

DINING WITH THE PHARISEES

Luke 7:36-43; 11:37-54; 14:1-24

Introduction

1. Luke records three occasions when Pharisees invited Jesus to dine with them.
 2. One of the common threads within the three accounts is that the Pharisees were given reason to regret having extended the invitations.
 3. Self-righteousness never fares well in an encounter with God.
 4. By examining these three mealtime encounters we can see many examples of what God does not want us to be.
 5. It is especially ironic that in each of the three confrontations, the people who come up short are the religious leaders.
 6. When men invent religion in their own self-righteous image, they destroy the essence of what makes true religion work.
 7. We can learn much from the mistakes of the Pharisees.
- I. The Cold Smugness of Self-Righteousness (Lk. 7:36-50).
- A. The condition of the heart determines a person's potential for repentance (Matt. 21:28-32).
 - B. Love has warmth that stands in stark contrast to the bitter cold of self-righteousness.
 - C. Self-righteousness delights in degrading others so that it can seem to be more righteous.
 - D. Self-righteousness feels no compelling sense of thanksgiving because it doesn't think it needs very much help to be acceptable to God.
 - E. Humility, on the other hand, has the warm glow of love adorned by a thankful, genuine heart.
- II. The Utter Hypocrisy of Self-Righteousness (Lk. 11:37-54).
- A. To the self-righteous, the outward is far more important than the inward.
 - B. Above all else, self-righteousness loves the praise of men.
 - C. Self-righteousness makes religion a burden rather than a joy (Matt. 11:28-30).
 - D. The self-righteous spirit hinders people from finding salvation.
 - E. Truth is an insult to the self-righteous.

III. The Dishonesty of Self-Righteousness (Lk. 14: 1-24).

- A. Self-righteousness makes a mockery of truth by resorting to hidden agendas and hypocritical tactics.
- B. Humility is the very opposite of the self-righteous attitude.
- C. Needy people are of no real concern to a self-righteous man (Matt. 9: 10-13).
- D. The mindset of the self-righteous makes excuses when it should admit a lack of commitment.
- E. The most dangerous personal consequence of self-righteousness is that those possessing it don't have a clue that they are never going to make it to heaven.

Conclusion

1. We must be very careful that a self-righteous spirit does not destroy the heart of true religion.
2. Those who take the Bible seriously must be particularly watchful lest we think that we somehow stand in our own goodness (Rom. 2: 17-24).
3. Our relationship with God must be understood as being on the basis of grace, personal humility, obedience of faith (not of merit), and thanksgiving.
4. It is only when Jesus dines with the humble, that both enjoy the meal.

edwin