

The DAILY JESUS NEWS #183

(Note: You can read the online Newspaper edition of this post [here](#).)

The Later Judean Ministry: Jesus Warns His Disciples Not to Emulate the Pharisees

The Hypocrisy of the Pharisees

Luke 11.37-41

37 When Jesus had finished speaking, a Pharisee invited him to eat with him; so he went in and reclined at the table. 38 But the Pharisee was shocked because he noticed that Jesus did not first wash before the meal.

39 Then the Lord said to him,

"Now then, you Pharisees make a practice of cleaning the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are filled up with enough greed to practice extortion, and wickedness. 40 You foolish people! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also?"

41 "Look! As for what is inside you--I command you to be generous to the poor, and everything will be clean for you."

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NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = ^{MT}, Mark = ^M, Luke = ^L, John = ^J, Acts = ^A. This "superscript ID" is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *red italics identify the words of Jesus*. Old Testament quotations are CAPITALIZED.

	CONTEXT DIGEST
Location	At a Pharisee's House in Judea
Timeline	October or November (Months 33, 34)
Jesus' Life Context	Stage VI: Jesus' Later Judean Ministry
	D. Jesus Minister in Judea and Trains His Disciples
	2. Jesus Warns His Disciples Not to Emulate the Pharisees
Title	iv. The Hypocrisy of the Pharisees

COMMENT:

In today's reading we see Jesus' unconditional love expressed toward the Pharisees in two ways.

First, when Jesus was invited to eat a meal with a Pharisee, he graciously accepted the offer. Jesus entered the man's home and share fellowship with him, and the other Pharisees who were in attendance, in spite of the fact that he knew the evils that lurked with their hearts.

This is a glorious demonstration of God's kind of impartial love. Jesus was the friend of the most socially reviled, outcast sinners. He was likewise open to fellowship with the people who hated him most, and sought to kill him. Only God loves unconditionally in this manner..

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Secondly, Jesus' unconditional love caused him to speak the truth to those who did not want to hear it. Like his openness to fellowship with all people, speaking the truth showed how much Jesus cared for his enemies. As Paul wrote: *"Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices in the truth."* (1 Cor. 13.6)

Jesus confronted the evil that lived within the Pharisees openly because he was relentlessly seeking to say and do what was in their best interests. That is love.

Although Jesus did not use the word "hypocrite" in today's reading, or in the "6 Woes" passage that follows (tomorrow's reading), his description of the Pharisees is centered in hypocrisy. (See DJN #125 for a review of what Jesus said about the hypocrisy of the Pharisees during his last months in Galilee.) When Jesus leveled these same charges against the Pharisees and Scribes during his last days on earth (MT 23), he repeated this phrase six times: ***"Woe to you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees--you hypocrites!"***

In today's reading, Jesus did not "immerse" (the Greek word Luke used is often translated "baptize") his hands in water to ceremonially clean them before he ate. This shocked his host. For a Pharisee, loving God and living a righteous life was all about scrupulously observing all the ceremonial rules the Rabbis had agreed upon.

They kept the outside of their lives squeaky clean. Yet, they saw nothing wrong with offering to buy a widow's house for next to nothing, so they could immediately resell the property for a massive profit. They were motivated by greed, for they dearly loved their money. This led to all manner of evil.

The Pharisees would give give alms if it was in a public place where people would see and admire their gifts--but would never give if it was anonymous. They were greedy enough to practice extortion, or take advantage of the weak, who had no defense against them. They would make public offerings in the smallest valued coins of their day, so they could make a show of throwing lots of coins in to the donation box. Their motivation was not generous love, it was pride.

Jesus could see that the Pharisees were filled with evil desires and sinfulness on the inside, while they were super-concerned to keep all the ceremonial rituals on the outside. It was all a farce. Their outward actions merely covered up their inner darkness. That is hypocrisy.

APPLICATION:

Integrity maintains consistency between our inner values and outer behavior. Hypocrisy deliberately maintains a cover-up...a gap...between our true inner values and motivations, and our outer behavior. Initially, we are aware of that gap. If we maintain the cover-up, we eventually become totally blind to our own sinfulness. That is why Jesus spoke straight to it in love. Honest confrontation of our blindness in hypocrisy is the only remedy for resolving it. That is what Jesus did.

Because we are all sinful people in the process of growing into Christ's image, we all battle with personal hypocrisy on some level. No one is totally consistent with their own highest ideals all the time. Jesus loves us enough to speak the truth to us, in order to set us free from what ails us. Receiving his discipline, rebuke, and correction is the only way out of hypocrisy into freedom.

Always remember, God's rebuke and discipline is motivated by his unconditional love for you.

What kind of hypocrisy do you struggle with the most? What can you do to more effectively battle against it?