

Jun 17, 2018



# Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks Baptist Church**  
Grand Prairie, Texas

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**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:**

As we talk the talk, let's make sure we walk the walk.

**COMMENT FOR THE WEEK:**

Spiritual health is not determined by how we look, but by how we live. Let's ask God to search us, know our hearts, test us, and lead us in His way (Ps. 139:23-24).

**SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:**

*These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me.*

(Matt 15:8 NKJV)

*(from "Our Daily Bread", Oct 19, 2008)*

**Series: Justice in the New Testament**

**UNIT: God is Just & Merciful**

**NEXT WEEK**

**Reaping God's Justice (Luke 16:19-31)**

## Jesus Teachings about Justice Matthew 15:1-9

### Aim and Application of the Lesson

The lesson explores **Jesus Teachings about Justice** and hypocrisy. The study's aim is to show that God wants our hearts, not just our words. The study's application is to think and act according to God's Word and His justice, not man's.

*(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)*

### Lesson Introduction and Background

Our text comes in the midst of a conversation between the Lord and strict, law-keeping, religious Jews (scribes and Pharisees). On the surface it seems like an argument that is of little concern to us today. It concerned the practice of washing hands before partaking of bread (Matt. 15:2). But there is a deeper issue to explore, namely hypocrisy, the practice of pretending to be close to God by means of external religious deeds alone (vs. 9). What we see in this text is that God is not fooled by our facades. To be rightly related and pleasing to God, we must respond to Him with our hearts. The Lord pointed out the danger of drawing near to God just with our mouths. In this text, these religious people were attempting to demonstrate some kind of godliness through words without any change of heart. With unerring insight, the Lord pointedly informed them that, despite their pious words, their actions toward their own parents had obliterated the fifth commandment (Matt. 15:3-6). Undoubtedly, they were stunned as the Lord showed them their hypocrisy. On earth we often think we have other people fooled, but no one can fool God. So we come to the central concern of our text, which is the heart. These religious Jews had hearts that were far from God, despite their outward religiosity. They had made a shallow accusation against the Lord's disciples (Matt. 15:2). They obsessed over external religious deeds, but the real concern, the heart, was overlooked. This is what we want to take away from this text. God looks at the heart (I Sam. 16:7). What we need most in life is a new heart, one washed clean through faith in Jesus Christ. We need a circumcision that is deeper than our skin, one that penetrates our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 2:29). What God desires of us is a broken and contrite heart (Ps. 51:17). So it is all about the heart. In our hearts we plan, think, and determine our course of action. God wants our hearts in line with Him. They must be soft, humble, and conformed to the Word of God. The words that we speak, though very important, are very often a source of pretense, false profession, and hypocritical posturing in this world. It is tempting to fall into this. Our world suffers from an epidemic of hypocrisy. We see falsehoods and posturing from those running for high offices all the way down to children bragging on the school playground. It is easy to talk and bluster and position oneself to be thought of in a certain way. The teaching of the Bible is that God is just, and He sees through all pretense right to the heart. Consequently, His evaluation of us is perfect, thorough, and deep. We must not withhold our hearts from Him but allow Him to shape and mold our inner selves. Then we can respond to Him in a righteous way—not with mere outward "sacrifices" but with our hearts—honest, humble, and obedient hearts.

*(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)*

## NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

### Jesus Confronted by Accusations (Matt 15:1-2)

#### *Accusations from the scribes and Pharisees (1)*

Accusations of subverting the government (Luke 23:2)

Accusations of criminal activities (John 18:29-30)

Accusations of breaking the law (John 19:7)

Accusations of disloyalty by Pilate (John 19:12)

#### *Accusations based on man's traditions (2)*

Beware of traditions based on principles of the world (Col 2:8)

Treasure those things that are based on the promises of God (1 Pet 1:18-19)

Even if traditions are based on Scripture, interpretation must be from God (John 5:39-42)

Once tradition has been validated by God, be steadfast in it (Deut 5:32-33)

### Jesus Responds by Rebuking (Matt 15:3-9)

#### *Rebuke of disobedience (3-4)*

Disobedience that comes from the influence of Satan (Eph 2:1-3)

Disobedience of being deceptive (Eph 5:6)

Disobedience that should not even be mentioned (Eph 5:12)

Disobedience through actions that display the denial of God (Titus 1:15-16)

Disobedience that will receive just punishment (Heb 2:2)

Disobedience that keeps one from entering God's rest (Heb 4:6)

#### *Rebuke of hypocrisy (5-7)*

Hypocrisy through having a form of godliness (2 Tim 3:5)

Hypocrisy through legalism (Gal 6:13)

Hypocrisy through stories (2 Peter 2:3)

Hypocrisy through appealing to human lusts (2 Peter 2:18)

Hypocrisy through promises (2 Peter 2:19)

#### *Rebuke of vain worship (8-9)*

Vain worship that is not done in spirit and truth (John 4:21-24)

Vain worship by those that do not keep a tight rein on the tongue (James 1:26)

Vain worship by worshipping idols (Ps 97:7)

Vain worship is not accepted by God (Isaiah 29:13)

Vain worship is when there is no listening to God (Eccles. 5:1)

Vain worship is not putting lessons learned into action (Ezekiel 33:31)