

## *Parables Confronting the Pharisees*

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**Introduction:** The parables of Jesus were often spoken in the midst of opposition and controversy.

- A. The group that Jesus was most often in conflict with was the Pharisee's.
  - 1. He warned His disciples about their deadly influence. **(Mt 16:5-6, 12)**
  - 2. Jesus did not shrink from the confrontation with the Pharisees but always tried to get them to see their hearts.
  - 3. This kind of love must be the goal of our teaching as well! **(2 Tim 2:24-26)**
  - 4. When you get someone to see their hearts, you have done all you can do. The "ball" now is in their court.
- B. Jesus' Parables were powerful in controversy. **(Mt 13:10-13)**
  - 1. In many cases they answered the applications of the parables correctly, only to see they had condemned themselves!
  - 2. Also the parables had the effect of hiding from those who were unwilling to think while revealing to those who would seek out the truth!

### ***I. Parables Exposing Self-Righteousness***

- A. What is self-righteousness? **(Lk 18:9)**
  - 1. The essence of self-righteousness is a man had stopped looking at God.
  - 2. In this state of mind these men could not find the true righteousness of God. **(Rom 10:1-2; 4:1-4)**
  - 3. How could a man actually think he could earn salvation?
  - 4. The Pharisees often associated "righteousness" with their man-made traditions and their party affiliations. **(Jn 5:42-44)**
- B. Jesus used a Tax collector as an example of righteousness! **(Lk 18:10-14)**
  - 1. The Pharisee could not imagine any Tax collector as being righteous. Why?
  - 2. Jesus contrasted a Pharisee specifically with a Tax collector!
  - 3. The Pharisee's did not know how a man is righteous before God.
- C. Jesus used the parable of the two sons to reveal the kind of religion the Pharisee's espoused.
  - 1. The Pharisees were enraged over Jesus cleansing the temple again. **(Mt 21:12-13)**
  - 2. In a confrontation with Jesus, they showed they feared the people more than they loved God's truth. **(Mt 21:23, 25)**
  - 3. In response to this He told a parable. **(Mt 21:28-32)**
  - 4. The religion of God is more than a "talk religion."
    - a. Some of the hardest hearts can tell you what the Bible says.
    - b. They sat in the audience while their hearts were not touched thinking: "I am righteousness".
    - c. Sadly people can be so satisfied in their own righteousness that they fail to see what is plain to God. **(Mt 23:4)**
    - d. Which son are you?

### ***II. Parables Exposing Hypocrisy***

- A. What is a hypocrite? (**Lk 11:44-47**)
  - 1. **Hypokrites** 1) one who answers, an interpreter 2) an actor, stage player 3) a dissembler, pretender, hypocrite.
  - 2. You are in essence playing a part; your heart is somewhere else. (**Mt 15:8**)
- B. The parable of the good Samaritan exposed one lawyer.
  - 1. The lawyer wanted to “test” Jesus. Where is his heart? (**Lk 10:25**)
  - 2. Jesus in turn tests the lawyer! (**Lk 10:28-29**)
  - 3. This is a question of a man who does not want to see! I know of some who think they are spiritual because they raise many questions and then do what they want.
  - 4. Here is a picture so plain anyone could see. Notice who was the hero! (**Jn 8:48, Lk 10:30-35**)
  - 5. Now for the question! (**Lk 10:36-37**)
  - 6. You had better watch out when you expose one’s heart!
- C. The parable of the wicked vine-dressers was also presented to a hostile group.
  - 1. This is in the same context as the parable of the two sons.
  - 2. How would you answer the Lord? (**Mt 21:33-40**)
  - 3. They answered correctly. Watch out! (**Mt 21:41-45**)
  - 4. Most people who fail to understand do not have a lack of ability to think.
  - 5. Did they see Jesus’ point? (**Mt 21:45-46**)

### ***III. Parables Exposing Blindness***

- A. The Pharisee’s were made blind because of their pride. This was seen when Jesus healed a blind man. (**Jn 9:35-41**)
- B. The parables of the lost sheep and the lost boy were spoken in controversy.
  - 1. Jesus responded to this criticism. (**Lk 15:1-2**)
  - 2. In the parable of the lost sheep men rejoiced! The Pharisee’s could not because of their blindness. (**Lk 15:3-7**)
  - 3. We often focus on the prodigal son and his relationship to the father. This is not the point of the parable. (**Lk 15:11-24**)
  - 4. The point of the parable is the elder son. Who do he represent? (**Lk 15:25-32**)
- C. The parable of the great supper also was an answer to the Pharisees.
  - 1. They were very critical of Jesus. They looked only to find fault. (**Lk 14:1-4**)
  - 2. While Jesus was in their midst there was opportunity. These blind men were to fulfill the parable Jesus now tells. (**Lk 14:15-18, 24**)
  - 3. How sad to be so blind as to pursue something only to reject it when it is offered!

### ***Conclusion:*** What was the end of the Pharisees?

- A. Some were converted to Christ. (**Phil 3:5, 8**)
- B. Most were lost for eternity. (**Mt 21:45-46**)
- C. Where is your heart? In what do you trust?
  - 1. Your outward activity and your religious “heritage” is meaningless without a right heart before God.
  - 2. Too many are very casual about the things of God. They will miss what God has for them unless they repent!