detect it is the righteousness which you have produced by yourself you'll be proud of. The righteousness which you got as a gift you'll be thankful for but you'll never be proud of it.

And I've used this example often. Supposing I say this is a book that I wrote. I can be proud of it.

There's a temptation because I wrote it. But if I lift up a book here which somebody else wrote and say this is a great book I'm not even tempted to pride. Why? Because somebody else wrote it.

It's that simple. So, if you are proud of some good quality you have in your life maybe you're very generous or you're very humble or you're very prayerful whatever it is some good quality you have and you're proud of it who wrote that? God or you? You wrote it. That's why you're proud of it.

If somebody else wrote it you can never be proud of it. If God had written that into your life you cannot be proud of it. Can you be proud? Can any of you be proud if you pass this book out to some other people? You never wrote it.

You cannot be proud of what you did not write. You won't even be tempted. That shows how much of our righteousness is our own produced righteousness.

The test is are you proud of it? You know, they are they trust in their own self-produced righteousness. A lot of what you call divine nature is not divine nature at all. If it were divine nature you'd be very humble about it.

For example maybe you're a very hospitable person. You're very generous and hospitable to people in the church and you are quite conscious of it and you're proud of it. It is a human quality which you have which God did not produce in you.

It is your own righteousness which stinks in God's eyes. Is hospitality a good thing? Sure. But not your hospitality.

That stinks in God's eyes because you're proud of it. You look down on other people who don't have that hospitable nature that you have. It could be anything.

It could be that you can sing better or play an instrument better or preach better or your church is better than somebody else's church. Oh, your church is growing. We were only 50 people when I came here as an elder and now we are 200.

Oh, really? I wouldn't care two bits for those extra 150 people who came to your church because they're not probably disciples. If you're such an ungodly person how can they be disciples? Anything that you're proud of is your own. A book that you write, you're proud of.

A book that somebody else wrote, you cannot be proud of. And if God produced something in you, you can never be proud of it. If you're proud of it, it proves that you produced it.

You sacrificed something for the Lord. Oh, ho, ho. You are so sacrificial.

I'll tell you what, you haven't seen the sacrifice of Calvary. I don't believe I've sacrificed one single thing in my life for Jesus because I've seen the sacrifice of Calvary so clearly. Can you see the stars when the sun is shining? Not even one star.

And when the sacrifice of Calvary becomes as bright as the sun in your life, all your petty little sacrifices will disappear like the stars. You won't be able to see them. If you can see them, what does it prove? When can you see the stars? In the darkness.

If you can see your own sacrifices, in Jesus' name I can tell you, you are in darkness. Come into the light, brother, sister. Your own self-produced righteousness proves you're a Pharisee.

It's the opposite of faith. It's the opposite of that which glorifies God. Okay, another one.

A Pharisee looks down on other people. The next thing it says here in Luke 18 verse 9 is, this is number 38. He views other people with contempt.

It could be various reasons why we view other people with contempt. We learn to view other people with contempt from childhood. For example, if you're brilliant, if you're very intelligent and when you go to school, you come first in the class and next examination, again you come first in the class, you're absolutely tops.

You begin to view other people with contempt. And if you've got a stupid father or a stupid mother who boosts you up to make you think that you're somebody, then you'll be even worse. If your children are intelligent, make sure that you don't ruin them.

They're already battling with pride because they're coming first in the class. Don't ruin them even further by boasting about them, making them boast as little children. Make a rule that they will never talk about their results.

I made a rule like that for my children. They must never show their report card to anybody. They must never tell anybody their rank.

Never show anybody the prizes they got. Never let anyone know what they've accomplished in any area in school, in sports or academics or anything. Because I know what pride can do for my children.

It will destroy them. God will not give them grace. They will not be able to fellowship with other ordinary brothers who don't come first in the class.

My brothers and sisters, many of us have ruined our children. They view others with contempt. They make fun of other people.

You know, this is a very common practice among children to make fun of people who can't speak English like they can speak with this fantastic Bangalore accent. Oh, that fellow's got a Malayalee accent. What is that? You're a Pharisee.

You can view others with contempt for anything. You're not so holy no matter how well you know the scriptures. You view another person with contempt because he can't speak like you can.

Did you come out of your mother's womb speaking like that? And first of all, who said that your accent is supposed to be the best in heaven? You know what accent heaven appreciates? The accent of humility that loves other people, that doesn't make other people feel small. There are so many, many areas. I mean, we could spend a whole day talking about the way people view others with contempt.

Looking down, God is almighty, it says in Job 36.5, but he doesn't despise anybody. The more you're like God, you will not despise anyone for their lack of intelligence or for anything in their house. Maybe you're a person who keeps your house spotlessly clean, everything in their proper place.

And you go to somebody else's house and you say, ah, may they keep their house. You are a Pharisee. And that person's house who is messy is a godly person.

It doesn't look like that. It looks in the eyes of people that you who kept everything properly in your house is the godly person. You're not.

You'll get a tremendous surprise when Jesus comes. He'll call you, he'll dub you as a Pharisee of the Pharisees. I'm not saying you shouldn't keep your house properly.

By all means keep your house neat and proper. I'm saying don't despise others. I'm not saying you shouldn't come first in your class.

I'm saying don't despise others. I'm not telling you to encourage your children to come last in the class. I'm telling you to tell them not to talk about it to other people.

I'm not saying you shouldn't be intelligent. Don't despise somebody who's not intelligent. I'm not saying you can't... You know, for example, we have sometimes people in our church who start a chorus in the worship time and completely off-note.

I praise the Lord for them because they bring all our clever musicians down to earth. People who despise... Aha! And they talk about it at home. That brother, that sister can't start a song properly.

And this great musician expert, this Pharisee musician is glorying. Those Pharisee musicians are the ones who destroy the church. And that poor brother or sister who can't sing a note properly, God loves him.

He doesn't love you. He hates Pharisees. You're gonna get big surprises when Christ comes again.

If you listen to what you hear in the church, you'll be saved. Otherwise, you'll live and die a Pharisee. My brother, sister, cleanse yourself.

Cleanse yourself. Cleanse yourself. See people as God sees them.

Don't ever despise another person for anything. What do you have that you did not receive? How can you glory over another person? Even understanding on God's word. You got it from God.

Don't despise another person. Okay. Verse number 39.

Again in Luke 18, 9. He exalts himself above others and is spiritually proud. The spirit of self-exaltation. It can be in conversation.

Where I... All these things are linked, but we want to look at them separately so that we see each clearly. You know, we can say things in our conversation that makes another person feel small. That's exalting yourself.

I mean, if you have accomplished something great for God, don't talk about it to other people to make them feel small. I've seen... You know, for example, if you're in the midst of, say, some single sister who's getting older and not married, don't talk about the glories of married life to her. I mean, are you crazy? Don't you have a sense of consideration? That poor sister couldn't get married.

Don't talk about all those things. I mean, a thoughtful Christian is very thoughtful about these things. Will I hurt that person? Or will I exalt myself? Most people are so... so inconsiderate.

Phariseeism makes a person totally inconsiderate to the feelings of other people. They don't think about what's that person thinking when I speak like this. Exalting yourself.

Boasting about what you have done or you're this or you're that or you're church or whatever it is. Spiritual pride. Let's go to number 40.

We want to also split this up still further. A Pharisee boasts about his achievements. Lord, I thank you that I fast twice a week.

Verse 12. I pay tithes of all that I get. I'm not a swindler.

I'm not committed to adultery. He boasts about his accomplishments. Now, I believe that great danger faces us when we give a testimony.

Should we ever give a testimony? Of course. The Bible says we must proclaim what the Lord has done for us. But not in a boastful spirit.

To boast about our achievements or accomplishments is the mark of a Pharisee. It could be spiritual accomplishments. A lot of reports that people send from India to other countries are boasting that my organization is doing better than that other organization or a pastor boasts that he's got so many thousand people in his church boasting about accomplishments.

There must be zero of that in our life if we want to be free from Phariseeism. Yeah, there's a lot in that that we can think about in that particular passage. And because of that, this Pharisee did not go to his home justified.

It says there finally that the other sinner went to his house justified. Verse 14. Rather than the Pharisee.

We cannot go home declared righteous by God if we have even a smell of these characteristics that I mentioned here. Please meditate on them further. And number 41.

John chapter 8. A Pharisee is one who accuses other people. John chapter 8 and verses 1 to 11 is the story of the woman caught in adultery. And it is true that according to the law of Moses, she was supposed to be stoned to death.

And they wanted to catch Jesus and say let's see what he does now. If they say, if Jesus says yes, stone him to death, he will lose his reputation which he has built up as a very merciful, compassionate person. Everybody will see he's a hard person.

If he says no, don't stone her to death, we can immediately prove this fellow is not keeping the law of Moses. It's what they call a catch-22 situation. You do this, you're wrong.

You do that, you're wrong. Heads I win, tails you lose. Both ways I'm going to win.

But Jesus was in touch with the Father. They asked him a question and he was writing on the ground and saying, Father, what should I say? The Father said, just tell them one sentence. The Holy Spirit said, He who is without sin, cast a stone.

He said that. Solved the problem. You know, when you listen to the Holy Spirit, you don't need to give a big sermon sometimes.

One sentence can shut the mouths of people. God can give us wisdom if you're not a Pharisee and if you don't want to accuse people. If you've got a spirit of compassion and mercy, even towards someone who is caught in adultery, leave alone accused of adultery.

We can be so hard even against somebody who's accused of adultery without even verifying. Here was a woman caught in adultery. Jesus was not a Pharisee.

Is Jesus against adultery? Of course. But here we see a comparison of adultery on one side, the woman and legalism on the other side, the Pharisees. And here is the clearest scripture which proves that legalism is worse than adultery.

Does Jesus condone adultery? No. That is a speck in a person's eye. But this legalism was a beam in the eyes of all these Pharisees.

Compared to adultery, even legalism, compared to legalism rather, even adultery is only a speck. If we can see that in this story, we'll be delivered from this judgmental spirit, this accusing spirit of other people. You ask your own self, my brothers and sisters, how many times you have accused the brothers and sisters of things which are not even one millionth of adultery.

Think of some of the things you have accused the brothers and sisters in your own church of. And spoken about them, and spoken about them, and gone to somebody else's house, and spoken about them, and written about them, and told about them, and about them, and about them. It's not even one millionth of a speck.

And every time you accuse the beam in your eyes getting bigger and bigger and bigger, and you know the problem with having a beam in your eyes is you become blind. Imagine if I had a beam here. What could I see? I've got two big beams in my eyes, and I tell a brother, Brother, I think there's a speck in your eye.

Can you help me to take it out? You say, Priest, don't touch me, brother. With the beam in the eye, you may have messed up my eye completely. You think a man with a beam in an eye can be an eye doctor? To remove specks? Even an eye doctor wears a magnifying glass to see that small speck.

And here you go with a beam in your eye. Jesus said, Forget it. Leave him alone.

He's okay. He's only got a beam. He's only committed adultery.

She has only committed adultery. That's okay. What about you fellows? You are a million times worse because a beam is a million times bigger than a speck.

The spirit of accusation. Why was Jesus so much against this? Because Jesus came from heaven and he knew who the accuser of the brethren was. He had heard Satan accusing, accusing, accusing, accusing, accusing.

Throughout from man's history, from the beginning of man's history, Jesus heard this accuser, accuser, accuser, accuser, accuser coming to God saying this about that person, this about that person, this about the other person. Heard, heard, heard, heard, heard, and then he came to earth. And he saw some people having that spirit.

He said, This is the devil. Again. He hated it.

And do you think when he sees that spirit in you, he doesn't hate it? It reminds him of Satan. Do you know the number of believers who remind Jesus of Satan? But the believers themselves don't seem to have any light on it. They can't see it.

Why can't they see it? Because this beam blinds them. They don't judge themselves. They judge others.

I'll tell you something I have preached in this church for 30 years, for 29 years. If you want to progress spiritually, stop judging other people and judge yourself. And people who heard me 25 years ago will remember that I said it even 25 years ago.

Just finish with judging yourself. And finish with judging others. Start judging yourself.

Sorry. Finish with judging other people completely. And just concentrate.

Put your microscope on yourself. And judge yourself. Full stop.

And you say, What should I do after I judge myself? Judge yourself some more. After that, some more. When shall I stop? I'll tell you.

When you have become completely like Jesus Christ. Then you can stop. I permit you to stop once you have become completely like Christ.

He who has this hope of the second coming of Christ purifies himself as he is pure. You say, Well then how shall I correct other people? I'll tell you. With mercy.

With tremendous mercy. Just like Jesus. What did Jesus go and tell the woman caught in adultery? Did he say, Ah, adultery, that's a small thing.

Forget it. Just go right ahead and keep doing it. That's not what he said.

He said, I don't condemn you, sister. But don't ever do it again. That's mercy.

He doesn't condone sin. Don't ever do it again. Supposing one of the Pharisees.

Why did the Pharisees all go away? You know what they should have done? They should have come to Jesus and said, Oh, Lord, please forgive us. I get light on myself. I wish one of those Pharisees had come to Jesus and said, Lord, I now got such light that I'm worse than this woman caught in adultery.

I need your forgiveness more than that woman. Please have mercy on me. Not one of them came.

Will one of you come to the Lord today? Who've been accusing somebody? Finding fault with somebody? Finding fault with somebody else's children? Never find fault with your own children? Finding fault with somebody else's wife? Never your own wife? Finding fault with an elder brother? You don't judge yourself? Will one of you get light today that you'll come pleading with Jesus, Lord, I see what an evil person I am. Instead, what do you do even if you get light? You may go casually to that person and say, Brother, I'm sorry. He says, OK, forgive him.

OK, I'm alright. You will repeat that sin a thousand times till you're broken. I've seen people who come to apologize to me.

I don't see any brokenness in their life. I forgive them. I forgive them even before they come and repent and apologize.

But I'm sorry to say that very, very few people I have seen who are broken because of their judgmental attitude. Therefore, I know those people who apologize will again go back into the same old thing. I know it's just a matter of time.

Just a matter of time. Because it's not hit them. They technically realize, Ah, according to law number 347, I've disobeyed it.

Brother, I'm sorry. I disobeyed law number 347. Alright, forgiven, forgiven.

OK, fine. Let's move on with life. I tell you, it'll never go well.

If one of those Pharisees had been broken, you know what you need to pray? You need to pray that God will give you such light that you'll be blinded that like John fell at Jesus' feet like a dead man. You'll fall like a dead man and say, Oh God, I'm a sinner. I'm the worst sinner on earth.

Have you ever felt like that? When you accuse somebody? Have you felt like that when God showed you your own sin? Or are you like all those Pharisees who nominally say, Ah, that's right. I did a little wrong thing. And go on.

It'll never go well with you. I prophesy it will not go well with you. Till you allow God to break your stubborn hard heart and see your Phariseism and repent of wanting to stone poor people who did something one millionth less than adultery.

You want to excommunicate them? You want to do all types of things to them? May God have mercy on you. Judgment will be merciless, it says in James 2.13. Judgment will be merciless from God on those who have not shown mercy to other people. Please remember that.

Especially elder brothers because I believe elder brothers are the number one culprits in not showing mercy to other people. Number one culprits. Fathers and mothers are also number one culprits in the home in not showing mercy to each other and sometimes not showing mercy to their own poor children.

Repent. Let it break you. Then there is some hope.

Legalism is worse than adultery because a woman caught in adultery, an elder brother who falls into adultery can never destroy a church. Did you know that? Supposing an elder brother falls into adultery, tell me which brother in that church will be so stupid to still respect him as an elder brother. I don't think there will be one brother in that church who will continue to respect that elder brother.

But when an elder brother is a legalist, he is a bigger source of danger to that church because so many people don't have light, they'll follow him. And when you see that legalism is a million times worse than adultery, can you imagine what type of church that elder brother will build? He will build a church worse than an elder brother who is living in adultery. I want to ask all of you brothers, how many of you have seen, tell me honestly, how many of you have seen clearly that your attitude of judging others and accusing others is actually worse than your having fallen into adultery 10 times? I don't believe you have seen it.

And that's why I prophesy, it will continue to go badly with you till you see it. I hope you'll see it this morning. I don't know how many of you have seen it and I don't know how many of you want to see it.

I have seen it to some extent that judging others is worse than adultery. How much would you repent if you committed adultery 10 times in the last one month? Just imagine 10 times in the last one month you as an elder brother or a sister who has been in church so long committed adultery 10 times what would you say? Brother, I'm sorry I sort of fell into adultery you know. It's all forgiven.

Okay, praise the Lord. I'm continuing. You treat adultery like that? You treat accusing others and judging others in such a light way that shows clearly you have not understood John chapter 8 verses 1 to 11.

Go back there and meditate on it. Okay. John chapter another number 42 and a Pharisee is one who imagines that God is his father when actually Satan is his father.

John 8 verse 41 and 44 Jesus told the Pharisees they said our father is God Jesus said no verse 44 your father is the devil a Pharisee imagines that his father is God when his father is actually the devil he hasn't really come to partake of divine nature his nature is the nature of Satan the nature of Satan is one of finding fault accusing criticizing despising he manifests that nature in 101 situations and he still thinks God is my father how blind can you be you accuse you judge you despise you condemn and you still say God is your father I mean that's the height of blindness but they didn't get light even when Jesus told them that they didn't get light and I know a lot of people to whom I have said straight to their face I don't think you know God brother maybe you've gone through the

mantra of saying Lord Jesus come to my heart but I don't think you know the Lord I see so many characteristics in your life which seem to indicate to me you just don't know Jesus you don't know a loving merciful father in heaven no you don't know it you know there is hypocrisy everywhere yeah ok number 43 a Pharisee is a liar and a murderer John 8 44 Jesus said you are of your father the devil he was a murderer from the beginning and so are you their desire to stone that woman to death you know what Jesus called it not keeping the law he said it's murder you fellows want to murder that poor woman do you want to murder somebody with your tongue have you done it you are a murderer have you murdered somebody's reputation by spreading stories about someone scandals about someone even if it is

true do you know when the devil goes and accuses you to God he doesn't tell lies about you what do you think the devil accuses about you to God true things he doesn't say that fellow went and committed murder when you didn't commit murder he says look at the fellow the way he shouts at his wife and gets angry he tells the truth that is accusation the devil's accusations to God are all true he doesn't tell lies about you he tells God about your sins but he is a murderer because he is trying to destroy you and when you try to destroy somebody you won't destroy your own children like that supposing your daughter fell into some sin you tell me mothers if your daughter fell into some sin would you go talking to everybody about it or would you try your best to cover it up you know from your

past experience some of the foolish things your daughters have done and you fathers and mothers have lovingly covered it up why don't you do that when somebody else's daughter does something why are you such a murderer murdering people's reputations and glorying in the fact we have Abraham for our father we are connected with CFC I will definitely tell people not to come to your church why should they come to your church to be murdered let them go to some other church where they may be worldly but at least they live yeah I believe God is sick and tired of all this and so am I so not only they are murderers but they are liars I have seen one thing through the years when people begin to backslide one of the first things they start doing is telling lies they won't speak the truth when I

question them did you say this they will hedge and hedge and put it in a more pleasant way and that's a lie it's a lie and I want to tell you this any of you who when you are caught in some situation you tell a lie you are also a murderer it's the devil who is the father of lies and anyone who tells a lie has given his tongue to the devil he cannot expect God to use that tongue ever till he repents of that lie and confesses it and forsakes it you got to hate lying like you hate adultery a mark of a pharisee he can tell a lie cover it up make a little patch it up a little bit and make it look a little bit like the truth but he knows it's not 100% true I have known people whom I have asked a question and they have told me a lie I know it's a lie and I have left it I have not questioned them

again sometimes I ask them 2-3 times and they still keep on insisting I leave it they think they have fooled me they have not fooled me I have obeyed God's command which says leave them alone leave them

alone they will fall into the pit one day they will get the judgment they deserve but I am not fooled it's very easy to find out when a person tells a lie ok number 44 a pharisee persecutes those who don't listen to them John chapter 9 verse 34 it says when the blind man would not listen to the pharisee they put him out of the synagogue excommunicate him because he won't listen to me, the elder brother pharisees have a great desire to put people out of the church that's the word used here they put him out you won't listen to us you are in your sin get out of the synagogue do you have a

great lust to excommunicate people Jesus said even if a brother sins go and speak to him to win him your goal must always be to win him take 2-3 more people and win him win him, win him try your best to win him not wait for an opportunity to put him out that's a pharisee it all depends on how we approach a person we are surrounded by people who do wrong things and when I approach that person who does a wrong thing I can approach him as a pharisee or I can approach him as Jesus would Jesus would want to win him the devil would want to destroy him so they persecute those who don't listen to them number 45 a pharisee is jealous of those who can do miracles which he himself cannot do John chapter 11 verse 47 a pharisee is jealous of those who can do miracles which he himself cannot do now I'm

not talking about these counterfeit fake miracles that a lot of so called healers are claiming to do on television and in the platforms today I'm not fooled by all that I'll tell you honestly there are real miracles taking place today but you won't see them on television they are happening in the villages in north India where people are going out with the gospel for the first time just like in the Acts of the Apostles all the miracles in the Acts of the Apostles took place where people went out with the gospel for the first time the people forget that and it's happening today in India and it's happening without publicity the people who do the miracles don't even want anybody to know it like Jesus they cover it up they don't take any honor for themselves God is a God of miracles and if you

can't trust God for miracles you're a pharisee when you're sick you must pray to God for a miracle and if you are a servant of the Lord people come to you for prayer you must pray and have faith that God will do a miracle for them to draw them closer to Christ but don't talk about it don't advertise it unless you want to become a bigger pharisee keep it quiet before God they are jealous of those who can do miracles it says here Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead and instead of being excited Lazarus was the man in their own village I mean a man died and the guy was raised up from the dead you should be jumping with joy for it but they were not jumping for joy because the guy who healed him was not from my denomination somebody from some other denomination raised him from the dead, is it?

how crazy can you be? you're not excited that some fellow who was dead is raised from the dead you wanted to be the person to raise him from the dead and somebody else from some other denomination Jesus who belongs to this new group he raised him from the dead and it says what shall we do? this man is performing miracles if we let him go on like this all men will believe in him we don't want them to believe in him jealous even Pilate knew when they brought Jesus before him these guys are jealous of him jealousy is so obvious that a worldly person like Pilate could make out they were jealous because Jesus could do miracles number 46 a Pharisee judges other people godly people by the person not doing something not following some ritual that he thinks he should follow John chapter 9 verse 16

a Pharisee judges even godly people by the non-observance of some ritual this man cannot be from God because he doesn't keep the Sabbath the way we think the Sabbath should be kept this man cannot be from God you know how we can have our ideas about some little ritual he can't be from God because he doesn't keep this particular ritual which we keep regularly in our church you know the Salvation Army

which was founded by William Booth they don't believe in the breaking of bread and there was a reason for it because the early converts were all drunkards as soon as they smelled the wine they would go back to their drink so William Booth said we'll scrap breaking of bread I'll tell you something if I were living in England 150 years ago I would have joined the Salvation Army I'm absolutely

sure I would have joined William Booth and given my life for the Salvation Army maybe never broken bread I would submit to my authority I don't agree with that but I would submit to him because he's doing such a lot of good things we don't judge a man by the non-observance of some ritual I believe in the breaking of bread but not testing a man's godliness by something like that but so many of us if you're not careful you may be judging people by non-observance of a ritual you know people can say well Paul criticized Peter he certainly did you read that in Galatians chapter 2 but don't forget in the first part of that same chapter it says they recognized the grace God had given to Paul to establish churches to do so many wonderful things when such a man speaks against Peter it's okay but

today who are the ones who speak against Peter people who have done nothing for God God cannot bear witness to them for a single thing and they dare to criticize people whom God has used a million times more than you don't forget who it was who criticized Peter Paul didn't criticize Peter the day he was converted he criticized Peter after he had established churches after he had accomplished some wonderful things please remember that 47 a Pharisee tests God by asking Him for signs Matthew 12 verse 38 to 42 it says they asked for a sign to be performed Matthew 12 verse 38 teacher we want to see a sign they can't live by simple faith don't think asking God for a sign is a mark of spirituality it's a mark of a Pharisee it's repeated in Matthew 16 verse 1 as well there's nothing more need to

be said on that number 48 a Pharisee has no concern for lost sinners in John 7 49 the Pharisee said ah this crowd which doesn't know the law that's accursed we can say all these people who don't accept Christ they're all going to hell well that may be true but we have to see are we Pharisees there a Pharisee is someone who's got a concern for lost people he doesn't just say oh they're all going to hell ok number 49 I don't need to mention this explain it rather a Pharisee values traditions more than God's word Mark chapter 7 verse 1 to 13 he values the traditions you can study that passage how Jesus said you cancel the word of God by your traditions Mark 7 verse 8 you neglect it and you cancel it verse 13 because you value your traditions and you need to ask yourself my brother I need to

ask myself is there any tradition we have in CFC which is more valuable than God's word which says love your neighbor as yourself do you have a tradition which is more valuable than that commandment then we are Pharisees and the last one number 50 a Pharisee is one who justifies himself Luke 16 verse 15 a Pharisee justifies himself you are those who justify yourselves before men that means you can't take the blame Adam could not take the blame God asked him did you eat of the tree yes Lord that's the right answer he didn't say that I'll come to the yes I'll come to that answer Lord but first of all let me explain this situation this wife she is a real problem and don't forget you are the one who gave me this wife ok I sinned this is what I mean by justifying yourself where you go round

about the bush you put your hand right round and touch your nose and say yes that is my nose this is justifying yourself you do say finally that you sinned but with all this explanation these are the people who miss paradise the thief on the cross he said I'm guilty I don't blame my parents for bringing me up in the wrong way I don't blame my friends who led me astray I deserve this Lord said really come to paradise with me today paradise is prepared for those who take the blame themselves and don't blame their wives or blame God or blame anybody else in the church well we've gone through those 50 things pretty quickly

but I would encourage you to meditate on them if you want to be free from pharisees it's a great need in our churches let's pray heavenly father apply the truths that we

have heard to our lives Lord we really want to glorify you we want to be free from that spirit that you opposed Lord Jesus in all your earthly days and we see so much of it in ourselves so much of it as we study your word we say I am the man I am the man I am the one who is guilty it's not my brother Lord it's not my sister it's me give us that grace to ask the question Lord is it I it is have mercy on us teach us to be merciful to others as you have been merciful with us in Jesus name, amen

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