

Hypocrites in the Church!

The man who says he is kept away from church by hypocrites is not influenced by them anywhere else. **Author Unknown** crites; and yet, he takes not one single step toward the only place where no hypocrites can go--heaven.

Business is full of them; but if he by chance sees where he can make some money, he does not hesitate because there are hypocrites making money. Honestly now, is he not being a little hypocritical?

Society is crowded with them, and yet he never thinks of becoming a hermit. **Romans 3:3-4** For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? ⁴Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written:

“That You may be justified in Your words, And may overcome when You are judged.”

Hell will be full of them, and yet he is not doing anything to keep from going there.

He makes you think he is trying to avoid hypo-



Classes this Week

Kid's Class at the Building at 5:15 All Are Invited	College Class at the Johnson's on Sunday Night on Common Moral Challenges on Campus	Monday Night Men's class at the Davis' at 7PM	Thursday Night Class at Jillian Petty's on Acts at 7 PM	Saturday Night Class at & PM at the Rouse's on Communication and Personality
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Sick

Fran Snyder (Mother of Carla Humphrey)	Pam Dial (Laura Weldon's Mother)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Matt Tenold (Toni Herd's Friend)
Adriana Mininno (Haley Chittam's Cousin)	Dave and Betty Bradford
Ed Mort (Friend of Sharon Bailey)	"Grandmama" Odessa Wyatt (Dyle's grandmother)
Gerald White (Christopher's and Wesley's Father)	Dave Brown (Friend of the Lanier's)
Marty and Aubrey Meeks (Toni Herd's Nephews)	Carrie Chavers (Friend of Sharon Bailey)
Wes Bowen	Chick Wade
Johnny Adrian (Friend of Sullivan's)	Lori Holloway

News and Notes

- Let's remember our expectant mothers: Laura Weldon, Anna Miller and Nicole Pender.
- Chip Freeman's Father, John Freeman, died on Friday. Let us remember this family in our prayers.
- Here is the new address for Ryan and Kelly Hand:
133 Enclave Ave.
Calera, AL 35040
- Thanks for all who worked so hard to clean up the building and yard.
- If you wish to donate to the flower fund please see Patsy Ogle.
- Audio CDs of Today's Sermon will be immediately available.

The Auburn Beacon



Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. **(Matthew 5:16)**

Turning the Grace of God into a Carnal Weapon

By Larry Rouse



Thought to Ponder

Does not he to whom you betray another. . . know that you will at another time do as much for him?

All who know the Lord understand the power of His grace! Those who have seen the blackness of their own sin and were then melted by the message of how God gave His Son for them, can attest to the life-changing power of the gospel. We do not deserve salvation. We cannot earn salvation. In our sin we were once active enemies of God. Still, God, by His grace, gave us the greatest gift that has ever been given **(Rom 5:6-8)**!

Those who have been changed by this grace, find their hearts and their lives defined by it. Paul plainly proclaimed "By the grace of God I am what I am" **(1 Cor 15:10)**. When Paul converted some Jews and proselytes to God he urged them to continue "in the grace of God" **(Acts 13:43)**. Our true spiritual growth is measured by our increase in "the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" **(2 Peter 3:18)**.

The perversion of God's Grace

Satan hates the grace of God, for by it men are rescued from his clutches. Being the cunning adversary that he is, Satan has encouraged many to serve him under the banner of the grace of God! There were those who preached a doctrine of "grace" that left men's hearts untouched by the teaching of the Spirit of God. Men were told that they could "continue in sin that grace

From my personal experience, I have found most that have used God's grace as a weapon have hearts that are filled with anger and bitterness. Sadly, if given time, they will fill their disciples with this same spirit. Keep your eyes open and see if it is God or Satan that is behind these teachings.

may abound" **(Romans 6:1)**. Others found under this banner of "grace" that in their hearts they could hate their brethren and exalt themselves over these "inferiors" in their pride **(1 John 3:14-15)**. Jude proclaimed that these men had in fact turned "the grace of our God into lewdness" **(Jude 4)**.

Modern Day Examples

Years ago I read an article by Connie Adams that I never forgot. He received some advice concerning men who claim to define their lives by the "grace" of God and how they actually act under pressure.

"Years ago, an older preacher told me of a warning he had received years before

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Do You Have a Bible Question?
Call (334) 734-2133 or
E-mail:
LarryRouse@aubeacon.com

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

Ask about our home Bible Study Groups!

Larry Rouse
Evangelist and Editor

Check Us Out On the Internet: www.aubeacon.com

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from Cled Wallace. He said, "Watch out for the real sweet men. They will rip you to pieces when they get a chance." I have received more unkind and unjust treatment over the years from those who had the most to say about love, kindness, gentleness and such nobler qualities, but who could not tolerate any criticism about what they were teaching."

"I much prefer to deal with people who will meet you in the open before witnesses to air honest disagreements than those who isolate and insulate themselves in ivory towers where they look down with contempt on the fray below them."

I, too, have experienced the wrath of these men who talk about grace, love and peace. Often these men are seeking to form a party, split a church or work to destroy the reputation of another Christian they view as a competitor in any way they can.

Tests for the True Grace of God

Peter wanted Christians to clearly identify and stand in the "true grace of God" rather than some self-serving philosophy (**1 Peter 5:12**). Consider these questions and test your own heart.

1. How do I view those who disagree with me?

Those who are motivated by God's grace and love are forbearing and willing to listen to others that have a difference with them. God's grace will always lead to an open Bible and an open heart to search out "the word of His grace" (**Acts 20:32**).

When Satan's "grace" is involved, there will be quick judgments about others. Many are quickly labeled as unworthy of study, particularly if they have displayed a strong faith and knowledge of God's word. However, those who are struggling and separated from other Christians are often approached in private about these new views (**Peter 2:1**).

2. Am I being honest with others about what I really believe?

The grace of God will be open and honest about anything God has revealed. There is no need to plot, plan or scheme concerning how to teach others. "Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart. ²But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (**2 Cor 4:1-2**).

Those who are motivated by Satan's wisdom have

learned to lie. They have as their goal to bring as many into their party as possible and in any way they can. If a false impression about their own beliefs would keep a knowledgeable Christian from questioning them and thus give them more time to work behind the scenes, then they will do that very thing. If they can misrepresent what another Christian believes so they can pull another Christian into their group, then they will do that too (**Gal 4:17**).

3. What is the focus of my own heart and those that associate with me? Our tongues will ultimately reveal our hearts. "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things" (**Matthew 12:35**). Those motivated by the grace of God will be looking to serve others, to speak well of others and to see the best in others.

A sure sign of Satan's wisdom is seen when men's concept of "grace" leads them to quickly label others as "traditionalist," "legalist" and with many other terms (**James 3:16**). These men are constantly looking at men, whether it is to condemn and attack their "opponents" or to flatter one another over their spirituality. "For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise" (**2 Cor 10:12**).

One Final Test

We must know the difference between these philosophies. From my personal experience, I have found most that have used God's grace as a weapon have hearts that are filled with anger and bitterness. Sadly, if given time, they will fill their disciples with this same spirit. Keep your eyes open and see if it is God or Satan that is behind these teachings.

"Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace" (**James 3:13-18**).



Phariseeism

By Frank Jamerson

The Pharisees were probably condemned more severely than any other group of people by the Lord during His life on earth. The label of "Pharisee" has come to us as an extremely uncomplimentary label. Often it is misused by false teachers and those in sympathy with them. Let us notice some of the characteristics in Pharisees that Jesus condemned.

They were critical of Jesus for teaching sinners, but would not listen to Him themselves. The great chapter on God's attitude toward the lost and what ours should be, **Luke 15**, was spoken to Pharisees who murmured because Jesus associated with sinners. Their attitude was demonstrated in the elder son who stayed home, but said to his father basically what the Pharisees had said to Jesus, "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." They objected to Jesus receiving sinners, "but the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected for themselves the counsel of God, being not baptized of him (John)" (**Lk. 7:30**). The Pharisaical attitude is shown by those who criticize faithful teachers for teaching the truth, while refusing to listen or teach it themselves.

The Pharisees were hypocritical because they claimed to be interested in the details of the law, but ignored it when it suited their purposes. Jesus said, "But woe unto you Pharisees! for ye tithe the mint and rue and every herb, and pass over justice and the love of God: but these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Woe unto you Pharisees! for you love the chief seats in the synagogues, and the salutations in the marketplaces" (**Lk. 11:42,43**). They liked to appear "righteous," but, justice and love were not part of their armor. When men today profess to be interested in God's law, but lie, refuse to pay their debts, etc., they are demonstrating Pharisaical hypocrisy.

Pharisees were long on talk and short on practice. Jesus said: "All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not after their works: for they say, and do not" (**Matt. 23:3**). This spirit of finding things for others to do, but not for self did not die with the first century Pharisees! "Do as I say, not as I do" may be good advice; Jesus gave it; but He did not commend the conduct of those who lived that philosophy.

They were bound by traditions. In fact, the Pharisees were very strict when it came to observing their cus-

toms, even if they contradicted the teaching of God's word (**Matt. 15:1-6**). Though there is nothing wrong with a practice because it has been done for a long time, there is something wrong with elevating custom to a "thus saith the Lord." There was nothing wrong with washing hands before eating food, but to make this a law of God was to elevate man's traditions to an equality with God's word. Whether we have two songs and a prayer, or two prayers and a song are matters of judgment. Whether we have the Lord's supper before the sermon or after it; close with a song or with a prayer, are all matters of liberty, but when men elevate traditions to a "thus saith the Lord" they disrespect God's word. Likewise, when men substitute sprinkling for immersion, or add instrumental music to singing, they are demonstrating the Pharisaical spirit.

Jesus told a parable to those who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and set all others at nought in **Luke 18:9-14**. The Pharisee who had not been an "extortioner, unjust or an adulterer" and had given "tithes of all" that he got was not condemned because of those characteristics, but because of his attitude toward others. This was not the only condemnation of this bad trait. Earlier, Luke had said: "And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath; that they might find how to accuse him" (**Lk. 6:7**). They had set their minds on finding fault, and faultfinders usually find fault!

Pharisees majored on minors. Jesus said that they "left undone the weightier matters" and "strained out the gnat, and swallowed the camel" (**Matt. 23:23-25**). Many misrepresent what Jesus said in this passage by saying that the little things are not important. Jesus did not say to "swallow the gnats," but He did say that those who are careful to strain out gnats and then swallow camels are inconsistent. All of God's word is important.

Not everything about Pharisees was bad. Paul said, "after the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee" (**Acts 26:5**), and "as touching the law (he lived) a Pharisee" (**Phil. 3:5**). We need to strictly obey God's law, but we must avoid the bad characteristics that God condemned in the Pharisees.—Guardian of Truth July 3, 1986

