

ACCIDENTAL
PHARISEES

Week 4 – Exclusivity
Raising the Bar; Thinning the Herd

Don't Forget About: The Pharisee and the Tax Collector



*“⁹He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: ¹⁰Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘**God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers,***

***or even like this tax collector.** ¹²I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’ ¹³But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘**God, be merciful to me, a sinner!**’ ¹⁴I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. **For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.**” – Luke 18:9-14 ESV*

Review: God's View of Pride

"⁶God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble." – James 4:6

"⁵all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble." – 1 Peter 5:5

"¹³The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverted mouth, I hate." – Proverbs 8:13

"⁵Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord; assuredly, he will not be unpunished." – Proverbs 16:5

"²³A man's pride will bring him low, but a humble spirit will obtain honor." – Proverbs 29:23

A Recap of Andrew Murray's Humility Book

(Stew's notecards from the bus... don't freak out...)

What do you do to cultivate humility?

Table Discussion – One Answer Only!

- ***Looking at the American church today, in what one area does the bar most need to be raised in terms of following Jesus?***

– 3 minutes to decide

- ***Explain what makes that item **particularly** important***

Larry Osborne's Outline

- *Humans are just bent toward exclusivity!*
- *Thinning the herd is a bad idea*
- *Jesus' approach to "sinners" aka consumer Christians*
 - *What about those lukewarm Laodiceans?*

The “Committed Xn” vs the “Consumer Xn”

- How would you determine who’s a “committed” Christian?
- What things give away someone having only **lukewarm faith**?
- What is our attitude about **commitment** vs. **lukewarm faith**?
- Which does Faith Church want to attract? **Why?**



Consider Yourself

- *How do you deal with **believers having a lower commitment level than yourself?***
 - *What verses come to mind?*
 - *What examples from Scripture?*
 - *How do you know you have the right attitude?*
 - *What are symptoms of a wrong attitude?*

From Inside the Church...

In a bid to make superstar Christians, leaders regularly seek to **raise the bar, stretch our faith, and pile on burdens**

- ***The **onion strategy on sin**: always another layer to peel off***

The **video game analogy on growth**: no matter how much you grow, there is always another level to achieve

– Larry Osborne pg. 70

No pain, no gain!

The Commitment Entrance Exam

- Do we use any of these as tests of belonging?*

Spiritual disciplines (Luke 18:12)

Bible knowledge (John 5:39)

Giving amount (Matthew 6:3)

Service level (Luke 7:7-10)

Spiritual giftedness (1 Cor 12:7)

Extraversion level

Status symbols / Brands

Leadership/Taking charge

Others?

From Outside the Church

- *Humans tend toward us vs. them: **Exclusivity***
 - *Once **I'm** in, I need to keep the **riffraff** out*
 - *'Riffraff' = anyone too different from me*
- *Risk is setting a **higher** bar for salvation than even Jesus did!*
 - *How do the Gospels portray the Jewish public?*
 - *What the Pharisees did*
 - *What Jesus did*

Who is the Patron Saint of Anti-Seeker Believers?

- ***“No one greater born of a woman,”*** said Jesus about him
 - ***He saw the dove descend; he heard the voice of God, but***
 - ***He ended up confused by Jesus’ **opposite** approach!***
 - ***See Luke 7:18-23***
- ***What things characterized John the Baptist’s ministry?***

— _____ -- _____
— _____ -- _____

Jesus' Approach to the Undercommitted

- Who were “**sinners**” in Jesus day versus “**pagans**” in our day

But Jesus...

- *Came from a backwater place*
- *Didn't recruit Special Ops guys*
- *Was accessible to individual people, no app'ts*
- *Healed without regard to past or future life*
- *Left His message behind in Koine Greek*
- *Caused the curtain of the temple to tear!*

Bottom line: Offended the Elitists

Zero Elitism



Jesus' Attitude vs. Our Attitude...

- *He clearly didn't litmus test them or write them off*
- *He did not appear overly concerned about their lack of commitment*
- *Motivated by abundant compassion*
 - *Mark 6:34*



- *How far apart are we from **the Pharisees?***

Is it Possible to Set Too Low of a Bar?

- *What if we go too far the other direction – overly **seeker centric**?*

“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.”

“11. ...I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler—not even to eat with such a one.”



*What about the **2nd half** of the Great Commission?*

Table Discussion – One Answer Only!

- ***Is it appropriate for Faith Church to reach out to GenZ people by opening a Jesus-themed nightclub in downtown Chandler?***

– 1 minute to decide

- ***Explain the specific **consideration** in your decision***

Wrap Up Items

- *Scripture to remember and help us be less exclusive:*

*“²⁷but God has **chosen the foolish** things of the world to shame the wise, and God has **chosen the weak** things of the world to shame the things which are strong, ²⁸and **the base things** of the world and the **despised** God has chosen, the **things that are not**, so that He may nullify the things that are, ²⁹so that no man may boast before God.” – 1 Corinthians 1:27-29*

*“The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, **not wishing for any to perish** but for all to come to repentance.” – 2 Peter 3:7-9*

Application Questions

- 1. How do you decide who is and who is not a “**genuine disciple**” of Jesus?*
- 2. When **can** and when **can't** we join in with people who don't believe like we do?*
- 3. What is the role of conscience?*

Sic et Non from the EFCA

- *How do we do a better job of engaging the increasingly diverse religious opinions we are hearing today? By teaching our minds and our lips to say “yes and no.” “Yes” to what is good and right. “No” to what is bad and wrong.*

Sic, yes *This means, first of all, that in our approach to contemporary claims we need to learn to say “yes.” We need to avoid an attitude of hyper-criticism, which assumes that if any idea is new it must be false. Although we have the inspired, inerrant, and authoritative Scriptures, no church body or theological tradition has all the truth.*

Non, no *Just as clearly as we must affirm the truths others hold, we must also reject their errors. Too many of us are extremely naive in our acceptance of the truth claims of others. Too often we allow ourselves to be misled by others’ false notions because we are convinced that their motives are pure, unaware of the damaging (and damning!) spiritual effects of every false doctrine or teaching.*

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Next Week – Legalism