⁓ Christian Life Series V ⁓

THE SECRET LIFE OF SAINTS (Against Hypocrisy)

Our deeds of Christian piety must be done in secret from a pure and truthful heart.

KEY POINTS

- In Matthew 23:1-3, Jesus says "to the multitudes and to His disciples…'The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. [3]Therefore whatever they tell you …observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do.'"
- He then goes on to list their hypocritical acts. They:
  - Put burdens on others they won't bear themselves (v. 4);
  - Make long, insincere prayers (14);
  - Do everything to convert others, then teach them to be worse "sons of hell" than themselves (15);
  - Pay tithes on their smallest gains, yet act unjustly, unmercifully and unfaithfully (23:23);
  - Look righteous outwardly, but are absolutely unrighteous on the inside (23:27-28);
  - And worst, they condemn those who killed God's prophets of old, while plotting to kill Jesus (29-36).
- God hates hypocrisy and we must kill it if we see it rising up. Hypocrisy must never find good soil in our hearts and lives.
- Our lives must be transparently holy, inside and out. Whoever observes our lives must see the same 'us' whenever and wherever we are seen.
- Nothing destroys our witness for Christ more quickly than hypocrisy! When children see hypocrisy in their parents, it usually turns them away from Christ. Often permanently.
- When friends and family members see a double life and double standards, it completely turns them off. Everybody hates hypocrisy, saint and sinner alike.
- What is the alternative to living a hypocritical life?
- Jesus addresses this in Matthew 6:1-18. He says, "Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven… [3]when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, [4]that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly. [5]"And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. [6]But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father…and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. [6]"Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting...[17]But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, [18]so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.
- In Luke 18:10-14 Jesus told a parable about a Pharisee (religious leader) and a publican (despised tax collector).
- The Pharisee's eyes were wide open to see everyone paying attention to him. He even took time to compare himself to the publican, who he felt was beneath him.
- (While Matthew 6 gives us the "Lord's (or Disciples') Prayer", this Pharisee provides a good example of the "Hypocrite's Prayer".)
- We need to give. We need to pray. We need to fast. And we've read Jesus' way; but so many of us prefer to do it our way.
- Yes, at times others may learn of our giving, as with Barnabas in Acts 4:36-37, or the Macedonians in 2 Corinthians 8. And it may be necessary to let someone know we are fasting, as in 1 Corinthians 7:5, or to show respect if someone is cooking for us. We should also participate in corporate prayer and fasting (e.g. Acts 4:24-1; 12:11; 13:2-3).
- But we need to do it Jesus' way – in truth, sincerity and humility, seeking only to please Him.

KEY SCRIPTURES:
Matthew 6:1-18; 23; Luke 18:10-14

REFLECTION TOOLS

1. Make a mental or physical list of things you do to demonstrate your claim to being a follower/disciple of Jesus Christ.
2. Is it important to you that others know what you do? How do you feel if no one seems to notice? Do you care whether others do "as much as"/ "more than" you?
3. Repent of any wrong motives and take steps toward doing it 'Jesus' way' – with sincere motives and a pure heart.

Prayer Time

Lord, please give me a clean heart and renew a right spirit within me. I desire to be pure on the inside, not just for show. In Jesus' name I pray.

Start-up: What are you still hoping to accomplish this summer? What preparations (if any) must you make to get it done? (Get at it!)

WEEK OF SUNDAY, AUGUST 19, 2018

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

(Reminds me/Confirms) (New idea) (Think about)

(Do this) (Speaks to my heart) (Must shar)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS