

A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED UPON THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

JESUS REIGN IN MY HEART

Luke 11:42-45 “But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and every herb, and neglect justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others. Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the best seat in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces. Woe to you! For you are like unmarked graves, and people walk over them without knowing it.”

Having a high opinion of oneself, loving oneself more than others, wanting people to pay attention to oneself are all characteristics of a person's natural human nature. Wanting to be loved, valued by others and thought highly of is basic to humanity. The Pharisees carried these characteristics out to the extreme. Everything about their personal behavior including their clothing, outward adherence to the Jewish laws and customs, where they sat in the synagogue was done to focus attention upon themselves.

“Woe to you Pharisees,” Jesus said. “For you love the best seat in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces.” Jesus was not impressed. In fact, He was appalled! His comment about their lifestyle was anything but complementary. He said to them, “Woe to you! For you are like unmarked graves, and people walk over them without knowing it.”

Jesus' words were truly humiliating. According to Numbers 19:16 contact with a grave rendered a person unclean for seven days. So, Jesus is saying here that any contact with a Pharisee or listening to their false teaching defiled a person. The Pharisees outward conduct made Jesus' words seem totally out of place. But Jesus was looking inwardly at their heart.

Hypocrisy, the practice of claiming to have moral standards or religious beliefs to which one's own behavior does not conform, is the sin Jesus is addressing. The Pharisees did not have a monopoly on this particular sin. It is one into which Satan can easily lead you or any Christian. Remember what Jesus said, “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For

where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matthew 5:19-21) Faith in Jesus which the Holy Spirit has worked in your heart is what matters. What seat you have, what clothing you wear is not what is important. Your love of Jesus and love for your neighbor is what defines you.

Prayer: O Lord, keep my heart pure for Jesus’ sake. Amen

Jesus, Thy boundless love to me No thought can reach, no tongue declare;
Unite my thankful heart to Thee, And reign without a rival there!
Thine wholly, Thine alone I am; Be Thou alone my constant flame.

O grant that nothing in my soul May dwell but Thy pure love alone;
Oh, may Thy love possess me whole, My joy, my treasure, and my crown!
All coldness from my heart remove; My ev’ry act, word, thought be love.

This love unwearied I pursue And dauntlessly to Thee aspire.
Oh, may Thy love my hope renew, Burn in my soul like heav’nly fire!
And day and night, be all my care To guard this sacred treasure there.

In suff’ring be Thy love my peace, In weakness be Thy love my pow’r;
And when the storms of life shall cease, O Jesus, in that final hour,
Be Thou my rod and staff and guide, And draw me safely to Thy side!
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