

Looking for a Group to connect and dive deeper in your relationship with God and others? Contact Community Pastor, Beth Yokley, at byokley@myhope.church.



Discussion Questions With Beth Yokley

Week 5

Matthew 23:25-26

Take time before diving into the questions to read this week's scripture in at least three different translations...

I'll give you a head start with the Message version here:

"You're hopeless, you religion scholars and Pharisees! Frauds! You buff the surface of your cups and bowls, so they sparkle in the sun, while the insides are maggoty with your greed and gluttony. Stupid Pharisee! Scour the insides, and then the gleaming surface will mean something."

The images of external beauty and cleanliness juxtaposed with the internal muck is a visceral experience. How do you think the Pharisees felt in response to this truth from Jesus?

Jesus addresses specifically the Pharisees' greed and gluttony. Their excess went beyond meat and drink though to money, and personal gain. We have a variety of ways that we can be greedy and gluttonous. Where do you find yourself grasping? Share with the group if you feel comfortable. Consider the following: personal accolades, recognition, approval, praise, attention financial gain, power, prestige, respect, comfort/ease control.

Like the Pharisees, we too have areas of our life where we hope that people see our 'bright and shiny.' Simultaneously we hope they are paying no mind to our yucky muck that is seeping out of the back closet. How does being exposed make you feel? What do you think is on your list of 'bright and shiny' that you hope people WOULD notice about you? What is on your yucky muck list that you would prefer stayed in the closet?

Brian has talked a lot during this series about the compassion that Jesus had for those that were being affected negatively by the Pharisees. He has also talked about the compassion Jesus had for the Pharisees. What was Jesus' deepest desire for the Pharisees?

Do you have some folks in your life that you think of as "Pharisees"? Hypocrites that should know better, but don't? What is Jesus' deepest desire for them? As you think about those difficult people in the same space with Jesus, can you imagine Him thinking on them kindly, gently, compassionately? How is He looking at them? How does He invite you to see them?

The Pharisees had good reason to be sticking close to the Scriptures--the root motivation was on-point--that the children of Israel not forget their God again. However, they got distracted. They built laws on top of laws, on top of laws, and were actually hurting the people they served with all of their systems. Jesus cut through all of that and went directly to the person and their need. Is there anyone in your life that you think Jesus may be calling you to look at in a new way, the way he did? Who are you struggling to see clearly as a child of God, maybe because of 'rules' in your own mind?