

AF A9 BIBLE STUDY: “Hypocrisy in Us” Luke 11

Scripture of Lesson: Luke’s Gospel 11: 33-53

1. The light of our body is the eye

- A. Back in olden days when there was no electricity, people lighted a candle or lamp in the evenings indoors. We place a candle on a table so that it will give light to the entire room [v. 11:33]. This is like Christians living with a clear testimony, a life of truth both inwardly and outwardly. This teaching is related to the Lord’s subsequent teaching on hypocrisy.
- B. But, why did He say the light of our body is our eye [v. 11: 34]? He gave the following teaching: “Take heed therefore that the light which is in you be not darkness” [v. 11: 35]. The eye is the source of light so that, if our eye is dark, the whole body will be full of darkness, and vice versa. This teaches us that our eye, which symbolizes our life’s aim, values and pursuits, must be “single” toward God, so that we are not swayed this way and that way. Rather, our eye must be looking steadily toward God of Heaven so that our whole life be full of light.

And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment. [Mark 12: 30]

- C. We are also reminded that Jesus Christ is the true light of this world. Through the gospel God opens our eyes to receive this true light into our life so that our physical living (body) becomes full of light.

I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me. [Acts: 26: 17-18] – Lord’s commission to apostle Paul

2. Hypocrisies criticized by Lord Jesus

- A. Outward decency but inward corruption [v. 11:39]

: Lord Jesus criticized the Pharisees directly that, although they are clean outwardly and keep the sanitary rules, inwardly they are full of greed and wickedness. Then He prescribed giving of alms to the poor so that their heart and soul could be made clean. This is an interesting teaching – We normally think that righteous acts are the result of inward transformation. However, here the Lord tells the hypocritical Pharisees to clean up their living so that their souls are made clean [v. 41]. This is understood to mean that, although their religious zeal and devotion are commendable, God is sorry that they fail to live out God’s judgment and love in their lives. Therefore, He is urging them to repent and live so that both their inward and outward parts are wholly devoted to God’s principles and truths.

- B. Slighting of God’s judgment and love of God [v. 11: 42]

: This verse is often misunderstood by people who believe that Christians should pay tithe because He told the Pharisees to do so and to live out God’s justice and love of God as well. We need to remember that these people were living in the OT era before the New Testament era began. They were still subject to the Mosaic laws and the temple worship regime. In this verse Lord Jesus is criticizing the assiduous compliance of the tithing rule by the Pharisees while they fail to live out God’s justice and love when dealing with the people they were supposed to tend and care for.

Lord Jesus was expressing God’s disappointment and frustration that these leaders of Israel were failing to understand that they need to have the shepherd’s heart like King David, who had a heart

after God's heart. Faithful adherence to the Mosaic tithing regulation was not the core of His teaching. That was of course necessary under the OT temple worship regime but is no longer necessary since we do not have the temple worship system. Worship in the NT church regime requires a whole new governance system. Therefore, we know that the Messiah was not emphasizing the tithing rule here. Preachers should not misquote this verse and use it to impose the tithing rule on their congregations.

C. Love of men's honor [v. 11: 43]

: Lord Jesus criticized that the religious leaders love to be honored and be recognized in public and religious events. Most people love to receive recognition and praise from others, particularly in public. He compared them as white-washed tombs, which are painted white outwardly but contain dead bodies inside. Rather, we should aspire to receive God's approval when we are alone with God.

But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. [Matt 6: 6]

D. Blood of all God's martyrs to be required on "this generation"

: Lord Jesus reminded the religious leaders that their forefathers killed many prophets of God in the past and lays the blame on "this generation" of all blood "from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zacharia" [v. 11: 51]. Why was this generation of Jews of the 1st century to be responsible for all the blood of the righteous servants of God killed up to that time? Consider Abel, who was killed by Cain. The Jewish people was not even existent when Abel was killed –it was hundreds of years before the flood of Noah!

"This generation" was to deny the Son of God and to crucify Him on a cross, thus climaxing on the enmity against God that had run through the generations from Cain right up to the first century Jewish religious leaders. God was to unleash His wrath against the Jewish people for their hatred toward God and His servants including His Son. The fearful prophecy of this verse calls upon just punishments for all the blood of His martyrs on this "generation [*genea*]." The term, generation, is sometimes used in NT to refer to an era, so that peoples of the 1st to 21st centuries are the NT generation as contrasted to the pre-flood generation, the post-flood generation, and the Mosaic OT-generation.

E. Failure to teach the people the truth of God and leading them wrong

: This criticism of the Lord in verse 52 is a serious warning to Christian preachers of today. If any of them are not teaching about repentance, suffering, the cross, the true meaning of baptism and the last days, he is subject to God's punishment on the judgment day. God's ordained servants must teach people on the whole truth of God and lead them safely to the kingdom of God.

Discussion topics:

1. *What things in our life and society need changes so that our testimony is not hypocritical?*
2. *If the Lord returns today, will I be able to stand before Him without shame? What must I do now to receive His "well done"?*