

Good Intentions Vs Good Actions

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction:

- A. Matt. 21:28-31 - Relate parable
 - 1. One may consider himself numbered among the righteous, and if his religion is based only on what he says, he will be less likely to be saved than those who are clearly unrighteous.
 - 2. The unrighteous have the potential to become aware that they need to be saved. One who believes he is already saved is less likely to.
 - 3. Matt. 7:21-23
- B. Matt. 23:2-4 - The Pharisees and scribes say, but they do not do
 - 1. They understand enough to tell others what they should do, but they themselves are not willing to bear the same burdens
- C. James 1:22-25 - The contrast between hearing and doing illustrates the point
- D. 2Cor. 10:11 - The way it ought to be
 - 1. What we say must be what we do!

I. WHAT ARE WE SAYING?

- A. Eph. 4:25 - We are to speak truth with one another.
- B. 2Cor. 2:17 - We are to speak God's word as entrusted to us by Him.
- C. Matt. 12:33-35
 - 1. But if the heart is full of good things, it will be because it has been filled with good things - Phil. 4:8

II. WHAT ARE WE REALLY DOING?

- A. If we are saying what we ought to say, are we doing what we are saying?
 - 1. Matt. 7:1-5
 - 2. A truism: We judge ourselves by our intentions, and we judge others by their performances.
 - 3. We know that in our minds we have the right priorities, even if we seldom act on them.
 - 4. We know that we can do better, and perhaps at times have done better, so we console ourselves with that thought.
 - 5. Yet all the while, everyone around us sees what we are actually doing as distinct from our intentions, attitudes, and words.
 - 6. What we choose to believe about our works, and what others see us do, may be two completely different matters.
- B. Application: We profess to be Christians, members of the Lord's church; but, does our practice measure up to our profession?
 - 1. One professes to be a member of the body of Christ, but is known to use drugs or alcohol, or buys lottery tickets, or views pornography, or uses foul language. Does his practice measure up to his profession?
 - 2. One professes to love God and Jesus Christ, but is known to habitually absent herself from worship and Bible study. She goes shopping, to family gatherings, and to public gatherings, but states that she is too ill

to assemble or else is afraid of contracting COVID. Does her practice measure up to her profession?

3. One undermines his or her profession of faith when their practice of it falls short. His or her family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and classmates see the obvious disparity. The only person deceived is one's self.
4. Make the practice fit the profession or else the profession becomes a lie
5. I am not suggesting that one cease professing allegiance to Christ; I am asking that you actually be what you say that you are.

III. THE IMPACT OF SAYING AND DOING

- A. Remember: everyone around us sees us for what we actually do, not what we intend to do or talk about doing at some point in the undefined future.
- B. This is true in every relationship
 1. Our husband or wife sees what we actually do; we will not long fool our mate if we say one thing and do another
 - a. What will be the impact of this kind of influence on our mate?
 - b. 1Peter 3:1-2
 2. Children are instinctive character judges; they know the difference between what we say and what we do
 - a. They are more likely do what we do than do what we say, if we do not follow through with it
 - b. Eph. 6:1-4 - Demands harmony between our words and actions
 3. As the ambassador of Christ to our family and friends, what message are we delivering by means of our conduct?
 - a. 2Kings 22:4-7
 - b. Co-workers and classmates?
 4. Do we keep our commitments to brethren?
 - a. Heb. 10:23-25

Conclusion:

- A. Luke 6:31 - Loving others is not merely about what we feel or say alone; it is about what we do.
- B. Salvation is not received through feeling and saying alone; it is by doing.