

Day 31
Do as They Say, Not as They Do!

Matthew 5:8 (TPT) "What bliss you experience when your heart is pure! For then your eyes will open to see more and more of God."

A life that is lived for the sole purpose of glorifying God is only possible when we allow the Holy Spirit to do the consecration work in our lives. Jesus tells us the pure in heart, those who have gone through the process of God's cleansing, come out on the other side, not just better, but they can finally see. The danger of allowing leaven to grow is that we become shortsighted and it leads to spiritual blindness. When we are spiritually blind, we teach, but we do not do. *"Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, 2 'The teachers of religious law and the Pharisees are the official interpreters of the law of Moses. 3 So practice and obey whatever they tell you, but don't follow their example. For they don't practice what they teach.'" (Matthew 23:1-3 NLT)*

They teach what is right, but they don't do what is right. If Jesus were to look at your and my life, would He say the same, or something different? Would Jesus say about you that people can listen to what you say, but they should not follow your example? If others can only follow our words and cannot follow our example, we are in desperate need of a change of heart!

We lack the capacity to see what truly is going on in our hearts because, even though we say the right things, we do not follow our own profession. We teach, but we do not do! That leads to a false belief system that carries over in our behavior. This spiritual blindness leads to a duplicity that causes us to say all the right things when we are with others, but speak the exact opposite when in private. The Pharisees had a major problem with this kind of behavior, so when Jesus (Who is truth personified) shows up, He exposed this hypocrisy. *"You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you, for he wrote, 8 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. 9 Their worship is a farce, for they teach man-made ideas as commands from God.'" (Matthew 15:7-9 NLT)* What an indictment against those who were supposed to lead the way. Fake worship, according to Jesus, is saying one thing with your mouth and doing another with your lifestyle.

The Light will always expose the darkness, but when we are too blind to see the Light, it leads to a hardening of our hearts. We insist that we are right, yet according to Jesus, we are completely wrong. We insist that we see, yet Jesus says we are blind. We insist that we know what to do, yet Jesus says our priorities are completely misdirected. We insist that we know where to lead others, yet Jesus says we are both going to be falling into a ditch. All of this because we refuse to tie our behavior and our confession together. If our words and our actions do not correspond, our worship is nothing but fake. **It's nothing but a farce;** a farce that is not based on the reality of a changed heart, but is based on a pretense of a false belief system. We think we are right, yet Jesus says our hearts are far from Him.

We might not think that we are like the Pharisees of Jesus' day, but it would be very unwise not to check both our words and our actions. Why? So that we can see how close to Jesus our hearts are. The passion to know God, serve God, with all, does not allow my heart to become distracted or misdirected. Jesus says we become misdirected by claiming certain things are spiritual or even powerful, when they are not. They are simply man made ideas that have an outward appearance of a pure heart, yet inwardly, have no value whatsoever.

We have to be careful for misdirected, fake worship that looks like it is something spiritual, but really is not. The Pharisees complained about eating with unwashed hands, yet it was their unclean hearts that were the problem. So Jesus explains it: *“Then Jesus called to the crowd to come and hear. ‘Listen,’ he said, ‘and try to understand. 11 It’s not what goes into your mouth that defiles you; you are defiled by the words that come out of your mouth.’ 12 Then the disciples came to him and asked, ‘Do you realize you offended the Pharisees by what you just said?’ 13 Jesus replied, ‘Every plant not planted by my heavenly Father will be uprooted, 14 so ignore them. They are blind guides leading the blind, and if one blind person guides another, they will both fall into a ditch.’ 15 Then Peter said to Jesus, ‘Explain to us the parable that says people aren’t defiled by what they eat.’ 16 ‘Don’t you understand yet?’ Jesus asked. 17 ‘Anything you eat passes through the stomach and then goes into the sewer. 18 But the words you speak come from the heart—that’s what defiles you. 19 For from the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, all sexual immorality, theft, lying, and slander. 20 These are what defile you. Eating with unwashed hands will never defile you.’” Matthew 15:7-20 (NLT)*

Jesus says, “You cannot be defiled by the food you eat, but you are being defiled by the words you speak.” **Because our words come directly from our hearts.** When we operate with leaven, we are more interested in how we appear to be than how we really are. Having a pure heart is having a desire to do the right things, for the right reasons. In God’s view of a pure heart, right actions are only one step; right motivation is just as important as right actions. How do I know what is in my heart? What comes out of my mouth. **Our mouths are the release valve for our hearts. Your mouth is the faucet of your heart.** Listen to a person long enough and you will know what is in their heart. Listen to what people say in unguarded moments; that is what is in their hearts. Listen to what comes out of people’s mouths when they are under pressure; that is in their hearts. What is coming out of your mouth?

Most people say, “Man, I have to watch my mouth.” Jesus says the opposite. Jesus says you have to purify your heart. Your mouth follows your heart. Watching your mouth, without changing your heart, is like trying to keep your mouth closed when you have to vomit; it’s going to turn out bad! *“A tree is identified by its fruit. If a tree is good, its fruit will be good. If a tree is bad, its fruit will be bad. 34 You brood of snakes! How could evil men like you speak what is good and right? For whatever is in your heart determines what you say. 35 A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. 36 And I tell you this, you must give an account on judgment day for every idle word you speak. 37 The words you say will either acquit you or condemn you.” Matthew 12:33-37 (NLT)*

We cannot hide from our words; we can only account for them. That’s according to Jesus. **To justify something, we so easily say, “Well, God knows my heart.” That should terrify us and lead us to want to change, not want to hide.** The question is, do you know your heart? **You cannot cover up wrong behavior by confessing pure motivation. Because wrong behavior comes from wrong motivation and wrong motives come from an impure heart.** Jesus is saying, with this beatitude, that our first motivation should be to please God by allowing Him to purify our hearts and that would lead us to the right behavior before others. Paul writes and says, *“So you can see we were not preaching with any deceit or impure motives or trickery. 4 For we speak as messengers approved by God to be entrusted with the Good News. Our purpose is to please God, not people. He alone examines the motives of our hearts.” (1 Thessalonians 2:3-4 NLT)*

Having a pure heart gives us the ability to see God. When we see God, in His holiness, we realize how unholy we are. Then we cry out for a change of heart. The power of God’s grace enables us to embrace the beauty of His holiness. Our hearts long for Him so that we can reflect in our behavior, His character

and nature; then our words express this gratitude. In that way, what we say, what we do, and what we meditate in our hearts, is congruent.

What will Jesus say about our lives? Would He say, “Do as they say, not as they do!” Or would He say, “Do as they say and do as they do!” I want Him to say the latter. What about you?

Reflection and Prayer:

- Read James’ exhortation in James Chapter 3:
- ***“Dear brothers and sisters, not many of you should become teachers in the church, for we who teach will be judged more strictly. 2 Indeed, we all make many mistakes. For if we could control our tongues, we would be perfect and could also control ourselves in every other way. 3 We can make a large horse go wherever we want by means of a small bit in its mouth. 4 And a small rudder makes a huge ship turn wherever the pilot chooses to go, even though the winds are strong. 5 In the same way, the tongue is a small thing that makes grand speeches. But a tiny spark can set a great forest on fire. 6 And among all the parts of the body, the tongue is a flame of fire. It is a whole world of wickedness, corrupting your entire body. It can set your whole life on fire, for it is set on fire by hell itself. 7 People can tame all kinds of animals, birds, reptiles, and fish, 8 but no one can tame the tongue. It is restless and evil, full of deadly poison. 9 Sometimes it praises our Lord and Father, and sometimes it curses those who have been made in the image of God. 10 And so blessing and cursing come pouring out of the same mouth. Surely, my brothers and sisters, this is not right! 11 Does a spring of water bubble out with both fresh water and bitter water? 12 Does a fig tree produce olives, or a grapevine produce figs? No, and you can’t draw fresh water from a salty spring. 13 If you are wise and understand God’s ways, prove it by living an honorable life, doing good works with the humility that comes from wisdom.” (James 3:1-13 NLT)***
- The tongue is difficult to tame because, at the root of the tongue, is the heart. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you see what He is communicating in these verses.
- The heart and the tongue are co-conspirators; they work either for good or evil. What does yours reflect?