

WHOLE WHEAT

The truth is simple...just simply not known.

A PUBLICATION FOR BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING

The Pharisees

What was wrong with the Pharisees in Jesus Christ's time? If this were actually known, followers of Jesus Christ would know how to [repent](#) and truly be saved.

Let's begin by showing what kind of ministers the Pharisees were. Jesus Christ called them a bunch of religious snakes or vipers who robbed widow's houses (Matt. 23:33). They talked widows into leaving their children's inheritance to the church (Matt. 23:14; 15:5). He said they appeared to be righteous on the outside while on the inside they were full of fraud, greed and indulgence (Matt. 23:25-28). They were of their father, the devil (John 8:44). They were also religious liars, cheats, unconverted hypocrites and lovers of money (Luke 16:14). They put the love of money above God (Luke 16:13). Yet, they were loved and respected by everyone in the community (Luke 6:26). As you can clearly see, God's word describes the Pharisees as possessing these characteristics.

Jesus Christ continually hinted to the Pharisees what their problem was. Jesus told them more than once that He desired compassion and not sacrifice (Matt. 9:13; 12:7; Hosea 6:6). He told them to go and find out what that meant according to the Scriptures.

We also need to know what this means! **We need to understand the sacrifice the Lord desires of us.** The answer is found in Proverbs 21:3; Psalm 106:3; and Psalm 50:22-23.

The key to this mystery lies in understanding these Scriptures:

1. God desires compassion and not sacrifice (Matt. 9:13; 12:7).

2. Jesus accused the Pharisees of taking away this key of knowledge from the people. They did not enter the kingdom themselves and became [stumbling blocks](#) to the people who were seeking

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The Pharisees

God (Matt. 23:13; Luke 11:52). We should heed this warning!

3. Jesus repeats what we need to do to be saved: “Give that which is within as [charity](#) and then all things are clean for you” (Luke 11:41-42).

‘We enter the kingdom of heaven when we do the Father’s Will on earth daily (Matt. 7:21; 6:10).’

[There is a kingdom of heaven and the entrance is within you](#) (Matt. 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; 5:20; Luke 17:21). The kingdom of heaven is entered by practicing righteousness (Rom. 14:17). We enter the kingdom of heaven when we do the Father’s Will on earth daily (Matt. 7:21; 6:10). The kingdom of heaven and God’s Will are righteousness. That righteousness is doing good toward others (1 John 3:18-19). The person who does God’s Will daily by doing good toward others will live forever (1 John 2:17). This is what the parable of the sheep and goats represents. The person who knows what pleases God but does not do it is a goat, and the one who does please God is a sheep (Matt. 25:33-46).

‘Jesus said if we keep His words, put them into practice daily and live them, we will never die (John 8:51; 11:26).’

Jesus told us how to do good toward others daily and that is how the Father in heaven is glorified (Matt. 5:16). [Jesus said if we keep His words, put them into practice daily and live them](#), we will never die (John 8:51; 11:26). How do we put Jesus Christ’s words into practice in our lives? It’s so simple. Just practice doing good toward others. For example, when we give a dinner or party, we should make sure to include the poor,

lame, blind, elderly, widowed, orphan or homeless person. Notice Jesus said we would be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous (Luke 14:13-14).

Jesus admonished those who follow in His footsteps not to practice their righteousness to be noticed by others or they will not have any reward for practicing righteousness (Matt. 6:1). Yes, there is a [reward for practicing righteousness daily for God](#), and it is so great it is incomprehensible.

‘Notice it is only those who did the good works who come to a resurrection of eternal life (John 5:29).’

[God’s Way of life is so simple](#). The righteous people do the good deeds for God on this earth and the evil people continue to do the evil deeds for their father, the devil (1 John 3:10). Notice it is only those who did the [good works](#) who come to a resurrection of eternal life (John 5:29). Jesus Christ Himself said these words, and He cannot lie (Heb. 6:18; Titus 1:2).

‘This is what the Pharisees had overlooked because they were lovers of money instead of lovers of God.’

This is what the Pharisees had overlooked because they were lovers of money instead of lovers of God. They had lost the knowledge of how to repent. They did not understand [how to live the repentant life](#) to become new creatures (2 Cor. 5:17). They were probably so caught up with building funds, church growth issues and church social events, they lost sight of what God wanted—new people with changed lives.

The Pharisees

'The Pharisees worshiped God in vain by teaching the traditions of men (Col. 2:8).'

The Pharisees worshiped God in vain by teaching the traditions of men (Col. 2:8). They neglected telling the people how to keep the commandments of God—by practicing [righteousness](#) daily for God. Their foolish minds were darkened by God and they exchanged the truth of God for a religious lie (Rom. 1:21, 25).

'Good works are also necessary for godly discipline, spiritual growth and rewards from God in heaven (Luke 14:14; Matt. 6:1; 16:27; Eph. 6:7-8).'

What could that lie have been? Could it be they constantly told their people that “works are not necessary for salvation,” while omitting that [good works are necessary for repentance](#) (Acts 26:20)? Good works are also necessary for godly discipline, spiritual growth and rewards from God in heaven (Luke 14:14; Matt. 6:1; 16:27; Eph. 6:7-8).

'Jesus only did God's Will, not His own will (John 4:34; Luke 22:42).'

Jesus was [zealous](#) for good works. Doing good works for God is God's Will. Jesus only did God's Will, not His own will (John 4:34; Luke 22:42). Jesus said we would do greater good works than He had done because He had to return to the Father (John 14:12).

'Without a life of doing good there is no repentance.'

Good works are an integral part of [God's salvation plan](#). Without a life of doing good there is no repentance. Repentance is a daily way of life, doing as much good as we can for others (Luke 9:23). This is why the servant of the most will be called the greatest in God's soon-coming kingdom (Matt. 20:26-28; 23:11; Luke 11:28; Mark 9:35; Rom. 15:2-3; 1 Cor. 10:24). This is information few people know. It is the proof of how to repent [so we can be a people who are truly prepared to meet the Lord](#) (Luke 1:17).□

BIBLE Q&A

“What does God think of religion today?”

The answer is...

Traditions of Men

‘Jesus knew that the religions of His day were an empty form of worship.’

Jesus knew that the religions of His day were an empty form of worship. People attended church but their lives didn't change. The reason their lives didn't change is that they were ignoring what God wanted and replacing it with what man wanted—man's traditions, which makes worshipping God in vain (Rom 10:3; Mark 7:7-9).

Jesus said, “Go find out what this means, ‘I desire compassion and not sacrifice’” (Matt. 9:13). He repeats this in Matthew 12:7. If we find out what this means, we will find out what God wants us to do. It will also show us what the Pharisees were omitting that made their traditions an empty form of religion.

In Proverbs 21:3, we find the answer to the question asked in Matthew 9:13. To practice righteousness daily in one's life and to be just in all our dealings is desired by God rather than sacrificing animals for sin. Notice that this is exactly what God told Abraham to do—[practice righteousness, charity and justice towards others](#) (Gen. 18:19). This is also what Daniel told the king to do (Dan. 4:27). This was the message the prophets taught, and for which they were killed. Notice what happened in Jonah 3:8-10 when God saw the deeds of the people of Nineveh. They repented.

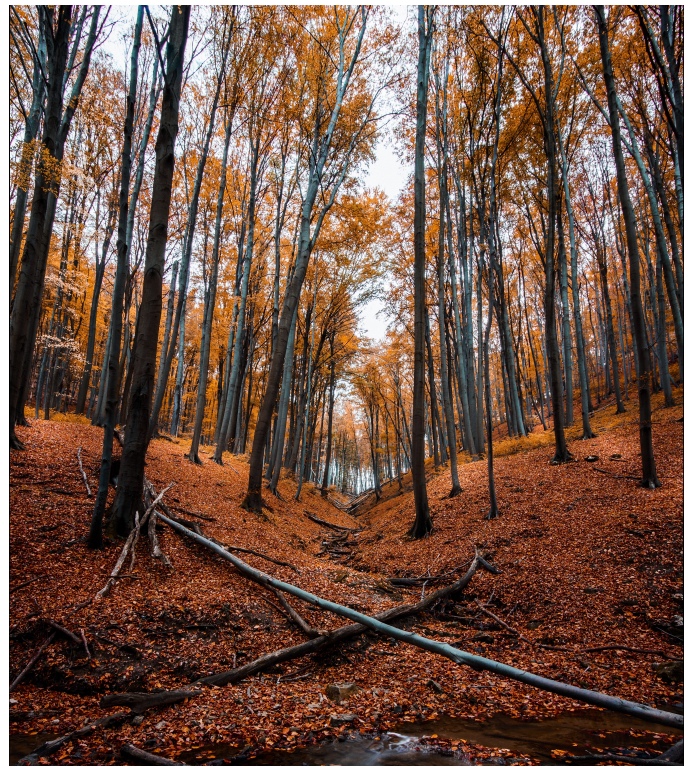
‘Isn't practicing righteousness what obedience to the faith is all about (Acts 6:7)?’

Do you know of any way to turn from bad deeds other than to practice righteous deeds for God (Rom. 12:21; Eph. 2:10)? [Isn't practicing righteousness what obedience to the faith is all about](#) (Acts 6:7)? The Pharisees were not practicing righteousness to be acceptable to God, but rather to be seen of men (Matt. 5:20; 6:1). They never received a change of heart

from God because they were doing righteousness for the wrong motives—for man's interest. They were stumbling blocks (Matt. 16:23). They were not entering the kingdom or receiving changed natures that would eventually make them new creatures (Luke 17:21; Matt. 23:13; Gal. 6:15). They were not [glorifying God](#) daily by performing good works the way that God wants to us to worship Him (Matt. 5:16; Rom. 12:1; Heb. 13:16). They were not doing God's Will from the heart by being happy slaves to righteousness (Rom. 6:13, 18-19; Eph. 6:6; Matt 7:21). They were more concerned about self than what God wanted.

God wants us to do good works for His glory, and stop our empty religious traditions of men.

God wants us to do good works for His glory, and stop our empty religious traditions of men. When we do good works for His glory, we will be worshipping God in the way He desires to be worshiped, so says the word of God.□



The Mistake of the Pharisees



The fatal mistake of the Pharisees was that they were doing righteousness for the wrong reasons. They were doing righteous acts to be seen of men and not to glorify God (Matt. 5:16). Jesus was constantly reminding them of what they were doing wrong but they were living so much to the flesh, they couldn't hear the words of the Spirit (Matt. 9:13; 12:7; Prov. 21:3).

'The fatal mistake of the Pharisees was that they were doing righteousness for the wrong reasons.'

Jesus was telling the Pharisees how to clean the inside of the cup by being true servants to others so they wouldn't be [hypocrites](#) (Matt. 23:11, 25). He was telling them how to enter the kingdom of heaven within (Matt. 23:13; Luke 17:21). This is the key to knowledge of how to be truly converted from the inside.

In the example of the good Samaritan, Christ was showing the Pharisees that the people they called religious fakes were more compassionate to the needy than they were (Luke 10:30-37). Those who handled the Law of Moses were holding people back, keeping from them the keys to the kingdom (Luke 11:52). The understanding of how to enter the kingdom was then given to Peter (Matt. 16:19). Peter knew what the Pharisees were doing wrong. Many Pharisees did repent and become obedient to the faith (Acts 6:7).

Unrepentant sinners do bad works. Repentant sinners do good works for God—works meant for

repentance (Acts 26:20). Performing good works for God by [imitating Jesus](#) Christ's works is how you overcome the deeds of the flesh (Rev. 2:26). You live to the Spirit (Rom. 8:13-14). Then you don't carry out the desires of the flesh (Gal. 5:16).

Once you put your hand to the plow, which represents doing good works for God, don't look back or get weary of well-doing (Gal. 6:9; 2 Thess. 3:13). Soon you will be a [new creation](#) with Christ formed in you (Gal. 6:15; 4:19). Then [you will be complete](#) (2 Cor. 13:9, 11). You will also be a peculiar person, zealous for good works and not worthless, but worth more (Titus 2:14; 1:16).

'Once you put your hand to the plow, which represents doing good works for God, don't look back or get weary of well-doing.'

This is the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness and it [requires discipline](#) (Titus 1:1; 1 Tim. 4:7). If anyone advocates a different doctrine than this, he is conceited and understands nothing (1 Tim. 6:3-4).

Be a sheep and not a goat (Matt. 25:33-46). Allow God to crush Satan (your old nature) under your heel (Rom. 16:20). Soon, as a [happy slave of Christ](#), you will be doing the Will of God from your heart and will escape from the snare of the devil which traps others to do his will (Eph. 6:6; 2 Tim. 2:26). You will not be caught making the same mistake the Pharisees of old made.□

Spiritual Sacrifice



When we do what we don't feel like doing, and we do it with a good attitude to please the Lord, we will truly be blessed and we have fulfilled the Scripture in 1 Peter 2:5, which says: "Offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

God's word describes how to worship Him. Romans 12:1 very clearly states that our bodies are to be used for good, for God, to serve others. We are a constant sacrifice of righteousness when we are serving others continually, which glorifies our Father in heaven (Matt. 5:16).

We naturally want to do what pleases ourselves. We naturally want to associate with people we want to be with. We want to have those special people in our lives over for dinner.

What does God say about this? In Luke 14:13, He says that when we have a lunch or dinner, we should include those who cannot repay us. Yes, we can have those we want, but God wants us to

include the poor, the lame, the blind, the deaf, the unloved or the unfortunate. This would also include the elderly who may not be able to prepare a meal.

When we include these people, we are performing a sacrifice of righteousness. [This is how God wants to be worshiped](#) (Rom. 12:1)!

God wants us to serve others. In Matthew 23:11 He says, "The greatest among you shall be your servant." Jesus Christ's definition of the word "greatest" is sure different from the world's, isn't it? When we study God's word and apply it, we see through a new pair of eyes. These new spiritual eyes see what God's Will is. And yes, we see all the wonderful righteous Ways God has for us to live by in order to be pleasing to Him. As a result of living righteously before God each day, [we can be truly blessed](#) in this life and for eternity (1 Tim. 4:8).

Now, when I wake up in the morning, I look out my window at the birds singing in the trees. I have happy thoughts of folding fresh, clean laundry, making the house neat in case someone stops by, cooking a delicious meal for my family and doing all my work to please God. I'm keeping my spiritual eyes open, looking for special opportunities to serve my heavenly Father by serving others for His glory.

Let's all be the sacrifice of righteousness that Jesus Christ represented. He walked on this earth only doing good for others, then He gave His life for us at Calvary, that we might live the Way He gave us example to live (John 15:13; Acts 10:38). God will bless you for every good thing you do in the name of Jesus Christ for God's glory (Col. 3:17; Gal. 6:8; Eph. 6:8)!

Your sister in Christ,

Karren

Letter From the Editor

Dear *Whole Wheat* Readers,

“The whole world is a stage, and all the men and women merely players,” is a famous quote from Shakespeare. I believe it’s so famous because it hits far closer to home than we would all like to admit. That quote encompasses what this issue of *Whole Wheat* is all about. The problem with the Pharisees, is the problem with all of mankind. Let’s be honest, what we show the world and what really resides inside of us, can be two very different things.

Learning how to [become a new creature and change the inner man](#), is what drew me to *Whole Wheat*. It is the message of how to conquer the stronghold of the flesh (Rom 12:21). The two articles, *The Pharisees and The Mistake of the Pharisees*, talk about what the Pharisees were doing wrong; one of those things being the sin of hypocrisy (Luke 12:1). Who would have thought hypocrisy was a sin? We are no better than a Pharisee if we are [hypocrites](#). Think about that for a moment. Is what you are presenting to the world something different than what resides inside of you? Are you still striving to become a [new creature](#) in Christ and actually living and applying all of His Ways in your life? Are you utilizing all the resources God has given us, to stimulate you in your walk and encourage you to be zealous for [good deeds](#)? Are you truly living the life, every minute of every day and putting God first, before all else?

For years, all I wanted to do was fulfill Eph 6:6, with all my heart and [do God’s Will wholeheartedly](#). I really wanted to be a man of

God, not only on the outside but on the inside (Luke 6:45). I was striving for what Karren writes about in her *Woman to Woman* article - true worship *inside and out*. It wasn’t until I learned the truth of God’s word, from the founder of *Whole Wheat*, that I was able to be freed from *Religious Traditions* and *Traditions of Men*, as both of these articles discuss. Until then, I was the definition of a hypocrite; *a person who puts on a false appearance of virtue or religion*, and I didn’t even know it! [The truth set me free](#) from all the world’s religious lies.

We should continually be mindful of becoming modern day Pharisees and be sure we are not missing the mark of righteousness. Let’s truly put into daily practice, and take to heart, all that is in this issue of *Whole Wheat* and all of God’s truth on [wholewheatonline.com](#). It is there for you, day or night, to encourage you as you study, put it into practice and become that new creation (2 Cor. 5:17). Let’s leave Satan’s kingdom of sin, and all of man’s ways, behind as we strive to enter God’s righteous kingdom within *now* (Luke 13:24). Don’t let another day pass you by. Each new day presents so many opportunities to live for Him. Keep your eyes wide open and look for them. Let’s continue to persevere, [overcoming evil by doing good](#), so we might abide with the Lord forever (Psalm 37:27). An incredible future awaits us if we [endure to the very end](#) (Matt. 10:22).

In His Love,

Scott

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Religious Traditions

God hates the religious traditions and the precepts of men (Gal. 4:10-11). [Deceived Christians](#) today are so blind and so ignorant, they don't even know what religious traditions are.

Jesus quoted the prophet Isaiah because what was true for the religious people in Isaiah's day still held true in Jesus Christ's day; and is still true for religious believers today (Matt. 15:9; Is. 29:13).

Many people are worshiping God in vain, teaching as doctrines of their church the precepts or ideas of men (Col. 2:22-23; 1 Tim. 4:1, 16). **They are not teaching what God wants taught and as**



a result, the hearts of people are far away from God in heaven. They honor God with their mouths by singing songs of praise to Him. They witness for Jesus by asking everyone they meet, "Do you know Jesus?"

Perhaps these people need to first [study God's word](#) and discover what it really means to know Jesus (Jer. 9:24; James 1:22, 27). Then they should ask God to open their eyes to see and understand God's Ways so they can obey Him, shed their religious traditions and

[discipline themselves for the purpose of godliness](#) (1 Tim. 4:7; James 1:25-26)!□

[Learn more about how NOT to be a Pharisee here!](#)

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