



Today's Message

Date: March 7, 2021
Speaker: Pastor Steven Thomas
Title: ***A Direct Assault on Error***

Text: Luke 11:37–54 (ESV)

³⁷ While Jesus was speaking, a Pharisee asked him to dine with him, so he went in and reclined at table. ³⁸ The Pharisee was astonished to see that he did not first wash before dinner. ³⁹ And the Lord said to him, “Now you Pharisees cleanse the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. ⁴⁰ You fools! Did not he who made the outside make the inside also? ⁴¹ But give as alms those things that are within, and behold, everything is clean for you. ⁴² “But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and every herb, and neglect justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others. ⁴³ Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the best seat in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces. ⁴⁴ Woe to you! For you are like unmarked graves, and people walk over them without knowing it.” ⁴⁵ One of the lawyers answered him, “Teacher, in saying these things you insult us also.” ⁴⁶ And he said, “Woe to you lawyers also! For you load people with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers. ⁴⁷ Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets whom your fathers killed. ⁴⁸ So you are witnesses and you consent to the deeds of your fathers, for they killed them, and you build their tombs. ⁴⁹ Therefore also the Wisdom of God said, ‘I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute,’ ⁵⁰ so that the blood of all the prophets, shed from the foundation of the world, may be charged against this generation, ⁵¹ from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, it will be required of this generation. ⁵² Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter yourselves, and you hindered those who were entering.” ⁵³ As he went away from there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to press him hard and to provoke him to speak about many things, ⁵⁴ lying in wait for him, to catch him in something he might say.

Introduction: Whenever people attempt to come to God apart from trusting the gospel of Christ, they follow one of two paths: antinomianism (no law required) and legalism (salvation through law-keeping). Ironically, both paths begin in the same place: trust placed in human wisdom. In this sermon text, Jesus confronts the legalists.

I. The message of Jesus speaks to the condition of the heart. 37-41

- A. Controversy arose about man-made rituals. 37-38
- B. Jesus insists that only fools trust outward rituals; God requires an inward transformation. 39-41

II. Woe to Pharisees, those who practice legalism. 42-44

- A. “Your hypocrisy blinds you to what is important.” 42
- B. “Your pride drives you to crave recognition.” 43
- C. “Your corruption causes you to defile others.” 44

III. The first response: Jesus’ message insulted the legalists. 45

IV. Woe to lawyers, those who teach legalism. 45-52

- A. “You crush the people with burdens while refusing to help them.” 46
- B. “You despise the word of God while pretending to honor it.” 47-51
- C. “You claim to know the way to God while preventing others from entering.” 52

V. Second Response: Jesus’ message fueled the legalists’ murderous hatred. 53-54

Today’s take-home truth: Human works can never bring anyone to God; God requires faith in Jesus that changes the heart.