
Key text: Mark 7:1-23

H_____ of the matter is a matter of the heart!

Isaiah 29:13 Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written, “These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules.” You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions.

E_____ your motives.

Mark 7:8-9 You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions... You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions!

Mark 7:10-13 ¹⁰For Moses said, “Honor your father and mother,” and, “Anyone who curses their father and mother is to be put to death.” ¹¹But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father or mother is Corban (that is, devoted to God) – ¹²then you no longer let them do anything for their father or mother. ¹³Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that.

A_____ you a modern day Pharisee?

- Check out: www.barna.com/research/christians-more-like-jesus-or-pharisees/

The 10 research statements used to examine Christ-likeness: (to what degree is this statement true of you?)

Actions like Jesus:

- I listen to others to learn their story before telling them about my faith.
- In recent years, I have influenced multiple people to consider following Christ.
- I regularly choose to have meals with people with very different faith or morals from me.
- I try to discover the needs of non-Christians rather than waiting for them to come to me.
- I am personally spending time with non-believers to help them follow Jesus.

Attitudes like Jesus:

- I see God-given value in every person, regardless of their past or present condition.
- I believe God is for everyone.
- I see God working in people’s lives, even when they are not following him.
- It is more important to help people know God is for them than to make sure they know they are sinners.
- I feel compassion for people who are not following God and doing immoral things.

The 10 statements used to assess self-righteousness, like the **Pharisees**: (to what degree is this statement true of you?)

Self-Righteous Actions:

- I tell others the most important thing in my life is following God’s rules.
- I don’t talk about my sins or struggles. That’s between me and God.
- I try to avoid spending time with people who are openly gay or lesbian.
- I like to point out those who do not have the right theology or doctrine.
- I prefer to serve people who attend my church rather than those outside the church.

Self-Righteous Attitudes:

- I find it hard to be friends with people who seem to constantly do the wrong things.
- It's not my responsibility to help people who won't help themselves.
- I feel grateful to be a Christian when I see other people's failures and flaws.
- I believe we should stand against those who are opposed to Christian values.
- People who follow God's rules are better than those who do not.

For your reflection: Paul listed of several “You might be a Pharisee if...” statements in the style of Jeff Foxworthy’s “You Might be a Redneck” jokes. Take some time to examine your own life, your own walk with the Lord—are there some places where you might be a Pharisee?

R_____.

- “.....turning to God and changing the way you think and act...”
- Check out: **1 John 1:8-9** and **Philippians 3:1-21**

2 Corinthians 7:8-10 ⁸Even if I cause you sorrow by my letter, I did not regret it. Though I did regret it – I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while – ⁹yet now I am happy not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. ¹⁰Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

T_____ transformation and change happens from the inside out!

- “...a complete or major change in someone or something’s appearance, form, etc.”
- In the Greek, the word used for transformation is *metamorphosis*! (Think caterpillar becoming a butterfly.)

Romans 12:1-2 ¹Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship. ²Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

Questions for reflection/discussion at home and in your life group:

1. Do you agree that “the heart of the matter is a matter of the heart?” Why or why not?
2. On a scale of 1 to 10, when it comes to being a “modern day Pharisee,” how would you rate yourself and why? What motivates you to do the things you do?
3. Check out this Barna Group’s study: www.barna.com/research/christians-more-like-jesus-or-pharisees
 - a. How would you rate yourself?
4. When it comes to transformation and change—what’s your part? What’s your next step? Who are you in relationship with who can help you?
5. What was *for you* in this message? What, from this message, is God pressing upon you to *share* with someone else?

The Book of Mark Reading Plan:

June 17-June 23: **Mark 7:24-8:26**

June 24-June 30: **Mark 8:27-9:13**

July 1-July 7: **Mark 9:14-50**