

Curse of the Pharisees

One of the most distinctive things about the modern Church (and it's very difficult to call it a church in any seriousness) is its hatred of godly standards and discipline. This modern creature really seems to have a philosophy opposed to holiness, one which might easily be called anarchism, for its rebellion against all order and governing authorities. Its hatred of holy standards, and its hatred of order, seem to go hand in hand. This is the disaster that many people, especially if they are older, have watched happen during their own lives. It's also a disaster which is facilitated by alienating anyone in the Body of Messiah who desires holiness in the Church, and a near constant name calling of those same people. For modern anarchists, if anyone seeks to restore godliness to the Church, their favorite insult to sling is to call someone a Pharisee. They will sling other baseless claims such as legalist and self-righteous towards those who simply want to try and live as the Bible instructs, but it seems their favorite childish insult is Pharisee. I wonder why.

In case you don't know, it is the Bible itself which calls us to live according to holy standards, and calls us to obedience. It is hard to argue biblically in favor of the modern disregard for seeking holiness without actually ignoring the Bible itself. Why do some choose to do this? To ignore scripture? To ignore standards? To alienate anyone who seeks them? In part I believe it is their own ignorance of the faith which they claim to hold. I also think it's in part their own desire to basically live as they please, free from the narrow path of the Savior. Finally, when it comes to ministers of all kind, I think a lot of it is merely protecting their own jobs; you see they've built a million churches based on lawlessness and minimalistic doctrine, so if they ever chose to preach holiness and keep standards, they would expose themselves for the complete shams that they are. Not only that, but they'd probably go out of business.

But rather than linger on the reasons why, and I discuss those reasons in other articles I have posted at Holiness of the Bride, let's look at what the Word of God actually teaches us in regards to holiness. I think you will find at looking at these scriptures, and I have not chosen nearly all of them, that if one who desires holiness in Church is a Pharisee, then so is God Almighty. So is the Savior Yeshua. So are the apostles of the Lamb. They are all Pharisees using this modern depraved logic, because they all call us to obedience. Here are some of the Lord's teachings to us, His children in His family, on how we are to live. I have organized them categorically according to which "Pharisee" said them:

You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. (John 15:14)

--Yeshua the Pharisee

If you love Me, keep My commandments. (John 14:15)

--Yeshua the Pharisee

But He said, "More than that, blessed *are* those who hear the word of God and keep it!" (Luke 11:28)

--Yeshua the Pharisee

"But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say? (Luke 6:46)

--Yeshua the Pharisee

Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest *your* hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, *as* in your ignorance; but as He who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in all *your* conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." (1 Peter 1:13-16)

--Apostle Peter (the Rock) Pharisee

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. (2 Corinthians 7:1)

--Apostle Paul the Pharisee

But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; (Ephesians 5:3)

--Apostle Paul the Pharisee

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. (2 Corinthians 7:1)

--Apostle Paul the Pharisee

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

--Apostle Paul the Pharisee

But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who “will render to each one according to his deeds”: eternal life to those who by patient in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; (Romans 2:5-9)

--Apostle Paul the Pharisee

For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them. (Ephesians 5:5-6)

--Apostle Paul the Pharisee

But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. (James 1:25)

--Apostle James the Pharisee

Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. (Revelation 14:12)

--Apostle John the Pharisee

This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. (2 John 1:6)

--Apostle John the Pharisee

Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.

Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor *is* he who does not love his brother. (1 John 3:6-10)

--Apostle John the Pharisee

I believe it's very clear with even a portion of the preceding scriptures that a claim by the modern Church against the importance of obedience is kind of absurd. Not only that, but that to attack preachers of the Word as Pharisees is spurious, as well as slanderous. In making that claim, one makes the Savior and His apostles Pharisees too. I don't just say this for those members of the audience here already in the Body of Messiah, but especially for the younger generation, and maybe those who just walked in the door. There are new believers who will be nearly force-fed the deception that Christianity is a do-as-you-feel religion, or that it is no religion at all. Who will be conditioned to respond to prophetic calls to obedience as unChristian and legalistic. It is these new believers, who just walked in the door, who will be most victimized and I believe they need to hear this. May God Almighty help them.

Before I conclude, let me just review what the Messiah actually criticizes the Pharisees for. I mean they are so famous at this point for multiple reasons, and often used as a bludgeon against anyone who wants standards, it is worth getting a focus on what their wrongs actually were in the Gospels. Are you ready?

1: The Pharisees were guilty of a number of forms of corruption, including using legal practices to rip off the poor

2:The Pharisees were guilty of greatly misunderstanding scripture and prophesy

3:The Pharisees were guilty of making a big show of religion, while being rotten on the inside.

4:The Pharisees were guilty of ignoring major points of the law, even as they kept many minor ones

5:The Pharisees built upon the faith a massive set of traditions, and uplifted those traditions to the status of the Word of God

6:The Pharisees sought to establish their own righteousness apart from God

7:(and I hate to use such a holy number for such a terrible thing) Probably the heart of the problem, the Pharisees so misunderstood the intent and purpose of their faith that they were

blind leaders to their fellow Jews, and could not recognize the promised Mashiach when He came. They were simply false teachers.

I realize the list isn't comprehensive or in detail, but I think it covers most of the basic problems with the Pharisees. It's that last one I want to focus on, since as I say, I think it's at the core. The Pharisees were false teachers. They had a position of authority, but they were so deceived that they could not do their jobs as teachers. And it is at this point in the Church, after nearly 2,000 years of history, that we seem to have arrived at a place much like Temple Judaism had as we read in the Gospels. A time of countless sects, and a great loss not only of good doctrine but even of the very purpose of the religion itself.

Therefore, I'd like to call on all of you hearing this, if your faith is in the Savior, to battle for restoration including the holiness and obedience I have just cited from scripture. It is biblical. It is what our Creator desires. As I say elsewhere at Holiness of the Bride, bring holiness to your lives, and to your communities. Brothers, if people hate you for it and try to hurt you, do not stop. Ministers, if you are threatened for it or fired for it, by all means continue. Never stop preaching the whole council of God. New believers, bless you, your new faith is NOT about an infantile warmth and following your perceived heart, but a godly fire, and a life striving for obedience. Just as I have written above and as you may already know, the modern Church will go to great lengths to stop you, calling you all kinds of names and trying to catch you in a snare, just like their favorite namesakes and bedfellows the Pharisees did in ancient Israel. They are false teachers. Just keep preaching the truth brothers, and live it. As it was for the apostles at the dawn of the Church, the truth of God is on your side.

But you *are* a chosen , a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His light; (1 Peter 2:9)