

**Russell Kelfer**

# **Hypocrite of the Year Award**

**536-B**

**Series: The Beatitudes**



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# Hypocrite of the Year Award

I trust that many of you like to receive awards. We are going to have a presentation today of some very dubious awards. Stay tuned to this channel for further information. But first, we are going to review very briefly our last study of the Beatitudes as we re-examine the sixth of a series of packages from God. All of the packages are labeled, "Happiness is...". This one contains a heart-shaped mirror that reflects the condition of the real us. This is the person that lives in that sometimes pious, self-righteous, Christianized body known as Me and known as You. This Beatitude paraphrased says,

Oh what bliss, what self-contained joy, what happiness of soul for the one who is progressively becoming pure in heart. How will happiness be found?

(Matthew 5:8 paraphrased)

Jesus goes on to say that progressively and intimately, they shall see God.

We learned in the last lesson some basic principles necessary for the study of a pure heart. These are:

Principle 1- God's basic view of man is not based on what man says or does, but rather on what he thinks, feels and does in his heart.

For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. (Proverbs 23:7 NKJV)

...for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." (I Samuel 16:7 NKJV)

Principle 2- The heart of man, perhaps Scripture's most often used explanation of what God is concerned about in us, is not just our feelings and what we feel, the seat of our emotions. It is not just our intellect, the seat of our thoughts. It is not just our choices and decisions. The heart of man is all of that and more. The heart of man is the soul of man with all of the veneer stripped away. The heart of a man is the real you. It is your mind, to a degree, because it is what you think and that which will never be known. That is what you think in your heart. The heart of man is also his emotions. It is how you really feel about God,

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about people, about your husband or wife, about your friends, about your circumstances, and about yourself. It is not that pious, superficial, canned response. It is the real you. This is what God sees. It is also your will. The heart of man is what you really would do if you could do what you would like to do with no restraints or consequences. If you would never be found out or penalized, what would you do? That is your heart. That is the real you. This is what God looks at all day long.

### Principle 3- Apart from God, your heart and my heart is

...deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it?  
(Jeremiah 17:9)

The word deceitful means crafty or deceptive. The word desperately wicked means terminally evil. The phrase, “who can know it”, means that it is impossible to find out. So apart from God, your heart and mine is really about as unusable as any material you and I could ever pick up in the garbage heap of life.

Principle 4- God in the heart of believers, gives us the power for and expects from us progressive purity. This comes in four parts.

#### a) Progressive purity will change your whole view of life.

To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled.  
(Titus 1:15 NKJV)

A friend of mine called and shared this verse with me, Proverbs 4:23 from the Good News Bible goes like this:

Be careful how you think, your life is shaped by your thoughts.  
(Proverbs 4:23)

b) Remember that a pure heart will determine your ability to see God as we read in Matthew 5:8. The purity of your heart will determine how godly you are. What is godliness? The word godliness means Godlikeness. It means how much like God you will become. I John 3:2 says,

Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.  
(I John 3:2 NKJV)

Why? Because we shall see Him as He is.

The more you progressively come to see Him, the more like

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Him you become naturally.

c) Our job is to tend the heart.

Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the  
issues of life (Proverbs 4:23 NKJV)

The word “keep” in this passage is the same as the “keep” in Genesis when Adam was told to keep the garden. That means to protect it from intruders. If Adam had had his snake bait out like he should have, some of these problems might have never happened. The “keep” in a castle is the center point of the castle where things are kept secure. To “keep” your heart means that you have a given responsibility by God to tend it. As Adam was supposed to do with the garden, you are to tend your heart, to maintain it and keep it pure. Out of the heart comes the issues of life- the things that decide your fate.

Principle 5- To conclude our review, having decided that a pure heart was that important to God, we discussed five things about a pure heart. These are five evidences of purity in the heart. We will be looking at these more closely in this lesson and the next one.

Evidence 1- A transparent life, the absence of hypocrisy.

Evidence 2- Purity of motives. This is the ability to honestly evaluate why you do what you do so that you can progressively reject unholy motivations.

Evidence 3- A clear conscience. The Scripture says that a clear conscience is being void of offense toward God and void of offense toward man.

Evidence 4- Singleness of heart, the absence of double-mindedness. This person has a steadfastness of purpose.

Evidence 5- Moral purity of the thought life. This is the continued ability to sift through and with an increasingly higher standard, reject those things that represent moral compromise.

In this lesson we will take up our study by examining the first evidence of a pure heart which is a transparent life. This life is absent of hypocrisy. All of us know someone who is a hypocrite. As we began our day, we gazed intently into this face in the mirror. The word hypocrisy means to answer back as in a play, to play a role, to portray something other than what we are.

What does God say about hypocrisy? To find out, we turn

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our spiritual antennas to channel 23 of Matthew where we join a network program that is already in progress. All of us have, probably, heard of the Oscar Awards. They give awards to everything connected with movies. Then there are the Emmy Awards which give awards to television programs and television stars. Then there are the Tony Awards for Broadway plays. In this lesson we are going to watch the Hypo Awards. These are presentations to the biggest hypocrites who have ever lived. We will see the best acting, staging and directing of lies on the stage of a Christian life. Jesus Christ, the only true judge, will be making the presentations. He sees not only the performance, but He alone also sees the heart. Only He can perfectly judge the gap between the two.

The intensity of our Master of Ceremonies as He makes these presentations is somewhat unusual. If we are around someone who screams and hollers and yells all the time, after a while we don't pay any attention to them. We basically set a tone and others don't pay attention to us if we don't raise that tone and talk louder. Ninety-nine percent of the time, Jesus is portrayed with gentleness, kindness, love, compassion, mercy and grace. However, when we open to Matthew 23, we see fire, condemnation, judgment and power. If this passage doesn't make us sit up and take notice when we read it, something is wrong. There is such a sharp contrast that we know God has something extra special to say to every one of us.

The show is unfolding before a live audience. We read in Matthew 23:1 that three groups of people are present. The multitudes are there, the mass of people following Jesus to see what He will do next. The disciples are the inner group of men surrounding Jesus, who is making the awards. They are not even aware that they are involved in the presentation. The Scribes and the Pharisees are also there. These men are the acting unions who are responsible for all of the performances that are being considered in this chapter.

### The Scribes

I want to pause for a commercial at this point and explain the Scribes and Pharisees, so that we will fully understand their importance. First, let's consider the Scribes. The nation Israel always had visions of greatness, but they have now been conquered by the Assyrians, the Babylonians and the Persians.

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Jerusalem has been left desolate. Politically and from a standpoint of military force, they have found out that power was not to be their claim to life and glory. However, they do possess the law of God, the most precious possession in the world. Ever since that eventful day when having returned to rebuild their shattered city, Ezra, the scribe, took the book of the law and read it, their nation's history was altered. There was an understood national purpose in keeping the law.

Now the men whose duty it was to study and interpret the law were the Scribes. They would take the law as it was outlined from God. They would break it down into pieces, define it, redefine it, refine it and then complicate it. They would take something simple and make it long enough to become incomprehensibly complex.

An example was that the law said man was not to work on the Sabbath. So the Scribes took it upon themselves to write reams of material defining work. They defined what constituted work and what constituted the Sabbath. They wrote explanations of what hours and what type of responsibilities were allowed. They decided how many paces a man could walk on the Sabbath and not sin. They decided how much weight he could carry and get by with it. They filled up fifty volumes just trying to define the law. The Scribes made the law unbearable, then instructed men to bear the unbearable.

### The Pharisees

The Pharisees were another group of men who are up for awards. In 175 B.C., a deliberate attempt was made to stamp out the Jewish religion and replace it with Greek religion, Greek customs and Greek practices. At that time, out of persecution, there arose a sect called the Pharisees, a separate sect. The word literally means the separated ones. They determined to devote their whole lives to the careful, meticulous observance of every rule. So we can conclude that the Scribes were the definers, and the Pharisees were the examples. But the Pharisees soon developed problems as all men develop problems when they decide to be God-pleasers without the power of God.

Some of these problems were so evident that when Jesus spoke in this chapter, people understood what He was saying. From the lips of the Talmud itself, the Jewish people had already said there were seven kinds of Pharisees. These names are the

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real names translated into English of what the people called the different groups.

1- The shoulder Pharisees. These men were very meticulous in their obedience and wore their good deeds on their shoulders to be seen of men. Everything they did was for show.

2- The wait-a-little Pharisee. These men professed the creed with undying loyalty, but always had a valid excuse as to why they couldn't do it now. It has been interesting to study how these people lived like this, always knowing what to do, but never getting around to doing it. Sound familiar?

3- The bruised and bleeding Pharisees. In this day and time, the women had such a low status that anyone who was an Orthodox teacher was not allowed to speak to a woman in public, including his own wife or sister. These Pharisees wanted to be so religious and so self-righteous that they wanted to be sure they were not adversely affected or contaminated by the females in the population. They would shut their eyes when a woman came into view, therefore walking into buildings, stepping off of bridges, and bumping into objects. They were bruised and bleeding, because there were so many women in the towns they would constantly be wounded as they closed their eyes and ran into things. They were called the bleeding Pharisees. They considered that the more bruises they had, the greater their badge of moral purity.

4- The humpbacked Pharisees. These were the men who felt that they needed to show their humility, so they walked stooped over to show that they weren't proud. They wouldn't pick up their feet, because they were afraid they would look like they were marching, and so as they were dragging their feet to walk, they would often fall.

5- The ever-reckoning Pharisee. These men should have been called CPA's because they kept a ledger on God all of the time. They figured that the more good deeds they did, the more God owed them. The more good deeds they did, they held it up in God's face and expected something special in return.

6- The timid Pharisees. These men were always living in fear of divine retribution. They were afraid that they had done something bad and God was going to get them. They lived in morbid fear of God so they tried to work that much harder trying to earn God's favor.

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7- The God-fearing Pharisee. This small group of men really loved God and loved His Word.

This is our cast of characters. The whole group is represented by its president, Clean Cup Charlie. We find him in Matthew 23:25-28. We discussed him a little in the last lesson. For the sake of time, I am simply going to share with you that he represented the entirety of the group in principle. We learned in the last lesson that Jesus said that his life could best be defined by using two simple illustrations. You may be able to relate.

Illustration #1 is that of a fine china cup and saucer. It is set on a beautiful table, highly polished, lovely in appearance, and very ostentatious. When you pick it up to drink from it, you see dead roaches in the cup. That is not pleasant. This is literally what this verse means. God will not fill that cup. He would never want anyone to drink out of it. He said that Clean Cup Charlie was walking around all shined up on the outside, but on the inside were roaches, ashes and dirt.

Illustration #2- Jesus told the Pharisees that on the outside they looked like “whitewashed sepulchers”, but on the inside they were full of dead men’s bones. In the time that Jesus lived, many tombstones were placed by the wayside or by the road, because the poor people didn’t have land to bury their dead. The problem was that if someone tripped or touched a tombstone, he became ceremonially unclean and couldn’t take part in rituals. This was a particular disaster during the time of the Passover, because if someone tripped and fell over a tombstone, he was unclean and couldn’t partake of the Passover. So just before the Passover, they would send a group of people who would whitewash these tombstones in order to get them crystal clean. Then if someone bumped into one of them, he would not become unclean. Jesus said that the only problem was that they were still full of dead men’s bones. Jesus goes on to say of the Pharisees, “Such are ye.” This is what Clean Cup Charlie was like. This is what hypocrisy is all about. Clean Cup Charlie represented the whole crew of Pharisees.

Our Master of Ceremonies, Jesus Himself, will read out the nominees of the Hypocrite of the Year Award. Listen to see if this is convicting or not. In Matthew 23:1-4 the award for the poorest performance for an actor in a directing role goes to Double Standard Danny. In verses 5-12, for the best star performance in



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a supporting role, the award goes to Limelight Louie. In verse 13, the best artistic effect award goes to Stumbling Block Sammy. In verse 14, the best performance as a religious con-man, the award goes to Praying or “Preying Pancho”. In verses 15-24, the best direction of a sequel, the award goes to “Davey Disciple”. In verses 25-28, the best acting in a mystery role, the award goes to “Legalistic Lonny”. In verses 29-33, the best performance by an actor in a dual role, the award goes to “Self-Righteous Robert”.

And the Nominees...

### Double Standard Danny

Here come the nominations. We can see Jesus come to the platform in verses 1-4 as He says, “The first nominee for the role of someone who is trying to act in a directing role is “Double Standard Danny”.” Let’s turn to Matthew 23.

Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples,  
saying: “The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat

Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe  
and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say,  
and do not do.

For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on  
men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them  
with one of their fingers. (Matthew 23:1-4 NKJV)

Now He outlines the principle of submission to authority for the sake of the office of authority, but teaches how to learn to separate the office from the person. How many wives will say, “I can’t submit to my husband because he doesn’t live the Christian life.” How many employees say, “I can’t submit to my boss because he is not faithful in his Christian walk.” The point is that we submit to the government, to our bosses, to our husbands and to those we are placed in authority under, because of the role they occupy. If they are not faithful, then Jesus says to submit to the authority, but reject the example.

Let’s use the example of a wife going on a diet. The husband may say, “You must lose 30 pounds,” while he is 60 pounds overweight. She may wonder how she can listen to him when he says it is the will of God for her to lose weight, while he is not submitting to God. Jesus said that the Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat, so whatever they say to do, do it. The Law was handed from Moses to Joshua, from Joshua to the elders, from

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the elders to the prophets, and from the prophets to the Scribes and Pharisees. The Scribes and Pharisees now sat in Moses' seat. They occupied the place of authority. Jesus told the people to do what those in authority told them to do. However, He told them not to do what they *did*, but what they *said*. If the wife who had the diet problem, did what the husband did, she would weigh too much. So she needs to do what the husband says. When you come under authority, do what that authority bids you do, if that authority is in line with the will of God and in line with the Word of God.

So many times we confuse the people in authority over us with the things they ought to be doing. We may say, "They are not faithful, so I can't submit myself to them." Jesus says to do what they tell you to do, but don't be like them. You can obey the authority but not become like them. It is easy to find examples of this. Some parents tell their children that it is terribly important to spend time alone with God every day, but they don't. They know in their own hearts that they are just about as unfaithful and rotten in that area of their lives as anybody they know. Then with a pious, self-righteous attitude, they come to their children telling them that is what they ought to do. They imply that if as parents they think it is important, surely they live that way. Hypocrisy.

Husbands may tell their wives to learn to control their tongues. Yet, the example they give on the phone or in front of the television during a sports game is exactly the opposite. The wife wonders why self-control is right for her and wrong for him. This is hypocrisy. It is playacting. It is pretending to be something we are not by setting a double standard.

Worse still, the Scribes and Pharisees were using their authority to compensate for their own hypocrisy. The Scripture says that they would bind heavy burdens, grievous to be borne, but not lift a finger themselves. They would turn the heat on those under their authority in order to cover up the fact that they themselves were having a problem in that very area.

It is hard for me to admit it, but I do it at work. I do it at home. I do it as a parent, as a husband and as a boss. I just turn the heat on in an area to create a smoke screen, so that no one can look back in my heart to see that I am rotten in the very area in which I am being demanding of others around me. If you

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are honest with yourself, you do this too. The problem is that when we cover up authority that way, we are simply revealing an emptier heart.

### Limelight Louie

Jesus goes on with the second nomination, “Limelight Louie”. This guy is his own co-star in a stunning performance as a humble boxer in Rocky VII or some other sequel. He is nominated for the most scene-stealing performance by what is supposed to be his role as supporting actor. As we read further along in Matthew 23 Jesus continues,

But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments.

They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues,

greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, ‘Rabbi, Rabbi.’

But you, do not be called ‘Rabbi’; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. (Matthew 23:5-8 NKJV)

The problem is that their motive is always to be seen of men. They want to be on stage at all times. They have on a painted grim face with a high volume voice. They enter the room like a bulldozer with a flat tire. They want to be seen. They want to be known. The Christian ought to enter a room and dissolve into the woodwork only to return as light. People are not interested in hearing our voice and seeing us. They are interested in knowing a Living God who can live and shine through us.

The Scribes and Pharisees wore externally gaudy signs of their spirituality. The phylacteries were little wooden boxes with scrolls kept in them. They held four verses of Scripture in them. Two verses were from Exodus 13, and one was from Deuteronomy 6 and the last was from Deuteronomy 11. They wore one of the boxes on their foreheads and one on their wrists. This was a sign that they were keeping the law as frontlets between their eyes. The problem is that the Pharisees decided if it worked that way, they could make the boxes a little bigger, and the people would realize they were keeping the law a little better. They started carrying big satchels around their heads. They were proud of themselves. Everywhere they went they thought, “Look at us, we are spiritual.”

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We also know that they would enlarge the borders of their garments. In Numbers 15, God instructed them to put four tassels, one at each corner of their garment to show that they were in subjection to the Word and to show their commitment to God. The Pharisees thought, “Why have ordinary tassels. We are more in subjection than the average person.” So they would get big ropes and make enormous tassels to be seen of men.

Scripture says that they would look for the uppermost seats in the synagogue and at the feasts. They always wanted to be in view. They loved the greetings in the marketplace. They loved to be greeted in the street with acknowledgments of how good their Bible studies were and would want everyone to hear the compliment. They loved to be called “Rabbi”, “Father”, and “Master”. These titles bring glory, and they wanted it. But these titles bring glory and only belong to the One who can receive glory.

In Matthew 6, God gives us the ideal illustration of how we are supposed to deal with the three basic elements of our faith—prayer, fasting and giving. When you pray, go into a closet and don’t let anyone else know about it. When you fast, you put a smile on your face and don’t tell anybody what you are doing. When you give, you don’t even let your left hand know what your right hand is giving. The reason for all of this is so we won’t be hypocrites. We don’t need to be known and seen of men. When we do, we have our reward. You may say, “I really prayed about something, and everybody I asked prayed about it. But God didn’t answer that prayer.” You may wonder why not. He already answered it, because you have already gotten your reward. You wanted attention, and you already got it. You got the attention, and now it is all over.

You may say, “I fasted for two days. I talked to several of my friends about it. But what I fasted for wasn’t handled like I wanted it to be.” Yes it was. You wanted to be recognized for being holy and fasting. You got recognized, because you told others about it.

Let’s suppose, “I gave some money to a special fund, and I told the pastor about it. I told three friends and am really excited about it. However, I don’t feel any real treasure or blessing from it.” You got what you wanted. Scripturally, you have your reward.

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### Stumbling-Block Sammy

The third nomination Jesus gives goes to “Stumbling-Block Sammy”. Verse 13, basically sums it up.

“But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.  
(Matthew 23:13 NKJV)

This guy is nominated for the artistic effects of the year award. He is able to blur the vision of others who are trying to see God. He goes to work and passes out tracts, then loses his temper. He tells everybody he sees that he is a Christian. He has a bumper sticker that says, “Honk, I’m a Christian” then he goes 60 m.p.h. in a 40 m.p.h. zone. He thinks the guy at the red light behind him is honking because he is a Christian. The whole idea is that this guy doesn’t care that other people can’t get into the kingdom, because he is not who he says he is. Bumper stickers don’t really change people’s lives, Jesus does. Great big signs that you wear around your neck about your piety and self-righteousness will not draw men to God. Only God will draw men to Himself through your life. The lips and the testimony you give will bear witness of a Living God. Playacting. Hypocrisy.

### Praying-Preying Pancho

The fourth nomination is “Praying-Preying Pancho”. This is found in Matthew 23:14. This verse is not in all of the manuscripts. We could spell his name “Praying” or “Preying’ Pancho. These guys would make long prayers to appear extremely spiritual. They would get on everybody’s good list and particularly widows of whom the congregation was to be extraordinarily kind and sympathetic towards. These men would prey on these widows while they told them that they would pray for them. Oftentimes they would get into their financial lives by appearing to be pious and spiritual. They would ask these widows to trust them to help with investing their money. They would then help themselves to it. Hypocrisy. Their motive was to use for self gain.

How many times have people asked you to pray for them this last month? How many times have you agreed, then just went your way and never thought of it again?

### Dick Discipler

Then there is “Dick Discipler” in verse 15,

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“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.”

(Matthew 23:15 NKJV)

In this passage in terms of hypocrisy is the insensitive approach to discipling. Discipling means that you find someone who has a need in their life, and we pour our lives into them. The problem is that most of us begin to do that, then we get so prideful that we want them to become like us instead of like Jesus. Organizations do it. Churches do it. Individuals do it. The problem is that we not only transfer life, we transfer death as well. We not only transfer good, we transfer evil as well. That is why it is vital for churches and organizations and Christians in the body of Christ to communicate with one another so that the body of Christ has wholeness. Otherwise, we get tunnel vision when we disciple ourselves. It is like interbreeding animals until you get something that is so high-strung and specialized that it is not good for God or man. There has to be a certain amount of fellowship between the parts of the body so that we do not become so narrow in our thinking.

We try to make converts for our church or organization. If they don't talk like we do and use our language and think our way, we scratch them from our list. The whole principle is that this is hypocrisy. It is not the good of the person that we have in mind, but the making of someone like us.

### Legalistic Lonny

The sixth nomination is for “Legalistic Lonny”. He is the “Perry Mason” of the religious world. He comes for his acceptance speech and says, “I can't talk, I just swallowed a camel.” He is best known for his efforts to impose legalistic restrictions after the case is already closed. The problem is that the people would swear by the gold on the temple and say it was binding. They would swear by the temple itself and say it wasn't binding. Basically, they were nitpicking because they wanted a way out. They wanted to make a vow before God, but with certain conditions and they refused to be bound by it.

Jesus goes on to say that these people will tithe out of their dill, mint, anise and cumin, which are kitchen herbs that come out of a patch in the back yard. These are inconsequential things. They would take a dill and count the seed and take 10% of the

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seed and put it in a bag to tithe. They would count the individual leaves on the plants and split the leaves to be sure they tithed the right amount to be holy. Hypocrisy.

Jesus then told them that they would forget the big things like judgment, mercy and faith. They would never miss Sunday School, but they would never apply what they heard. They would never miss tithing, but they would never give their heart to anybody. They would never fail to witness, but they would never have a testimony. Jesus told them they were blind guides who would strain at a gnat. In those days they would purify the drinking water by pouring it through a sieve. Little bugs would be caught in the net, and that would clean the water. Jesus said that they were straining out the gnats while swallowing a great big camel. Translated into our day, they were more concerned with programs rather than people, details rather than principles, and the letter of the law rather than love.

### Self-Righteous Robert

The seventh one in verse 29-33 is “Self-Righteous Robert”.

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous,

and say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.’

“Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets.

Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers’ guilt.

Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell?  
(Matthew 23:29-33 NKJV)

This man’s performance is for best actor in a dual role. He plays Clark Kent and Superman in the same movie. The problem is that Clark Kent is his real identity and Superman is who he wishes he was. He turns to the Lord and says, “Lord, if I had been here, they never would have stoned the prophets.” This reminds us of Peter. Peter said, “You can count on me, Lord,” then he denied him three times. It is like the publican who said, “I thank You Lord that I am not like these other guys. They would have stoned the prophets.” Jesus said, “So would you. So did you. So will you.” Hypocrites.

The ballots are in, and the trouble is that we are all in the ballots. Our future growth is hanging in the balance. Jesus

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has given them each the dubious distinction of being called hypocrites, those who playact on the stage of life, roles of righteousness. They are actors indeed. Actors indeed we are. The degree of our hypocrisy is the measure of our ability to see God. You may fashion yourself as a “Clean Cup Charlie, Double Standard Donnie, Limelight Louie, Stumbling-Block Sammy, Praying Pancho, Davey Discipler, Legalistic Lonny, Self-Righteous Robert” or all of the above. All are fictional names to be sure, but only the names have been changed to protect the not so innocent.

I apologize for making the lesson so seemingly trite with television analogies, but I wanted you to get the point that the awards that Jesus was giving are awards that He still gives, and it breaks His heart every time He does. The things the Pharisees and Scribes did are the things we do. I would ask myself and you this week to go back over this chapter. You could make up some Hypo Awards and give them to yourself. Will the result bring in a changed heart, one that seeks after God? Blessed is the transparent man whose pure heart is without pretense, for through his transparency men will see God, and because of his transparency, so will he.

Note: Russell wrote each of these lessons in a manner that would enable him to clearly communicate them to his weekly class. The grammar or punctuation you encounter may not be technically perfect, but you will certainly “hear” his unique gift for making the message applicable to the common man in everyday situations.

It’s been said of him that he was really a writer who read his stuff. And that’s a very accurate statement!

May you be richly blessed as you “hear” as you read.

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