

Clean Hands, Dirty Hearts

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[0:00] If you have your Bible, why don't you stand and turn to the book of Luke, chapter number 11. Luke, chapter number 11. Back in our series, I love this series in the Gospel of Luke. Watching how Jesus lives His life and how He lives there on mission.

And we're going to see how He kind of interacts with some Pharisees, the religious elite. You know, sometimes Jesus' most harsh confrontations are with the religious crowd.

We're the ones that kind of thought they knew it and had it together. Jesus reminds them, you're missing the point. And I want to preach a message today entitled this, Clean Hands, Dirty Hearts. Because that's what Jesus is going to show us right here. Verse number 37 of Luke, chapter 11.

The Bible says this. And as He spake, a certain Pharisee besought Him to dine with Him.

And He went in and sat down to meet. And when the Pharisees saw it, He marveled that He had not first washed before dinner. And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter, but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness?

[1:07] Ye fools, did not he that made that which was without make that which is within also? But rather give alms of such things as you have, and behold, all things are clean unto you.

But woe unto you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs and Passover judgment and the love of God. These ought ye have done, and not to leave the other undone. Woe unto you Pharisees! For ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues and greetings in the markets. Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!

For ye are as graves which appear not, and then men that walk over them are not aware of them. I think you can tell right off the bat, we're going to dig in a little bit and see exactly what He means, but when Jesus starts coming and saying, whoa, whoa, you need to watch out, He's serious about some things.

And these aren't things that are just for the Pharisees. I think we're going to see, if we're not careful, some of the very things they were doing that Jesus was saying, hey, don't do this, can easily creep up in our life.

[2:22] And so that's what we're going to look at this morning. Let's go to the Lord and ask Him to bless this time together. Father, we thank You for this time we can open up Your Word. Lord, I pray that You would help us just to focus on it for a minute.

Lord, I pray that You would just speak to us and challenge us where need be, convict us. Lord, I pray You would encourage us. Lord, we need You. We need to make sure that we're living the life You've called us to.

Because Lord, many times it's easy to start just checking some boxes off. But Lord, that's not what You've asked us to do. That's not the mission You've called us to live on. Lord, I pray that if there is someone here today that doesn't know You as their Savior, Lord, they would see it's not about what we are doing, but about what You've done already for us.

Lord, I pray You'd be with me now. You would empty me of self, cleanse me of sin, fill me with Your Spirit, that I might be a help to Your people this morning. We ask it in Christ's name. Amen. Thank you so much for standing. May be seated. I think there is a difference on how people view cleanliness.

Like, let's just say, hypothetically, a child's view of how he brushes his teeth is probably different than his mother's. Because I'm like, hey, go brush your teeth. I mean, it's like, I'm like, did you brush your teeth?

[3:35] Yeah, I brushed my teeth. I'm like, that is amazing. And, you know, they have a dentist appointment this week, so now they're like, we've got to really brush our teeth because it's dentist appointment week. And I think we all do that as adults, too. Like, man, I've got to brush my teeth because I've been brushing it, but, you know, maybe if I brush it good for one week, it will get rid of all the six months of eating candy right before bed.

Am I the only one that does that? Okay, I guess, whatever. I would imagine maybe cleaning your car is different than how your teenager may clean their car. Cleaning their car is just moving stuff from the front seat to the back seat.

You know, like, oh, I don't need this here. Let's just throw it back there. And that may be how they do it. Sometimes there's a scientific test to determine if your clothes are clean enough to wear. Yeah, that's good.

Maybe to you, but not to maybe everybody else around you. I was a youth pastor for almost eight years, and I learned at youth camp very quickly that a lot of the teenage boys thought that Axe body spray and cologne could replace a shower.

Not true. You know, that was one of my, that was my number one rule at youth camp. You are taking a shower. That is on the docket. The simple idea is this, that everybody maybe has a different standard of what clean looks like and how to go about it.

[4:49] And as we come to our text here in Luke chapter number 11, Jesus is kind of running head on into a group of men who thought that they had holiness all figured out.

That they would look at themselves in the mirror and they would go into the market as we saw and they would be in the synagogue and everybody would look at them and say, man, they are clean. I mean, they're the most spiritual, religious people that I have ever met.

But yet when Jesus shows up, that's not what he sees. That's not, that's not how he viewed these men. But we saw there in verse number 37, he's there and he's with this crowd.

He's been teaching. He's been preaching. He's doing all of these things. And really kind of last week was reminding them, hey, you got to be careful of, of what is in your life. Is it light? Is it truth? Or have you kind of pushed the truth out with your own darkness? And so these Pharisees, they were always looking for an opportunity to kind of trap Jesus. They wanted to get him in an environment kind of where they were kind of making the rules as they went.

[5:54] So this Pharisee, he invites him to lunch. He invites him to have a meal with him. And Luke tells us that something shocking to them happens at the end of verse number 37.

It says, and he, talking about Jesus, went in and sat down to meet. We think, isn't that what he was supposed to do? Wasn't he invited to have a meal? Absolutely. But we notice there in the next verse that Jesus did not wash his hands before dinner.

How many of your mama made you wash your hands before dinner? You know, it's like, I mean, it's like mud all over the place. And we look at him like, didn't Mary teach Jesus manners?

Didn't she say, didn't she remind him that you have to wash your, your hands before dinner? Why did Jesus do this? Well, I think it's, it wasn't because he was against hygiene.

It wasn't because he was careless. I think what we're going to see as we walk through this text is Jesus is refusing, refusing to play their religious performance game.

[6:57] That, that's really what's taking place here. That's what he's doing. And, and, and, and verse number 38, it says, and when the Pharisees saw it, he marveled. This word carries the idea of just utter shock.

We've been somewhere like that. We see somebody do that and we think, can you do that? And they're thinking to themselves, he's a rabbi and they don't agree with him. And he's from the wrong side of the tracks. He's from Nazareth.

He's not some elite, wealthy Pharisee like many of these would be. And they think to themselves, how can a rabbi do this? How can a man that so, so-called loves the law and teaches others just completely disregard it himself?

See, to us, we might kind of read over and think, okay, what's the big deal? But to these men and to this man that invited him to his house specifically, this wasn't a, a small slip in etiquette.

This wasn't a small slip like, oh, I just forgot to wash my hands. No, really what's going on here, the reason he was shocked by it is that this was proof of something that they had all highly suspected.

[8:05] That Jesus wasn't serious about the law. That Jesus wasn't serious about holiness. Because that's what the Pharisees were all about. And Jesus is going to use this moment, he's going to use this interaction, this lack of hand washing to expose a truth that can still offend people today.

That God is after the inside. That God wants your heart. Because we are much like the Pharisees, you know, we can put a good facade on the outside.

But Jesus says, hey, what's it look like on the inside? What's your life really like? And before we really jump into the meat of this text, so to speak, I want us to understand who these Pharisees were.

We hear this group all the time. Many of the Pharisees were scribes, which would have been like a lawyer or an expert in the law of God.

Like I'm going through the book of Leviticus right now, it's kind of in my daily Bible reading. Like, yeah, you know what I'm saying? And you're thinking, this is the most boring thing.

[9:18] And a lot of it doesn't apply to us. I just want to say this to you, though. You know what it reminds us? That God is a God of detail. And he cares greatly about you. And he was giving that to a people that had just come out of slavery and Egyptian bondage.

He was helping them live their life in just simple matters. But these men, they love that kind of stuff. I mean, they were all about the law. And I mean, if you mess up one of those things, because sometimes you read through Leviticus, you're like, man, I wouldn't have made it back then.

I'd have been done for. And that's kind of where these men were. To say that they loved the Scripture, to say that they loved the law, the first five books of the Bible especially, would have been a gross understatement.

In fact, they revered God's law so deeply that they built extra rules around it. Jewish tradition would say this, that their tradition is a fence around the law.

I mean, because God, we saw in the book of Exodus chapter 20, that he gives the Ten Commandments. And those are to follow. And it kind of helps us in our relationships with other people. But it helps us in our relationship with God that those two things can help us live a better life.

[10:25] But you think to yourself, man, I have a hard enough time with the Ten Commandments. I don't need all these extra ones. And some scholars tell us there was up to over 600 laws.

That's crazy. Why would they do that? Well, the idea initially was rooted out of a good place. They thought to themselves, if there's extra boundaries that we build around this, we're never going to come close to breaking God's commandments.

That's a good thing. Listen, we're not out here just trying to live our life, just break all these commandments like it's no big deal. No, it is a big deal. And that was kind of their heart initially. But by the time we get to the first century, by the time Jesus is on the scene, it is kind of spiraled completely out of control.

See, these Pharisees, they were disciplined. They were meticulous. They were admired by all those around them. And really, when you kind of really study their life and you study even Jewish history, they drew a hard line between themselves and the common people.

It's not that they didn't necessarily love them, so to speak. They just wanted everybody to know, hey, we're better than you. I mean, that's kind of their idea. Like, I know you're Jews, but we're better Jews. I mean, look how we dress.

[11:45] Look at all our fancy prayers that we pray in public in front of everybody. That's kind of where they were. And really, when it came down to it, they were especially hard-nosed about tithing and possessions and money.

And outwardly, they were this picture of religious devotion. But inwardly, we're going to see something had gone terribly wrong.

And Jesus is going to address it. Not because he's trying to call them on the carpet and make a fool of them. No, it's because he loves them. Because Jesus didn't come to prop up this religion.

No, he came to give them a relationship. He came to give them something real. Because all of those laws and all of those sacrifices and all of those feasts that they were so particular about doing, here's what they were pointing to.

All the Old Testament is pointing to this, Jesus. And yet, he's standing there. He's speaking to them. He's loving them. He's doing miracles. And they're completely missing it.

[12:46] As we walk through our text here this morning, we're going to see this truth. That the Pharisees believed holiness worked from the outside in.

But Jesus teaches them, as he teaches us, that holiness begins from the inside out. See, they worked so hard to make sure the outside looked great.

But Jesus wants them to know, and he wants us to know, that real life change, real transformation starts in our heart. That that's where it begins, and that's where it must begin.

And just like Jesus does over and over, he doesn't leave it as theory. He immediately illustrates it. He shows us things and things they would have understood.

In verse number 39, he looks around the table, and guess what? He sees a cup. He sees a platter. Everybody understood that. And what he shows them in this conversation is he's going to lay out five dangers of outside in religion.

[13:50] He's there, and they've gathered around, and they're just baffled he didn't wash his hands. He said, listen, I want to show you kind of where you're missing the point. So the first danger that we see about outside in religion is this, is that it cleans the outside, but neglects the heart.

It cleans the outside, but neglects the heart. That's what we see in verse number 39. And the Lord said unto him, now do you Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter, but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness?

Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without make that which is within also? So he sets down to dinner with these men, and no doubt there would have been a crowd gathered.

Because we're going to see in a minute, the Pharisees loved the attention. They wanted everybody to see how fancy they were. They wanted everybody to see how big a spread they had for just a light meal, and how fancy their house was, and all of these different things.

And I want us to kind of picture sitting at this table. Their hands are probably still damp from the ritual washing, the washing of the hands. They outwardly, as they sat there and all the people looked around, I mean, they looked spotless.

[15:09] These were religiously impressive people. And Jesus said, wow, you're so impressive. That is not what Jesus said.

Sometimes I think people, like if Jesus were here, he'd be so popular. I don't think Jesus was as popular as we even think he was in his day. Because he told the truth, and guess what? From the beginning of time, we haven't really cared for the truth that much.

Because the truth exposes. That's what Jesus talked about last week with light. No, in fact, what he said, he said, hey guys, your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.

Inside, they were decaying. We don't use that word very often, but ravening has this idea of grabbing and devouring and taking whatever they wanted. See, when they would walk through the markets and they would be in the synagogue, everybody would be like, man, they're so pious and they're so spiritual.

Jesus said, that's not what you are on the inside. You're a hypocrite. A hypocrite is just somebody that plays two parts. And that's why he keeps calling them out over and over again.

[16:19] Because the idea is they wanted everybody to think they were generous and everybody to think they were holy. But Jesus says, listen, greed is what's ruling your heart. Greed is what's on the inside.

They talked a big religious game, but they didn't really live it out. They taught everybody about how they should love God. And Jesus shows up at this dinner and says, listen, you may look like you

love God on the outside, but that's not what's on the inside.
And they didn't like this. Who is this guy? How does he know who we are inside? Well, he's God.
And that's what he does. That's what he's interested in.

Listen, we can fool everybody around us, but we can't fool God. That he knows what's on the inside. He knows our hearts. And here's the beautiful thing. He still loves you.

But he also tells us the truth. Listen, that shouldn't be in there sometimes. See, these men, they didn't desire God. Maybe that's what they did for their job.

[17:22] But really what they desired, and you can see it throughout the Gospels, they wanted power. They wanted that prestige. They wanted that influence in Israel. They wanted to accumulate that wealth.

And when Jesus showed up, guess what they started losing? Prestige and power and influence. Because they were on the rigidity of the law. And you have to do this and this and this. Because that's the only way that God loves you.

And yet Jesus shows up and says, come unto me, all you that labor and heavy laden. Come unto me, all you that are struggling. And he was preaching the Gospel. That's not what they were looking for.

See, these men were certain when the Messiah showed up, he'd pat them on the back and say, hey everybody, be like him. And Jesus said, hey everybody, follow me. This is what it looks like.

Simply put, they weren't living for God. These were men that were living for themselves and nobody knew it. Why? Because their religious performance, it hid their corrupt desires.

[18:24] Now, when you come to the end of the Gospels, you see it all eking out, don't you? These men that were in charge of all the religion, they said, Liz, let's kill this man. That didn't just happen overnight, by the way.

That was already in there. That was already what they were feeding. See, even though they had freshly washed hands and they followed all the ceremonial laws, their hearts contradicted all of that. And just like Isaiah said and Jesus repeated to them in the book of Matthew, this people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth and honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

And we think, man, these guys, they need to get it together. How dare they do that? But let me just remind you that this mindset still exists today.

Because here's the reality. It's a lot easier to make the outside look good than what's on the inside. Because we're just, all we can see about each other is the outside.

[19:32] Sometimes, just bringing it where we live, we think holiness is about church attendance. That's not. Don't misinterpret that.

I'll see you next Sunday. Preacher said, preacher said it's not about church attendance. It's not about a religious routine. It's not about a generous appearance.

It's not about a spiritual vocabulary. Listen, we can say all the right things. We can say all the things. We can know all the words. We can say all the Christian lingo. Listen, it's not about keeping things looking clean.

Because you can do all of those things. And still be ruled by pride and greed and bitterness and control. You can look all clean and nice on the outside.

But be corrupt and ravening and full of wickedness on the inside. I get it. This is not popular preaching this day. But it's so true.

[20:35] I'm thankful that God loves us enough. That he wants our heart that much. That he knows that we're prone to this. And yet he still comes after. Listen, he's there with this man.

And he wants him to get a hold of this truth. He wants him to understand how much he loves him.

But here's the beautiful thing. Jesus doesn't just expose the disease. He exposed the problem.

He points to the cure. Jesus doesn't say, hey, you're out of luck, man. No, he reminds us. Yeah, the outside might be clean. But I can help you on the inside.

And what he shows us is how the inside actually becomes clean. Because outside in religion, here's what it does. It promotes performance, not heart change.

That's the issue that these men have. Look at verse number 41. But rather, give alms of such things as you have. And behold, all things are clean unto you.

[21:37] In other words, Jesus is saying this. Get rid of the greed. Repent of the wickedness. Let God cleanse your heart. And when the inside changes, the outside is going to change as well.

That's what he wanted them to see. Listen, don't misunderstand. Jesus wasn't calling them to wash their hands harder. He was calling them to surrender their hearts.

See, it was a lot easier. Their religion was a lot easier to follow. Because all you had to do was just check a box. Hey, go to synagogue. Tithe. Act like you're being nice to people.

And they just checked it off. You know what? Then they're good. But when Jesus showed up on the scene, he didn't destroy the law. He fulfilled it. And honestly, he actually raised the bar.

You read the Sermon on the Mount, that's exactly what he's doing. Because he says things like this. You've heard it said. He's talking to the commoners. You know where they heard it said? The Pharisees. Because the Pharisees said, hey, as long as you don't kill anybody.

[22:41] Jesus said, you've heard it said you shouldn't kill somebody. But I say unto you, if you have hate in your heart for your brother, you've already killed him. See, Jesus wasn't destroying the law. He was making it even more difficult.

Because the Pharisee was never the bar. Here's the bar. Jesus Christ. And we're never going to get to Christ by what we do. It's not about a performance.

It's about a heart change. See, real holiness, spiritual cleanliness always flows from the heart. But that's what Jesus is teaching.

He isn't saying, don't misunderstand what he's saying. He's not saying, hey, if you just start giving to a bunch of people, you give alms. Because they love to give their tithes. They love to give their offerings. He's not saying if you do that, you're going to earn cleanliness.

You're going to earn holiness. No, here's what he's teaching in verse 41. That generosity, it exposes true repentance. If God has really changed the inside.

[23:38] If God really has a hold of your heart, it's going to be exposed in a good way. It's going to come out. Because if you love God, guess what you should also love? People.

These Pharisees didn't love either one of them. Who did they love? Them. That was their issue. See, when God breaks the grip of selfishness and greed and wickedness on the inside, listen, it should change the outside.

Listen, think about before you knew the Lord as your Savior. And I hope everybody here knows Christ as your Savior. He came so we could have a real life. A life that's worth living of joy and peace and purpose.

That's why he died on the cross. Because we have a sin debt we couldn't pay. And he paid that debt. He willingly laid down his life. And when you get a hold of that truth that you were dead and your trespasses and your sins, and Jesus gave you a brand new life, you shouldn't be mad about that.

Well, Jesus changed me. Well, I don't want to be your friend. Listen, the idea is, you know, we sing that song in children's church, I got the joy, joy, joy, where?

[24:47] Down in my heart. You go back there, the kids singing, they're jumping all around, jumping up and down. You think, I can't believe that. Listen, I hope you're still excited that Jesus changed your life. Because I would imagine many of you, like myself, like, well, I'm a good person, and I go to church.

My mom and dad made me go to church, but at least I'm a good person. And Jesus said, hey, hey, hey, it's not about what you're doing. That's not going to get you where you want to go. Why don't you give me your heart and let me take you somewhere?

Why don't you surrender it and lay it down? And before we move on, I just want to make sure we understand that salvation does not begin with cleaning yourself up. That's not what Jesus is saying. He said, you start doing things, and then you're going to get better. No, he says it starts with your heart. And when God does that, he's saying, I didn't come to prop up your religion. He came to give a relationship.

Because when he has your heart, everything changes, not just the outside, the inside. But even after salvation, I think we can focus more on religion than relationship.

[25:51] Listen, you can know the Lord is your Savior. You can trust him with your eternity, but it's easy to slip back into checking boxes.

Because it's just kind of how we operate in our life. And Jesus shows us how that played out in their lives, not by what they ignored, but by what they emphasized wrongly.

That's what we see here in verse number 42. That inside out, outside in religion, it majors on minor things and misses what actually matters the most.

Look at verse number 42. But woe unto you Pharisees, for you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs and Passover judgment and the love of God.

These ought ye to have done and not to leave the other undone. This is not going to be a message on giving, but he's not saying stop giving. I knew that would go over real well.

[26:54] That's not what he's saying. He's saying you can do both. And you should do both because it's not about the outside. It's about what God is doing in your heart. And how God is working in your life.

And he's reminding them, hey listen, you're faithful givers. And to say they're faithful givers, man, that's getting, they were beyond that. You know, they weren't just bringing 10% of their income.

Every time they would go tithe, you know what they would do? They would go in their garden and they would get all their herbs and they would tithe 10% of all their herbs. Don't bring your cinnamon and spice and put it in the offering plate. We don't, you know, we don't need that.

But that's what they would do. They weren't going to just go 10% of their actual money. They're going to go 10% of everything they had. And they're measuring out leaf by leaf. Well, I got 10 mint leaves, so I'm going to give one to the synagogue.

I mean, that's the level that they were on. And Jesus says, listen, listen, you're great givers. You do a lot of things. You can measure all these percentages of your herbs, but you won't lift a finger to help somebody that has a burden in their life.

[28:03] What are you missing right there? Like, you see somebody in need and you're just going to run right past them. Listen, they knew what to do. They knew what God expected of them.

They knew the Old Testament. We've already made that clear. The prophet Micah said this. He has showed thee, O man, what is good. And what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God.

I don't think they're doing that. They wanted to uphold all the law. But Jesus said, listen, I think that's what you need to do. John the apostle tells us in 1 John 3, 17, But whoso hath this world's good and seeth his brother have a need and shuteth up his bowels of compassion for him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

Listen, we may not be able to meet every need that we see. But the idea is this, that when we love God and we're following God, sometimes God lays a burden right in our path.

He lays a person on our heart. And sometimes it's a simple thing of going to lunch with him, shooting a text, being kind, praying for him. And we think, well, I don't need to do that right now. But we look all real good on the outside.

[29:16] We love God. And yet God is saying, hey, they need somebody to love them. Why don't you tell them how much I love them? And the application is simple. It's possible to give faithfully and love shallowly.

That's what Jesus is saying. He said, listen, you do a great job of tithing, but what about the love of God? You kind of miss that part.

That's what he's calling them out for. It's possible to support the ministry of the church and to support worldwide missions and completely ignore people. That's what they did.

And listen, this is a hard thing to hear. But it's possible we can fall into this same idea of them, that we can do all the right activity with the completely wrong heart.

And if you trace the problem back far enough, you're going to discover something deeper than neglect. You're going to find motive. Because the truth is this, when compassion disappears in our life, pride is usually hiding somewhere nearby.

[30:25] And that's where they were. And what Jesus does here is he kind of pulls the curtain back on what was really driving their religion. An outside-in religion loves praise more than it loves God.

That's where they were. Look at verse number 43. Woe unto you Pharisees, for ye love the uppermost seats in synagogues and greetings in the marketplace.

As we've seen even already in this text, when it came to the Pharisees and the religious elite, Jesus didn't mince words. I would imagine, I don't know how long this conversation took, but maybe those kind of freshly washed hands are sweating now.

You ever been in a situation like that where you just kind of feel like it going downhand, and you're like, man, I need this dinner to end like right now. I don't want to be here. That's kind of where they are right now.

And we look at this verse, and we kind of think, what does that mean? Well, in this day and in the synagogue there in Israel, the most important seats, we know this wasn't a Baptist church, the most important seats were in the front.

[31:43] And we're not talking like this front. We're talking these seats were up on the stage. Listen, some of y'all would die. If we were so full one day and you came in a little bit late, and the only seats were up here, you'd be like, God doesn't want me to be in church today.

I mean, that's what it is. That's just how it goes. But not the Pharisees. Man, they got to church early so they could sit in these seats.

They loved to be seen. They loved looking spiritual while the Scripture was read. They loved appearing holy during worship. They loved long, elaborate greetings in public.

That's what they were about. They loved, and you see it all throughout the Gospels, they loved the praise of men. They weren't really pointing people to praise God.

What they were really doing in all of their things, people would look at them and say, wow. They'd walk by in the market, and people would think, man, I could never be that holy.

[32:50] I could never be that good of a Christian. I mean, my life is a disaster. I mean, they got it all together. They don't ever do any wrong.

But sometimes our perception is not always reality. Because plain and simple, their religion had become a performance. And the tragedy is that their pride left no room for the very God they claimed to serve.

You can have all these things. You can do all the stuff in the church. But here's the question.

Where's your heart? Why are you doing it? Because if we aren't careful, we can fall into the trap of serving to be seen, giving to be admired, living for the applause of others.

Listen, I just want to remind us, it's not about us. It's all about Him. Remember what John the Baptist said in John 3, verse 30? He must increase.

But I must decrease. That's the heart that God calls us to have. The Pharisees, they flop that around. I need to increase. We've got to get rid of this guy. And we're going to see that next week.

[34:01] They're trying to find a place to trap Him in His words so they can get rid of Him. We're not the master. Jesus is the master. He's in control.

He's the Lord. We are just servants. If you go through almost every letter in the New Testament, it will start something like this. Paul, a servant of God.

Peter, a servant of God. John, a servant of God. That's how they viewed themselves. Why?

Because Jesus was their master. And we need to look at our own life and have a servant's heart and a servant's mentality that we don't give to be seen.

We give because God has blessed us and we want others to have the opportunity to hear the gospel in Spain and across the street and wherever God allows this church to have an influence.

How do you know if you're a servant?

If you have a servant's heart? How do you act when you're treated like one? That's a good thought.

And Jesus is kind of meeting them where they are. And the sad thing is that pride was the engine of their religion.

[35:10] And when pride becomes the engine of why you're doing what you're doing, here's the bad news. It doesn't stay contained. It doesn't stay in just your life.

Jesus kind of ends this confrontation with one of his strongest images yet. And he gives us this final warning that outside in religion, it spreads corruption quietly.

Look at verse number 44 and we'll be done. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them. What is Jesus saying here? He's saying this. An unmarked grave is dangerous because you don't avoid it. And you end up stepping on it without knowing it.

And to us that may not be a huge deal. I know that when I visited a cemetery before, my parents would be like, don't run on the graves. Don't do this. You know, we have kind of some protocol when it comes to that.

[36:15] But just a little bit of background, and we won't labor the point a lot. But Jewish law, back in Leviticus and all these other things, touching a grave of a person made somebody ceremonially unclean.

And for them that was a big deal. It wasn't a long process, but there was a, when they became ceremonially unclean, they had to go through all of these steps. That's what Leviticus is telling us. And the law, they would tell them all these things.

And the idea is they wouldn't be able to go to the synagogue, and they wouldn't be able to go to be a part of the tabernacle in the Old Testament. They had to set aside for a while, and it would affect their life. And that's why graves were normally marked clearly.

So people could avoid them. They wouldn't step on them. They wouldn't break the ceremonial law. But an unmarked grave was dangerous because you didn't know it was there until it had already happened.

Until you already sat on it. And then you've got to go through this whole process. So I hope you kind of see what he's saying. He's saying this. You Pharisees are not just hurting yourselves.

[37:18] You're damaging people all around you. It's not just confined to your heart and to your inside. No, their outward religion looks safe.

Everybody look around and say, wow. Man, I wish I could pray like that. I mean, hear how long he prays? He says all these names, and I've never even heard them before. And he says these and thousands and all these things.

He's so spiritual. But the inside was full of decay. In another place, Jesus says, listen, you're like whitewashed sepulchers. You look really good on the outside.

You see all these tombs. I love watching the History Channel and the Egyptian mummies. Man, they look so beautiful on the outside. Overlaid in pure gold. Guess what's inside? Dead people. He said that's what you are.

That's what a Pharisee is. And when people followed the Pharisees and they admired them and they learned from them, here's what happened. That decay spread. Hypocrisy always multiplies.

[38:19] It doesn't stay private. And to kind of bring it where we are. When the heart isn't changed. When God is speaking to you and all we're worried about is the outside.

You know what's going to suffer? Your home. Your family. This church. Your faith. It's going to grow shallow. This type of hypocrisy.

It leaks into our families and our conversations and our churches. And people can get hurt by what looked safe. Jesus said we've got to avoid that. We don't want to have. Jesus is not calling us to an outside in religion.

And when you step back and you look at all of these warnings. This one truth kind of rises to the surface. That outside in religion it produces hypocrisy. But this inside out religion.

This transformation that Jesus wants to do in our life. Here's what it's going to produce. Holiness in your life. And we should strive for that. Because the Bible tells us be ye holy for I am holy.

[39:20] Listen if we're going to be a Christian. If we're going to be a Christ follower. Jesus and his mission. We need to be like him. And that's how he is. See Jesus doesn't just want clean hands.

He wants transformed hearts. This man was so appalled. That Jesus didn't wash his hands. Jesus said listen. I want to wash your life. Your life is much more than checking boxes.

And the same is true for us today. Jesus didn't say hey everybody come here and check some boxes off. And feel good about your week. Listen I'm glad you're here. But your life is not about this religion.

It's about the relationship that you have with Jesus Christ. Because we're not trying to fix the outside. That will happen all by itself when God gets a hold of our heart.

Listen God isn't impressed with our appearances. He's interested in our hearts. Would we respond to that today? Would we maybe take an inventory?

[40:25] Is my. Have I kind of slipped back into this outside in? Like Lord would you. Would you take my heart in. Make it what you want it to be. Would you stand with your heads bowed.

And with your eyes closed.