

## Red Flags Part 4 – Red Flags in our Spiritual Life

**Intro:** In this message we look at the legalist attitudes of the Pharisees so that we can guard against these 'red flags' in our spiritual lives.

### **RED FLAG #1: We wear the mask of spiritual play acting. (Hypocrisy) - Matthew 23:25-26**

The biggest indictment against the Pharisees was that their devotion to God was strictly EXTERNAL Jesus called them 'hypocrites'. This word originally referred to actors in Greek theater who wore masks to portray different characters. These actors would hide their true identities behind these masks, assuming various roles on stage.

Jesus condemned the Pharisees in many ways:

- Jesus **highlighted** their legalistic interpretation of the law as placing a BURDEN on people
- He **exposed** how they would PICK AND CHOOSE which laws they would keep – how they would neglect the 'weightier' matter of the law such as justice and mercy while majoring in the minor details.
- He would **rebuke** them for teaching ONE STANDARD of righteousness but failing to live up to it themselves.
- He **exposed** their internal corruption, which was greed, power, status, control, etc.
- He **challenged** their motives as they would often 'question' Jesus but were actually trying to TRAP him.

How can we guard against this Pharisee attitude? Get back to the heart of the message:

- It's a message that not about me, it's about Christ
- It's a message of ADMITTING OUR FAULTS instead of trying to HIDE THEM.
- It's a message CENTERED ON THE CROSS – NOT RELIGIOUS PERFECTION
- It's a message CENTERED ON GOD'S GRACE – NOT MY WORKS

### **RED FLAG #2: We've become more self-righteous than spiritually humble (Self-Righteousness)**

Self-righteousness is trusting in your own righteousness – the PROBLEM is the scripture says:

- There is none righteous no not one (Rom. 3:10)
- By the works of the law no one will become righteous (Rom. 3:20)
- All our righteousness's are as filthy rags (Is. 64:6)

Remember when Jesus told the story of the self-righteous Pharisee and the tax collector praying in the

**The first issue with self righteousness is: #1: Self-Righteousness is centered on pride**

**The second issue with self-righteousness is: #2 Self-righteousness causes us to look down on others**

**The third issue with self-righteousness is #3 Self-Righteousness rejects the work of Christ.**

Galatians 2:21 (NIV): "I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!"

### **RED FLAG #3: We've turned spiritual disciplines into empty rituals (Dead Works) - Mark 7:6-9**

There's a **difference between GOOD WORKS and DEAD WORKS**. There's a big difference between **genuine devotion and empty rituals**. "God's not interested in our religious routines; He wants our hearts!"

- Dead works = done for salvation
- Good works = done from/because of salvation
- Dead works = about you
- Good works = about Christ
- Dead works = lifeless tradition
- Good works = a living faith

When you live from a place of resting in Christ, you know that any works you do are a fruit of your new creation identity. Any work you do as a born-again child of God is not to gain, earn, inherit, release, breakthrough, or manifest God's promises and blessings. The reality is, all of that is **ALREADY YOURS!!**

When we reduce our relationship with God to a series of empty rituals, we miss out on the joy and intimacy He longs to share with us.