

Pharisees Seek Honour From Men

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen's sermon highlights the dangers of seeking honor from men, emphasizing the need for genuine devotion to God in all actions and ministries.

Scripture: Proverbs 27:2, Proverbs 29:25, Matthew 6:1, Matthew 7:3, Matthew 23:12, Luke 18:10, John 5:44, 1 Corinthians 10:31, Galatians 1:10, Philippians 2:3

Topics: "Humble Prayer", "Seeking Glory"

Description

Zac Poonen preaches on the danger of seeking honor from people, drawing from Jesus' teachings on the Pharisees who prayed publicly to be noticed by others. He emphasizes the importance of genuine, humble prayer directed towards God, rather than seeking recognition from men. Zac highlights the need for preachers to evaluate their motives and continually improve the quality of their preaching, focusing on delivering messages that glorify God rather than seeking applause from the audience. He warns against seeking honor in various aspects of life, such as writing reports or showcasing work, stressing the importance of seeking God's approval above all else to avoid falling into the trap of Phariseeism.

Transcript

"The Pharisees do all their deeds to be noticed by men" (Matthew 23:5).

Jesus said that the Pharisees would pray standing in the street-corners and pray loudly (Matthew 6:1). Jesus was obviously exaggerating here - but with a purpose. He was a great master at exaggeration whenever He wanted to highlight an important point. He spoke of people having a log in their eye and of those who swallowed camels! I have also sought to follow Jesus' example in this matter of exaggerating a point in order to drive it home. We should certainly not exaggerate when giving a report. We should not say, "200 people came to my meeting when only 150 people came"! But the type of exaggeration that Jesus used to drive home a point is very valuable.

Jesus spoke once about Pharisees who pray in order to get honour from people. Haven't we all prayed publicly to get honour from others? We have often listened while praying, to hear if anyone would say a "Hallelujah" or an "Amen" to our prayer. This is Phariseeism, for we have then prayed to people and not to God. We need to cleanse ourselves from this sin.

Preachers can preach to get honour? I judge myself after every sermon I preach to see if I have sought to please God or man and to see where I can improve the quality of my preaching. Every cook wants to

improve the quality of his cooking. But unfortunately very few preachers seek to improve the quality of their preaching. This is why most preachers are always boring to listen to. They are conceited enough to imagine that they are delivering powerful, anointed sermons. They don't even ask their wives what they think of their preaching. Through these past many years, I have sought to improve continually in my preaching, because I want to preach in the same gripping way that Jesus preached and with the same fire and passion that He had.

There are other areas too where we are tempted to seek honour from people. You may be writing reports of your work, not to glorify God but to impress others with what you are doing for God. In our churches, from the time we started in 1975, we have never sent a report or photograph of our work to anyone, anywhere in the world. We felt it was sufficient if God knew what we were doing.

Seeking honour from people is one of the sins that are never spoken of in most churches. Seeking honour is what makes a person a Pharisee. And Pharisees will only build Babylon.

To build the true church of our Lord Jesus Christ, we must cleanse ourselves from all seeking of honour from people.

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