

## Pharisees: Zeal Gone Bad

### **SPIRITUAL HYPER-DOGS**

Acts 26:5

- A hunger for God's **Word**
- A passion for God's **glory**
- A zeal to **convert others**
- A commitment to **spiritual disciplines**
- An obsession with **holiness**

### **IMPRESSING PEOPLE/ DEPRESSING JESUS**

Matthew 23:1-33/ Matthew 23:28

The people said, "**Wow!**" Jesus said, "**Woe!**"

### **WHAT WENT WRONG?**

Beware of "spirituality" that results in...

- 1 **Looking down on others**  
Luke 18:9-14
- 2 **Hypocrisy & a desire to impress others**  
Luke 12:1-3/ Matthew 6:1-18/ Matthew 23:5-12 & 27-28
- 3 **Majoring on minors**  
Luke 6:1-12/ Matthew 23:16-24
- 4 **Extra-biblical rules**  
Mark 7:1-8/ Colossians 2:20-23/ Romans 14:1-15:7/ Matthew 23:25-26
- 5 **A disdain for "sinners"**  
Matthew 9:10-13/ Matthew 23:13

### **ZEAL DONE RIGHT**

Micah 6:8/ Philippians 3:1-9/ 1 Corinthians 9:19-27

Become a spiritual hyper-dog tempered by  
**love** & **mercy** & **humility**

## Food for Thought

For the week of July 19, 2009  
(Questions and Scriptures for further study)

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1. This weekend we took a look at what Jesus had to say about hypocrisy. Thinking back on the sermon and your own experience, how would you describe a hypocrite? Jot down how the following scriptures expand or change your understanding of what hypocrisy looks like and how you can avoid it in your own life.

### Matthew 7:21-23

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. [22] Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' [23] Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!' [NIV]

### Matthew 15:7-9

You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you:

[8] " 'These people honor me with their lips,  
but their hearts are far from me.  
[9] They worship me in vain;  
their teachings are but rules taught by men.'" [NIV]

### James 3:10

Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be. [NIV]

### Titus 1:16

They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good. [NIV]

### Luke 6:46

"Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? [NIV]

2. Larry showed us why the Pharisees were criticized for their "zeal gone bad." The Apostle Paul, who was once a Pharisee himself, still encouraged the early church to be zealous about their faith. He wrote, "Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord" (Romans 12:11). What do the following passages encourage us to be zealous about?

### Psalms 1:1-3

Blessed is the man  
who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked  
or stand in the way of sinners  
or sit in the seat of mockers.  
[2] But his delight is in the law of the Lord,  
and on his law he meditates day and night.  
[3] He is like a tree planted by streams of water,  
which yields its fruit in season  
and whose leaf does not wither.  
Whatever he does prospers. [NIV]

### **John 13:1-17**

It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.

[2] The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. [3] Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; [4] so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. [5] After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

[6] He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

[7] Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

[8] "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

[9] "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

[10] Jesus answered, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." [11] For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

[12] When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. [13] "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. [14] Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. [15] I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. [16] I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. [17] Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them. [NIV]

### **Philippians 2:1-11**

If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, [2] then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. [3] Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. [4] Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

[5] Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

[6] Who, being in very nature God,  
did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,

[7] but made himself nothing,  
taking the very nature of a servant,  
being made in human likeness.

[8] And being found in appearance as a man,  
he humbled himself  
and became obedient to death--  
even death on a cross!

[9] Therefore God exalted him to the highest place  
and gave him the name that is above every name,

[10] that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

[11] and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father. [NIV]

How could zeal in each of these areas "go bad"?

3. The Pharisees were described as having a “d disdain for sinners,” while Jesus was particularly fond of the same people. Take a minute to ask God about the condition of your own heart as you think about the people Jesus came to save. How do you think God could use you to make a difference in their lives?

Is there a “zeal for God” in your own life that could be magnetic or attractive to the people you see on a regular basis?

Is there a “zeal for God” that could be repellant to the same people?