

The Gospel According to Luke- Part 5

TITLE: THE YEAST OF HYPOCRISY

PART 1

Seeking to live holy

READ LUKE 12:1-2

INTRODUCTION

When we talk about changing our hearts and living towards Jesus, there is often the understanding that we are trying to deal with sin as we continue to move forward. This provides plenty of opportunity to make a mess of things within our lives due to changing bad habits into good ones or completely being transformed into a new creation. (2 Corinthians 5:17) By nature, there will be times when we are succeeding at this and there will be times when we stumble and fall. God has the grace to cover those times when we fall and desires to help us get back up again because in His nature, He has mercy and love for us that surpasses all human understanding.

What will cause a rift between us in this journey is if we try and hide our sins from the others around us and we try to look holy when, in reality, we are sinning without repentance. Honesty is very important in any healthy relationship and that is no different with our relationship to God or His Church. Hypocrisy that Jesus speaks of in this passage is trying to look one way to people around us (holy) when we are doing something completely different behind the scenes in private (or outside of the Church). Having an expectation on others to live holy lives and then refusing to live that way ourselves is detrimental to the purpose in which we were created.

We may be able to fool others around us into thinking that we are holy and righteous but God knows the heart of a man and knows when we are being hypocritical in our lives. When we are hypocritical, our sin grows just as yeast causes bread to rise. We must be careful that our desire is to live an "unleavened" life (1 Corinthians 5) in order to be pure when we stand before God. It is only when we confess our sin to God and to others that we will be forgiven and then, we are able to stay away from the yeast that grows in us the more we do it: hypocrisy.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is it easy to say we follow Jesus but hard to walk after Him? What are some ways that you have been able to follow Him more closely?
2. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. What does being made new have to do with hypocrisy? What can the process of being made new look like? Why might this process create more mess? How can we help deal with that in people's lives?
3. Why do we try and hide sins from others? What is the purpose? What is the outcome? What is the best practice to stop trying to hide our sin and start confessing?
4. What is our ultimate purpose? Why does hypocrisy damage that purpose? Why is confession such an important part of our relationship with God and others?
5. What do you think that Paul means in 1 Corinthians 5 when he says to live an unleavened life? How do we do that? How can we better support one another in our journey towards that life?

WRAP UP

A little bit of yeast will affect the entire loaf of bread. Our unrepentant sin will cause damage to ourselves, others, our relationship to God and even can affect the Church body as a whole. This is sobering to be sure but, it is also encouraging to know that 1 John 1:9 deals with this very struggle. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."