

**Conscience, Morality and
the Spiritual Life
CMS-025 and 026:
When Morality becomes
Self Righteousness**

Self-righteousness [The] appraisal of oneself as being morally upright and justified by one's own deeds.

Morality, when elevated to such a place of importance in one's life, whether by guilt, shame, cultural approbation or religious training, blinds the person to their true state

Self-righteousness is like a bottomless cup: though you pour and pour, you will never be able to fill it. Why? Because pouring yourself into yourself adds nothing to you. Nothing plus nothing always equals nothing. Instead, accept God's righteousness rather than trying to accumulate your own. You will find that the righteousness he offers is real. And that is what fills the cup of sanctification.

Green, M. P. (1989). Illustrations for Bilical Preaching : Over 1500 sermon illustrations arranged by topic and indexed exhaustively (Revised edition of: The expositor's illustration file.). Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.

The man who cannot believe that God loves and forgives will always turn to self-righteousness or to despair. Only faith, a faith that lets us see God, frees us to discover our real selves.

Richards, L., & Richards, L. O. (1987). *The teacher's commentary* (692). Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books.

Gal 6:3 For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

Job 32:1 Then these three men ceased answering Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes.

2 But the anger of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram burned; against Job his anger burned because he justified himself before God.

3 And his anger burned against his three friends because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.

4 Now Elihu had waited to speak to Job because they were years older than he.

5 And when Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of the three men his anger burned.

6 So Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite spoke out and said,

“I am young in years and you are old;
Therefore I was shy and afraid to tell you what I think.

7 “I thought age should speak,
And increased years should teach wisdom.

8 “But it is a spirit in man,
And the breath of the Almighty gives them
understanding.

*So, let us look at what the
Lord has to say about
Self-Righteousness:*

Man is prone to Self Righteousness:

Proverbs 30:12 There is a kind who is pure in his own eyes,
Yet is not washed from his filthiness.

Proverbs 20:6 Many a man proclaims his own loyalty,
But who can find a trustworthy man?

- *I always like to hear a man talk about himself, because then I never hear anything but good.*
—Will Rogers

Self Righteousness is Hateful to God.

Lu 16:15. 15 And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God.

Self Righteousness Is vain because our righteousness is external.

Mt 23:25-28 25 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence.

26 “You blind Pharisee, first clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may become clean also.

27 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness.

28 “So you, too, outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

29 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous,

30 and say, ‘If we had been *living* in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partners with them in *shedding* the blood of the prophets.’

31 “So you testify against yourselves, that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets.

32 “Fill up, then, the measure *of the guilt* of your fathers.

33 “You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?

Lu 11:39-44

But the Lord said to him, “Now you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and of the platter; but inside of you, you are full of robbery and wickedness.

40 “You foolish ones, did not He who made the outside make the inside also?

41 “But give that which is within as charity, and then all things are clean for you.

42 “But woe to you Pharisees! For you pay tithe of mint and rue and every *kind of* garden herb, and yet disregard justice and the love of God; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others.

43 “Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the chief seats in the synagogues and the respectful greetings in the market places.

44 “Woe to you! For you are like concealed tombs, and the people who walk over *them* are unaware *of it*.”

Self Righteousness is No better than filthy rags.
Isa 64:6 For all of us have become like one who is
unclean,
And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment;
And all of us wither like a leaf,
And our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

Isa 57:12 12 “I will declare your righteousness and
your deeds,
But they will not profit you.

Self Righteousness is boastful.

Mt 23:30 30 and say, 'If we had been *living* in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partners with them in *shedding* the blood of the prophets.'

Lu 18: 10 “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

11 “The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.

12 ‘I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.’

13 “But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, the sinner!’

14 “I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted.

*A Sunday School teacher had done a good piece of teaching her class of boys, explaining the hard heart of the Pharisee. What a thing for a man to say: "I thank thee, that I am not as other men are!" This surely was no attitude for anyone to take. At the close of the lesson she had the youngsters lead in short prayers, and one boy, without any apparent beating on his own chest, prayed: "We thank thee, God, that we are not like that Pharisee!" Do we sometimes pray like that boy? (Luke 18:11)
—United Presbyterian*

Seek to justify themselves.

Lu 10:29. 29 But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Self Righteousness seeks to justify itself before men.

Lu 16:15. *The Unrighteous Steward*

1 Now He was also saying to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and this *manager* was reported to him as squandering his possessions.

2 “And he called him and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an accounting of your management, for you can no longer be manager.’

3 “The manager said to himself, ‘What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig; I am ashamed to beg.

4 ‘I know what I shall do, so that when I am removed from the management people will welcome me into their homes.’

5 “And he summoned each one of his master’s debtors, and he *began* saying to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’

6 “And he said, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ And he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’

7 “Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ And he said, ‘A hundred measures of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’

8 “And his master praised the unrighteous manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light.

9 “And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of the wealth of unrighteousness, so that when it fails, they will receive you into the eternal dwellings.

10 “He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much.

11 “Therefore if you have not been faithful in the *use of* unrighteous wealth, who will entrust the true *riches* to you?

12 “And if you have not been faithful in *the use of* that which is another’s, who will give you that which is your own?”

13 “No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

14 Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, were listening to all these things and were scoffing at Him.

15 And He said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God.

Self Righteousness rejects the righteousness of God.

Romans Chapter 10

1 Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for *their* salvation.

2 For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge.

3 For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.

4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

5 For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness.

6 But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ (that is, to bring Christ down),

7 or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).”

8 But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart”—that is, the word of faith which we are preaching,

9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;

10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

11 For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed."

12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same *Lord* is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him;

13 for "Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Self Righteousness Condemns Others.

Mt 9:11-13;9 As Jesus went on from there, He saw a man called Matthew, sitting in the tax collector's booth; and He said to him, "Follow Me!" And he got up and followed Him.

10 Then it happened that as Jesus was reclining *at the table* in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were dining with Jesus and His disciples.

11 When the Pharisees saw *this*, they said to His disciples, "Why is your Teacher eating with the tax collectors and sinners?"

Lu 7:36 Now one of the Pharisees was requesting Him to dine with him, and He entered the Pharisee's house and reclined *at the table*.

37 And there was a woman in the city who was a sinner; and when she learned that He was reclining *at the table* in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster vial of perfume,

38 and standing behind *Him* at His feet, weeping, she began to wet His feet with her tears, and kept wiping them with the hair of her head, and kissing His feet and anointing them with the perfume.

39 Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet He would know who and what sort of person this woman is who is touching Him, that she is a sinner."

The Self-Righteous Consider their own way right.

Pr 21:2. 2 Every man's way is right in his own eyes,
But the Lord weighs the hearts.

3 To do righteousness and justice
Is desired by the Lord more than sacrifice.

4 Haughty eyes and a proud heart,
The lamp of the wicked, is sin.

Compare: Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light
for my path. Psalm 119:105

The Self Righteous Despise others.
Isa 65:5 “Who say, ‘Keep to yourself, do not come near me,
For I am holier than you!’
These are smoke in My nostrils...

Lu 18:9. *The Pharisee and the Publican*

9 And He also told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt:

10 “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

11 “The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.

Are pure in their own eyes.

Pr 30:12. 12 There is a kind who is pure in his own eyes,

Yet is not washed from his filthiness.

13 There is a kind—oh how lofty are his eyes!
And his eyelids are raised *in arrogance*.

Job 9:20. 19 “If *it is a matter* of power, behold, *He is* the strong one!

And if *it is a matter* of justice, who can summon Him?

20 “Though I am righteous, my mouth will condemn me;

Though I am guiltless, He will declare me guilty.

Saints should renounce Self-Righteousness.

Php 3:7-10. 7 But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ,

9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith,

10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;

11 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. 12 Not that I have already obtained *it* or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of *it* yet; but one thing *I do*: forgetting what *lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead,

14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

15 Let us therefore, as many as are perfect [mature], have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you;

16 however, let us keep living by that same *standard* to which we have attained.

17 Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us.

18 For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* enemies of the cross of Christ,

19 whose end is destruction, whose god is *their* appetite, and *whose* glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things.

20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;

21 who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

Warning against Self Righteousness.

De 9:4. 4 “Do not say in your heart when the Lord your God has driven them out before you, ‘Because of my righteousness the Lord has brought me in to possess this land,’ but *it is* because of the wickedness of these nations *that* the Lord is dispossessing them before you.

5 “It is not for your righteousness or for the uprightness of your heart that you are going to possess their land, but *it is* because of the wickedness of these nations *that* the Lord your God is driving them out before you, in order to confirm the oath which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

6 “Know, then, *it is* not because of your righteousness *that* the Lord your God is giving you this good land to possess, for you are a stubborn people.

Denunciation against Self Righteousness.

Mt 23:27,28. 27 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness.

28 “So you, too, outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

29 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!
For you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the
monuments of the righteous,

30 and say, ‘If we had been *living* in the days of our
fathers, we would not have been partners with them in
shedding the blood of the prophets.’

31 “So you testify against yourselves, that you are
sons of those who murdered the prophets.

32 “Fill up, then, the measure *of the guilt* of your fathers.

33 “You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?

34 “Therefore, behold, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city,

32 “Fill up, then, the measure *of the guilt* of your fathers.

33 “You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?

34 “Therefore, behold, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city,

37 “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.

38 “Behold, your house is being left to you desolate!

39 “For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’ ”

Some Examples

Saul. 1Sa 15:13. 13 Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him, "Blessed are you of the Lord! I have carried out the command of the Lord."

14 But Samuel said, "What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?"

15 Saul said, "They have brought them from the Amalekites, for the people spared the best of the sheep and oxen, to sacrifice to the Lord your God; but the rest we have utterly destroyed."

16 Then Samuel said to Saul, "Wait, and let me tell you what the Lord said to me last night." And he said to him, "Speak!"

17 Samuel said, "Is it not true, though you were little in your own eyes, you were *made* the head of the tribes of Israel? And the Lord anointed you king over Israel,

18 and the Lord sent you on a mission, and said, 'Go and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are exterminated.'

19 “Why then did you not obey the voice of the Lord, but rushed upon the spoil and did what was evil in the sight of the Lord?”

20 Then Saul said to Samuel, “I did obey the voice of the Lord, and went on the mission on which the Lord sent me, and have brought back Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

21 “But the people took *some* of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the choicest of the things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to the Lord your God at Gilgal.”

22 Samuel said,
“Has the Lord as much delight in burnt offerings and
sacrifices
As in obeying the voice of the Lord?
Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,
And to heed than the fat of rams.

23 “For rebellion is as the sin of divination,
And insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry.
Because you have rejected the word of the Lord,
He has also rejected you from *being* king.”

24 Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned; I have indeed transgressed the command of the Lord and your words, because I feared the people and listened to their voice.

25 "Now therefore, please pardon my sin and return with me, that I may worship the Lord."

26 But Samuel said to Saul, "I will not return with you; for you have rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you from being king over Israel."

27 As Samuel turned to go, *Saul* seized the edge of his robe, and it tore.

28 So Samuel said to him, “The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to your neighbor, who is better than you.

29 “Also the Glory of Israel will not lie or change His mind; for He is not a man that He should change His mind.”

The Young man.

Mt 19:20. 16 And someone came to Him and said, "Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?"

17 And He said to him, "Why are you asking Me about what is good? There is *only* One who is good; but if you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments."

18 *Then* he said to Him, "Which ones?" And Jesus said, "You shall not commit murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness;

19 Honor your father and mother; and You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

20 The young man said to Him, “All these things I have kept; what am I still lacking?”

21 Jesus said to him, “If you wish to be complete, go *and* sell your possessions and give to *the* poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”

22 But when the young man heard this statement, he went away grieving; for he was one who owned much property.

23 And Jesus said to His disciples, “Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

24 “Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

25 When the disciples heard *this*, they were very astonished and said, “Then who can be saved?”

26 And looking at *them* Jesus said to them, “With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

And remember from last week, the Lawyer from Luke 10:25-29.

25 And a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

26 And He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?"

27 And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself."

28 And He said to him, "You have answered correctly; do this and you will live."

29 But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Pharisees.

Lu 11:39; 39 But the Lord said to him, “Now you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and of the platter; but inside of you, you are full of robbery and wickedness.

40 “You foolish ones, did not He who made the outside make the inside also?

41 “But give that which is within as charity, and then all things are clean for you.

42 “But woe to you Pharisees! For you pay tithe of mint and rue and every *kind of* garden herb, and *yet* disregard justice and the love of God; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others.

43 “Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the chief seats in the synagogues and the respectful greetings in the market places.

44 “Woe to you! For you are like concealed tombs, and the people who walk over *them* are unaware *of it.*”

Joh 8:33; 31 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, *then* you are truly disciples of Mine;

32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”

33 They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s descendants and have never yet been enslaved to anyone; how is it that You say, ‘You will become free’?”

34 Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.

35 “The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever.

36 “So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.

Israel. Ro 10:3. 3 For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.

4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

The Church of Laodicea (or was that "the USA").

Re 3:17. 17 'Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked,

18 I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and *that* the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see.

And, a Good Example:

2 Cor 10:12 For we are not bold to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves; but when they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding.

13 But we will not boast beyond *our* measure, but within the measure of the sphere which God apportioned to us as a measure, to reach even as far as you.

14 For we are not overextending ourselves, as if we did not reach to you, for we were the first to come even as far as you in the gospel of Christ;

15 not boasting beyond *our* measure, *that is*, in other men's labors, but with the hope that as your faith grows, we will be, within our sphere, enlarged even more by you,

16 so as to preach the gospel even to the regions beyond you, *and* not to boast in what has been accomplished in the sphere of another.

17 But he who boasts is to boast in the Lord.
18 For it is not he who commends himself that is approved, but he whom the Lord commends.

Php 2:3-4

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;

4 do not look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

Oh what a verse!

Col 2:20 If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as,

21 “Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!”

22 (which all *refer to* things destined to perish with use)—in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men?

23 These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, *but are* of no value against fleshly indulgence.

In fact, it is so good, let us look at the last verse again:
23 These are matters which have, to be sure,
1.) the appearance of wisdom
2.) in self-made religion and
3.) self-abasement and severe treatment of the body,
4.) *but are* of no value against fleshly indulgence.

So, what, again, are they?

- 1.) If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world [and you have- 1stCC],
- 2.) why, as if you were living in the world,
- 3.) do you submit yourself to decrees, such as,
- 4.) “Do not handle,
- 5.) do not taste,
- 6.) do not touch!”
- 7.) (which all *refer to* things destined to perish with use)
- 8.) in accordance with the commandments and
- 9.) teachings of men?

So, let us review what we have learned
about identifying
Self Righteousness
or Morality
in the Bible:

In no particular order (yet):

#1: “Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things” (Lu. 10:41). The Lord’s words are very striking. If you are busy about many things -- the 'wrong' things, you will not only be busy, but troubled. Martha, we read, “was cumbered with much serving”; and she was not only “encumbered,” but also “troubled” - -it weighed upon her. If you have service that weighs you down, look to it; see well why it is.

This is the first clue to understanding the difference between Morality and the Spiritual Life - if you are "weighted down" by your service to the Lord, you are likely producing the "wood, hay and straw" of Human Religious Morality.

#2:

10:40 Martha “was distracted” Apparently both women originally sat down to listen. Mary remained listening, but Martha began to worry about the task of hostess.

Clue #2: Is your "serving" the Lord distracting you from in-depth study of His Word? Then you are assuredly producing Good Deeds from your Religious Happiness Motivator and not from the Reservoir of Righteousness!

#3:

She became upset and started to complain. "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!" (verse 40). When she said this, this holy woman sadly forgot who she was and to whom she was speaking. She brought down on herself a solemn rebuke and had to learn a lesson which probably made a lasting impression. Alas, how great a matter a little fire ignites! This all started with a little overanxiety about the "need" to fix The Lord His supper - to "serve" Him, not just sit there at His feet, doing NOTHING!

Clue #3: Complaining about your service is a sure sign it is YOUR service and not the Spirit's ministry.

#4:

“ ‘Lord, do You not care’ ”

If you 'feel' that despite all you do for "Him", He doesn't take good enough care of you, that you "suffer" and "nobody" cares, you are functioning in Human Religious Morality.

#5: Bragging and complaining. “left me to do all the serving alone”

#6: “tell her to help me” This is an AORIST ACTIVE IMPERATIVE.

Losing your temper with others and with God is a sure sign your "service" is designed to bring you glory rather than Him.

#7

What our Father wants from us is receptiveness. He wants in us the capacity to receive. "You take care," the Lord says, "to receive of Me. Come and drink; and he that believeth on Me (faith being that receptive character in the soul), out of his inner being shall flow rivers of living water."

Service, true Godly service for the Lord, "flows", it needs no pump of Morality or Religious Motivation to come forth, it is "natural" - "Spiritually Natural" - flowing from the Reservoir of Righteousness that we all possess by the New Birth.

You will serve without "knowing" you are serving.

No "schedule" to serve, no "planning" to serve, no "list" of things to do - just "living" will produce it, if you are "walking by means of the Spirit"

If rivers of living water flow out of you, this means both testimony and service, surely.

It implies real ministry to others, and that God is to get His own from you in the world.

But if this is to be true of you, what are the means by which it is to be accomplished?

You are to come and drink; you are to come and receive from Him as Mary did, and you shall find that in this “*one* thing needful” all other things are contained and from this “*one* thing needful” all other things are produced.

“And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus’ feet, and heard His word” (vs. 39). The Lord takes her up to signify His entire approbation as to where she was and what she was.

He has a reproof for Martha’s service, but has only approbation for Mary’s simply sitting at His feet.

“But *one* thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her” (vs. 42).

Only “one thing.” To what a little point would that diminish all "encumbrance and anxiety" if we realized it: only “one thing”!

#8

A great deal of what is apparently devotedness is an effort to obtain a sense of His interest in us; it is a devotedness to obtain intimacy, instead of a devotedness resulting from intimacy. Hence work is resorted to as affording a kind of joy, according as there is success; but the acts done with a motive of this kind betray their source in that the doer is more occupied with success than with assurance of the Lord Jesus' approval, and is consequently dependent on good results for cheer and encouragement.

Stoney:
Sit To Serve

While it is comparatively easy to convict the idle and slothful, it is not so easy to convict the active Martha that she is unwisely occupied. The work seems so right and so necessary, that it appears almost impossible that there could be any personal plan in it.

Nothing so deceives and leads astray as the conscience working at a distance from the Lord Jesus. For instance, if I feel in my conscience that I ought to be His servant (true enough, I am His bondsman), but if I am not near Him, if I am not in personal fellowship with Him, I may begin to do something to satisfy my conscience, and if so I do it legally, and not as what simply suits Him.

#9

I do it to make my conscience easy and satisfied. When this is the case I do not consult what *He* would like me to do, but I do what I think best to be done. It is not His pleasure that guides me, it is my own mind, as to what is suitable and proper. It may be quite a necessary service as Martha's was, but Martha was evidently thinking of the services which were incumbent on her to render, and was not governed by His pleasure.

Clue #9: If you "serve the Lord" because of "conscience" -- the "need" to repay Him, you have not yet sat long enough at His feet to hear His Word.

#10

Here is where we fail — undertaking to serve where it is in a degree creditable to ourselves, and we thus get disappointed (if we are true-hearted) because we have not the acknowledgement of His pleasure. It is evident when I am occupied with services, however useful and necessary, which I have undertaken of myself, feeling that they devolve upon me, that I am not sitting at His feet, Mary-like. There is no growth in Him — the flesh is in the service.

Clue #10: Disappointment in our service.

#11

It is most blessed to work for the Lord Jesus, but if my work engrosses me more than Himself, then I am not really working for Him: "Without Me ye can do nothing." If I am truly working for Him, I am drawing *from* Him, and growing in Him. Sitting at His feet is the natural posture of my soul. When one is sitting at His feet, hearing His Word, he will not be behind in true service — pleasing to Him.

If you begin with service, as most do, you will not sit at His feet; whereas if you begin with sitting at His feet, you will soon serve well, wisely, and acceptably.

Clue #11: "It is most blessed to work for the Lord Jesus, but if my work engrosses me more than Himself, then I am not really working for Him: "Without Me ye can do nothing." If I am truly working for Him, I am drawing *from* Him, and growing in Him."

#12

Self Righteousness is boastful.

Mt 23:30 30 and say, 'If we had been *living* in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partners with them in *shedding* the blood of the prophets.'

#13

Self Righteousness has self-serving motives.

Lu 16: 1 Now He was also saying to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and this *manager* was reported to him as squandering his possessions.

2 “And he called him and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an accounting of your management, for you can no longer be manager.’

3 “The manager said to himself, ‘What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig; I am ashamed to beg.

4 ‘I know what I shall do, so that when I am removed from the management people will welcome me into their homes.’

#14

Self Righteousness Condemns Others.

Mt 9:10 Then it happened that as Jesus was reclining *at the table* in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were dining with Jesus and His disciples.

11 When the Pharisees saw *this*, they said to His disciples, “Why is your Teacher eating with the tax collectors and sinners?”

Lu 18:9. *The Pharisee and the Publican*

9 And He also told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt:

10 “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

11 “The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.

#15

The Self-Righteous Consider their own way right.

Pr 21:2. 2 Every man's way is right in his own eyes,
But the Lord weighs the hearts.

3 To do righteousness and justice
Is desired by the Lord more than sacrifice.

4 Haughty eyes and a proud heart,
The lamp of the wicked, is sin.

Compare: Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light
for my path. Psalm 119:105

#16

Arrogance, not humility is the result of Self-Righteousness

Pr 30:12. 12 There is a kind who is pure in his own eyes,

Yet is not washed from his filthiness.

13 There is a kind—oh how lofty are his eyes!
And his eyelids are raised *in arrogance*.

Php 2:3-4

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;

4 do not look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

#17

The Self Righteousness compare their Righteousness to others.

2 Cor 10:12 For we are not bold to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves; but when they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding.

13 But we will not boast beyond *our* measure, but within the measure of the sphere which God apportioned to us as a measure, to reach even as far as you.

#18

The Self-Righteous live by rules.

Col 2:20 If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as,

21 “Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!”

22 (which all *refer to* things destined to perish with use)—in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men?

23 These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, *but are* of no value against fleshly indulgence.

Let's look at verse 23, again - it is going to be the other half of the key (the 1st half being the Self-Righteousness characteristics we have studied today) in discerning whether we are walking by means of the Spirit, or by our own Moral Self-Righteousness:

These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence.

1. These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in:

A. self-made religion and

B. self-abasement and

C. severe treatment of the body,

2. but are of no value against fleshly indulgence.

1A = self-made religion = Religious Happiness Motivation

1B = self-abasement = Approbation Happiness Motivation

1C = severe treatment of the body = Chemical Happiness Motivation

2. *"but are of no value against fleshly indulgence."*

Why?

As you will recall from prior studies, when we are functioning in the "Flesh", (Human Happiness Motivators) we cannot help but gravitate toward one pole (Human Morality) or the other (Human Immorality).

BUT, we will ALWAYS vacillate back and forth between the 2 poles - and this verse tells us we WILL slide back into Human Immorality, known as "Fleshly Indulgence." It is this "slide" into Fleshly Indulgence, Human Immorality, that will also help us to identify our Functioning in Human Morality instead of the Spiritual Walk.

“The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again” (2 Cor. 5:14, 15).
Now, are we living unto Him?

Note that it is "unto" Him, not "for" Him.

“Behold as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters... so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God” (Ps. 123:2).