

put aside all anger, wrath, malice, slander and abusive speech from our mouths. We are not to lie to each other. We are to do away with all evil practices doing good to those around us to let others know we are what we say we are, a child of God. If Jesus were to stand in front of us today what do we think He would say to us? Would He say "Well done my faithful servant: or would He say "Away from me you wicked, lazy servant!". I pray that it will be "Well done my faithful servant." In Matthew 23 Jesus condemned the Pharisees and the religious leaders for outwardly appearing saintly and holy but inwardly remaining full of corruption and greed. For us today living as Christians merely as a show for others is like washing a cup on the outside only, not the inside. For when we are clean on the inside, our cleanliness on the outside won't be a sham, it will be the real thing. For when one desires the praise of men and not the praise of God, he is a worldly person and the love of God is not in him as seen in

1John 2:15-17: *"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world- the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life- is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever."*

If we as Christians really love God first we will not seek the praise of men. Instead we will yearn for the praise from God. When we truly love God we will not put our self interests first. God will truly be first in our thoughts and in our ways as seen in **James 4:7-10:** *"Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and He will lift you up."*

By Bill Davis

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Faithful Sayings

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Services

Sunday: 9:30 a.m.
10:20 a.m.
6:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.

Elders:

Ken Ford
Charles Kelley
Pat Ledbetter

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
Eddie Cook
Bill Davis
Pat Goguen
Neil Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn
Fred Perez
Rusty Scott

Evangelist:

Kyle Pope

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Outward Righteousness & Inward Corruption

When we read the Bible, unwilling to do what they demanded from the heart all that we read and people. They would also study? How often do we do their righteous deeds reflect upon what God's before men so as to be Word says to us noticed by all and regarding how we apply regarded as godly men. it in our daily lives? In These scribes and Matthew 23, we read that Pharisees wanted the Jesus denounced the praise from mere men scribes and Pharisees for instead of the praise by being corrupt. We find God as seen in **Matthew 23:1-12.** Pharisees lived a "double *"Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples saying: The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, heavy loads on the people that observe and do, but in religious matters, do not do according to their*

works; for they say, and do not do. For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.' But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is your Teacher, the Christ. But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." Here Jesus was being quite direct. He was telling the people that the scribes and Pharisees were blind spiritual guides for the people, even though they were supposed to know the law of Moses and be able to teach the people about God's laws and His ways. They were supposed to lead and teach the people concerning how they were to live.

Matthew 23: 13-22 *"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation. Woe to you, scribes and*

Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves. Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obliged to perform it.' Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that sanctifies the gold? And, 'Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is obliged to perform it.' Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift? Therefore he who swears by the altar, swears by it and by all things on it. He who swears by the temple, swears by it and by Him who dwells in it. And he who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by Him who sits on it."

As Christians today, when we read Matthew 23 do we examine our own hearts and lives? Are we like the scribes and Pharisees who were not true to their God? I hate to say it but in our society today a lot of luke warm Christians act just like the scribes and Pharisees that Jesus was talking about. We'll tell those around us in our work place and family that they need to be saved and be a member of the Lord's body. We show them in the Bible how they are to live their daily lives according to God's word and to leave the world behind them. But do we, as children of

God practice what we preach or teach? Do we let our actions speak louder than mere words? Do those around us know by our actions that we are children of God? Is our speech seasoned with God's word or is it seasoned with filthy talk and foul language? Do we let our "Yes be Yes" and our "No be No" or in other words do we speak out of both sides of our mouths as seen in **Matthew 23:23-26**: *"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithes of mint and anise and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel! Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also."*

Do we as Christians read the Bible everyday and study it so as to be able to present ourselves ready to teach others and lead those around us to the saving power of Jesus? Do we as Christians desire to be godly, and glorify our God in heaven? Do we merely want to be seen as godly when we are in public places and have men give us special attention because we can give long prayers, or give the appearance of being godly in church, or put up a good front when others are watching us? Do we have ourselves trained to live a double life in which every time we're in public places we always show our good side? Who are we when no one else sees us but God? Are our hearts focused upon pleasing God and serving Him? Have our hearts become dull and hardened by sin so that

we don't feel any shame or remorse for our actions? **Matthew 23: 27-28**: *"Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness."* As Christians today, are we like whitewashed tombs; on the outside we appear beautiful, but on the inside we are dead? I hate to say it but some of us as Christians are spiritually dead and don't even know it. Are we aware that God knows the thoughts of our hearts? Do we care? How can we lead others to Christ if our hearts are far from Him? It seems today that we don't care what goes on around us such as alcohol, drugs, adultery and the large number of divorces in this country and even in the church. We have become too comfortable with the ways of the world. If you don't believe me just look around. Do you see a very big difference between the church and the world? Today the language spoken in public won't even make us blush or get angry. It is as if we are used to these words and have become brain dead. The first step to a double life is becoming too comfortable with the ways of the world in **our everyday lives and then putting on our "Sunday best" when it's time to meet with the church to worship God. Do we care about what God sees in us as we worship Him? Do we even care if God will get angry with us when we live a double life as a Christian? We are to conduct ourselves with godly wisdom and speech towards those we come into contact with. We are to let our speech be seasoned with the grace as if it were salt so that we may know how to lead others to the Lord. As Christians, we are to**