

People of God: But First, Look Inside

By Brett Hilliard, January 19, 2025

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God.

1 Peter 2:9-10 NIV

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to His disciples:

"The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach.

Everything they do is done for people to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; they love the place of honour at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; they love to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces...

Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices – mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law – justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel.

Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean.

Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean.

You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?"

Matthew 23:2-3, 5-7, 23-27, 33 NIV

All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight, but the Lord weighs the motives.

Proverbs 16:2 NASB1977

He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of the heart. At that time each will receive their praise from God.

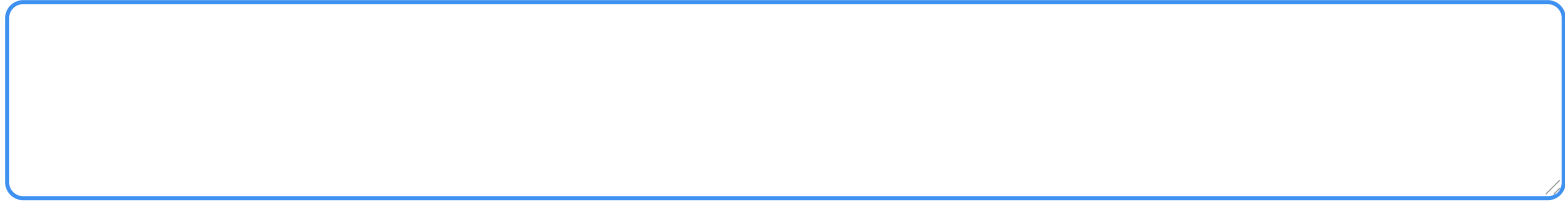
1 Corinthians 4:5 NIV

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

Galatians 6:2 NIV

For it is from within, out of a person's heart, that evil thoughts come – sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and defile a person.

Mark 7:21-23 NIV



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What is going on inside you? What are your secret thoughts? Dreams, bitterness, anger, fantasies?
2. How can you implement one new routine in your life to take better stock of your inner health?