

Pharisees Justify Themselves

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen's sermon emphasizes the dangers of self-justification and the importance of acknowledging personal sin to receive God's mercy.

Scripture: Genesis 3:12, Matthew 23:33, Luke 16:15, Luke 23:41, Hebrews 12:28

Topics: "Self Justification", "Humility"

Description

Zac Poonen preaches about the danger of justifying ourselves like the Pharisees, emphasizing the importance of taking responsibility for our sins and mistakes without blaming others. He contrasts the Pharisee's self-justification with the humility of the thief on the cross who accepted his punishment. Poonen warns that those who justify themselves are on a path to destruction, as Jesus Himself condemned the Pharisees for their hypocrisy. He encourages believers to serve God with gratitude, holy fear, and brotherly love, seeking to cleanse themselves from Phariseeism and walk in godliness and mercy.

Transcript

"Jesus said to the Pharisees, 'You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God'" (Luke 16:15).

A Pharisee justifies himself in every situation. He cannot humbly acknowledge his error and take the blame for his sins and his mistakes.

Adam could not take the blame for his sin. When God asked him "Did you eat of the tree?" there was only one answer that was right: "Yes Lord". But he didn't say that. He first blamed his wife for giving him the fruit and then blamed God for giving him such a wife!! (Genesis 3:12). This is what is meant by justifying oneself. As a result Adam was driven out of paradise.

The thief on the cross who was saved was totally different. He said, "I deserve my punishment." (Luke 23:41). He did not blame his parents for bringing him up badly, or his friends for leading him astray, or the judge for being prejudiced or partial or too hard. He simply said, "I am totally deserving of this punishment." As a result, he went with Jesus to paradise that very day - for paradise is made for those who accept the blame for their own sins and who don't blame anyone else.

If you are one who blames your wife or God or any other person, in order to justify yourself, you are a Pharisee and you are on your way to hell.

Jesus' closing words to the Pharisees are fearful: "You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?" (Matthew 23:33).

Since we have a kingdom that nothing can destroy, let us please God by serving Him with thankful hearts and with holy fear and awe. For our God is a consuming fire. So continue to love each other with true brotherly love (Hebrew 12:28 to 13:1).

Phariseeism is like the pus inside an infected boil on your skin. As you squeeze out the pus each day, you will find more and more pus there until it is completely cleansed. So we must squeeze out all the Phariseeism within us, until nothing is left.

May we honestly acknowledge,

"Lord, I am the guilty person. It's not my husband, or my wife, or my brother, or my sister, or anyone else, who is a Pharisee. It is me. Please have mercy on me and deliver me completely from my Phariseeism. Give me grace to be a godly man and a disciple of Yours. And help me to be merciful to others at all times, just as You have been merciful to me."

May the Lord help us walk this way all the days of our life, so that we can have an abundant entrance into His kingdom one day.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/pharisees-justify-themselves/>

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