Jesus the Friend of Sinners

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The TEXT

1. The Pharisees and lawyers, the kind of men that go by the book, hated God and Jesus.
    1. They wore the scriptures and memorized the scriptures, but they did not have a clue.
    2. They had their own slant on O.T. scripture to justify themselves over all other men.
    3. They rejected John's baptism, while publicans and harlots repented (Matt 21:31-32).
    4. Publicans and harlots justified God by confessing Him right and themselves wrong.
    5. Pharisees and lawyers rejected God's word by thinking they were above repentance.
2. Jesus compared the wicked generation of these Jews to a situation of children playing.
    1. Children tried music to get others to dance, mourning to get crying; neither worked.
    2. The Jews were implacable, evil men that would not submit to either godly ministry.
    3. John the Baptist and Jesus had different persons and ministries; both were rejected.
3. They accused John of being devil possessed, for he was a wild man of locusts and honey.
4. They accused Jesus of being a glutton and a drunkard, for He ate bread and drank wine.
5. But their most damaging charge, in their vile opinion, was Jesus was a friend of sinners.
    1. Publicans were hated tax agents for Rome against the Jews (Luke 3:12-13; 19:7-8).
    2. Sinners were notorious and public sinners like harlots (Matt 21:28-32; Luke 7:37).
    3. These two groups of public sinners – publicans and harlots – were being converted.
    4. With repentance, Jesus defended them and ate with them (Luke 7:36-50; 19:1-10).
    5. But self-righteous hypocrites like the Pharisees considered this wicked compromise.
    6. They had no regard for repentance by such; they despised all forgiveness and mercy.
    7. So they in their touch not, taste not, handle not religion charged Jesus with a crime.
    8. So the title for this sermon is taken from a malicious charge that was gloriously true!
6. But the children of God think differently from Pharisees to justify God and His wisdom.
    1. They knew John and Jesus were God's preachers (Matthew 21:28-32; Luke 7:29,35).
    2. Christians have secret wisdom worldly men cannot grasp (I Co 1:17-31; 2:6-8,1-16).
    3. This difference in perception is key (Ps 92:5-6; Prov 17:16,24; Eph 1:7-12; 3:8-12).

The SINNERS

1. Consider sinners in general and a few specific sinners to fully grasp this glorious lesson.
2. All men are equal legal sinners, and the Bible does not distinguish them with gradations.
    1. There are only practical gradations e.g. son of Belial, scorner, fool, mean man, etc.

2. But legally all men are equally corrupt and condemned by Adam and their own sins.
3. This makes legal payment by Jesus' death equally essential for each (Romans 3:23).
4. Paul, in his multi-chapter indictment, made no differences (Rom 1:32; 2:1; 3:9-19).
5. All men are equally vile before God and condemned to the same eternal judgment.

3. David was a terrible sinner of capital crimes, and God recorded some of his sins for us.
    1. He sinned by murderous anger at Nabal and men (I Sam 25:13,21-22,26,31,33-34).
    2. He sinned by polygamy – for horrible results (Gen 2:18,22; Deut 17:17; Mal 2:15).
    3. He sinned by moving the ark of the covenant contrary to God's law (I Chr 15:13).
    4. He sinned by not killing Joab for murder (II Sa 3:39; 18:14; 20:9-10; I Kgs 2:5-6).
    5. He sinned by adultery – an aggravated case due to his harem (II Sa 11:1-5; 12:1-9).
    6. He sinned by murder – conspiracy to kill a friend in battle (II Sa 11:14-15; 23:39).
    7. He sinned by collateral damage – killing others by foolish tactics (II Sa 11:14-25).
    8. He sinned by hasty judgment to believe slander of Ziba (II Sa 16:1-4 cp 19:24-30).
    9. He sinned by numbering Israel in pride, costing 70,000 lives (II Samuel 24:1-14).
    10. He sinned as a father and king by allowing the sedition of Adonijah (I Kgs 1:5-8).
    11. He sinned by missing Absalom's sedition – the forty years (II Sa 15:6-7; Pr 25:2).
    12. He sinned by grieving more for traitor Absalom than his own men (II Sam 19:1-8).
    13. He overlooked the feast of booths (Neh 8:17), or at least like this (II Chr 8:13; etc.).
    14. David sinned against more grace in his heart and knowledge of God than any man.
    15. As Jesus taught Simon the Pharisee, great sinners make great lovers, like our David.
4. Peter was a cruel sinner; disgraceful, don't you think? Denying Jesus and God's grace.
    1. He cursed and denied he knew Jesus three times at the worst time after being warned.
    2. He was a hypocrite at the new church at Antioch so Paul had to publicly rebuke him.
    3. Peter's two profane sins were after years with Jesus and after being a leading apostle.
    4. Peter spent the rest of life serving Jesus wide open, knowing his cruel death coming.
5. Paul had an abominable vice, though publicly the greatest apostle for us (Rom 7:7-24).
    1. He learned the tenth commandment to examine himself before he knew lust was sin.
    2. Until details of God's word are brought to bear, men justify themselves before God.
    3. The tenth commandment against lust condemned Paul's secret desires and fantasies.
    4. Paul had in him *all manner of concupiscence,* which is **e**ager or vehement desire, especially libidinous desire, sexual appetite, lust.
    5. Concupiscence, chosen by God for our Bibles, indicates wild fantasies of all kinds.
    6. Even limiting the word to lusts, Paul said his lusts were of all sorts and of all kinds.
    7. Paul knew his inability to do what was right all the time needed Jesus (Ro 7:24-25).
    8. No man ever gave so much in service to Christ than the apostle Paul by any measure.
    9. This phrase cannot comfort those that entertain sexual fantasies or lusts, for comfort is not Paul's

intent at all, and he fought his lustful thoughts (I Cor 9:24-27; 7:1-9).

6. Sinner woman that found Jesus in Simon the Pharisee's house to adore (Luke 7:37-39).
7. Zacchaeus was resented by the citizens of Jericho for being a rich publican (Luke 19:7).

The ENEMIES

1. By considering the enemies of repentant sinners, we will better appreciate their Friend.
2. Who hated Jesus the most? Who did Jesus hate the most? The severe, strict Pharisees.
    1. They are clearly by the Bible the greatest enemies of Jesus by mention and emphasis.
    2. The Pharisees are in the context of our text, for they hated Jesus befriending sinners.
    3. They were the conservatives (Acts 26:5) – strict, severe guys following their book.
    4. The Sadducees were liberals, so they allowed more, though still rejecting our Lord.
    5. The goal here is not extensive study of Pharisees, but their rabid self-righteousness.
    6. Consider our Lord's detailed comparison of a Pharisee to a publican (Luke 18:9-14).
    7. John, Jesus, and Paul had to deal with them over and over, even converted Pharisees.
3. *Be not righteous over much* condemns wicked righteousness by human ideas (Ec 7:16).
    1. This is not true righteousness; it has no limit (Gal 5:22-23; Rom 13:8; II Pet 1:5-11).
    2. There are some who in zeal for God, or religion, or arrogance pervert righteousness.
    3. Pharisees, Israel's most conservative denomination, were notorious at it (Acts 26:5).
    4. Jesus opposed them and their manmade standards often (Matt 15:1-20; 23:23-24).
    5. Consider the important lesson of David and the shewbread (Matt 12:1-7; Hosea 6:6).
    6. Consider the real purpose of the Sabbath, which Pharisees mocked (Mark 2:23-28).
    7. The monastic false righteousness of the RCC affects many converts from its prison.
    8. These extremists that think they are righteous deny Christian liberty to most others.
    9. Extra conservatism is not righteousness – it is Pharisaism – we do not modify Bible.
    10. There is wise righteous judgment, and there is also *righteous* madness (Jn 7:22-24).
    11. Jesus was angered by their merciless, perverted idea of right or wrong (Mark 3:1-6).
4. The Pharisees and lawyers made no difference for repentance, forgiveness, mercy, etc.
    1. Simon the Pharisee could not recognize repentance let alone value it (Luke 7:39,43).
    2. Jesus spent a whole chapter to rebuke these self-righteous heretics (Luke 15:1-32).
    3. The Pharisee in Jesus' lesson of prayer did not recognize or value it (Luke 18:9-14).
    4. Everyone not like them or following their rules is a despised sinner (John 9:24,34).
    5. They required burdens of men that they never even tried to lift at all (Matthew 23:4).
    6. But Jesus, the opposite of these monsters, asks only a light burden (Matt 11:28-30).
5. Some men are born without a conscience or kill it by constant self-righteous thinking.
    1. Salvation by grace makes us conscious of sins (Matt 3:6; Luke 18:9-14; I Tim 1:15).
    2. Pharisees and others, by vile natures and habit, have no such conscience (I Tim 4:2).

3. They despised harlots for what they did while desiring it with them (Matthew 5:28).
4. How could Doeg do what he did? How could Shimei do what he did? Vile monsters!

6. We must hate the self-righteous, vile spirit of those that hate Jesus or those like Him.
    1. The despicable older brother of the prodigal had no compassion for his repentance.
    2. All he could say was just like Pharisees, *Father, I have never done the things he did.*
    3. The angels ignore these black-hearted Pharisees to celebrate the repentant prodigal.
    4. The more you befriend sinners, help them, and defend them, you also will be hated.
    5. For clarification that has little need to be stated again, we speak of repentant sinners.
7. Self-righteousness can rise up in anyone, if not despised as of hell, like it did in David.
    1. He took a man's wife for sex, killed her husband, killed others in collateral damage.
    2. He had a whole harem of women, and God would have allowed him to have more.
    3. But he then judged a rich farmer should die and restore four lambs for taking one.
    4. Satan is a destroyer, and if you give him any room, he will cause you to hate sinners.
    5. Paul had to push Corinth to forgive their own incestuous fornicator (II Cor 2:6-11).
    6. Do you despise sinners? Do you think at all you are better than another? Get right!
8. What is worse? A very promiscuous, repentant harlot … or a good, straitlaced Pharisee?
9. We must forgive like God has forgiven us; we must forgive so that God will forgive us.
10. Let us, like our Lord and Savior, be friends of repentant sinners privately and publicly.
11. Let us, like Jesus taught, be the greatest lovers of Christ and respect others that are so.

The FRIEND

1. The Pharisees were right! Jesus was a Friend of sinners, but they despised Him for it.
    1. When they called Him a Friend of Sinners, they were relegating Him to the gutter.
    2. When we call Him the Friend of Sinners, we are exalting Him as glorious Savior.
2. When we open the N.T. of the Lord Jesus Christ, He honored four women in six verses.
    1. Tamar, Judah's daughter-in-law, played prostitute to have Judah's son (Ge 38:1-30).
    2. Rahab was a Canaanite prostitute, but she is Jesus' grandmother and a hero of faith.
    3. Ruth, from sexually-wicked descendants of Lot, married Boaz, a father of David.
    4. Bathsheba, wife of Uriah the Hittite, adulteress, was mother to Solomon and Nathan.
    5. In six short verses, a precedent is set to exalt forgiveness and mercy through Christ.
3. Zacchaeus was hated, but Jesus asked him down from a tree for lunch (Luke 19:1-10).
4. A Gadarene had no friends, but Jesus came only for him against his city (Mark 5:1-21).
5. A sinner woman, known in her city, likely a harlot, Jesus defended her (Luke 7:36-50).
6. The Samaritan woman had more than 5 husbands, but Jesus came for her (John 4:4-26).
7. The man born blind was saved by Jesus and defended from the Pharisees (John 9:1-41).
8. The thief on the cross did not have to give a pound of flesh; he heard the sweetest words.

9. Mary Magdalene was only a saved wretch, but Jesus appeared to her first (Mark 16:9).
10. Peter surely was worried, but Jesus appeared to him before the good twelve (I Cor 15:5).
11. Paul was the worst sinner, in some respects, but is an example for you (I Tim 1:15-17).
12. A pagan, cruel jailor was visited by Jesus' Spirit and His best apostle (Acts 16:25-34).
13. The Corinthians, like our San Francisco, had some of the worst sinners (I Cor 6:9-11).
14. No sinner should ever fret or worry about their sins, no matter how many or how bad.
    1. Go to Jesus, touched by our feelings/infirmities, tempted in all ways (Heb 4:14-16).
    2. He was made with our nature to be compassionate to tempted sinners (Heb 2:17-18).
    3. Jesus wants trophies of grace to glorify God, so He saves big sinners (I Co 1:26-31).
    4. Do not worry what good people say; Jesus rejects them to save you (Mark 2:13-17).
    5. Seek the LORD and call upon Him; forsake your sins; He will pardon (Is 55:6-9)!
    6. His yoke is easy and His burden light – run to Him for rest from any sin burden.

The INVITATION

1. You will soon die and meet God, but He is the thrice-holy God that cannot stand sinners.
    1. You are not in the same moral universe as Job, but he repented in dust and ashes.
    2. You are not morally close to Isaiah, but he cried out in great fear for his sinfulness.
    3. You are not morally close to John, but he fell down at Jesus' glorified feet as dead.
    4. But Jesus raised John to his feet and told him to fear not that He was alive for him.
    5. God sent His Son into this world to die and save chosen souls. Have you run to Him?
2. Jesus declared the great work of God was to come to Him, believe on Him (John 6:29).
    1. He taught only the elect would come; He would never cast out even one (John 6:37).
    2. He preached hard doctrine to drive away all carnal, selfish hearers (John 6:60-66).
    3. He asked the apostles if they would also leave like the many that left (John 6:67).
    4. But Peter answered, *Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou are that Christ, the Son of the living God.*
3. The Friend of Sinners will never cast out a believer, and He wants you to let Him in.
    1. If God's grace has convicted you about sins and deserved punishment, go to Jesus.
    2. If you do not know how to come or go to Jesus, believe He is God's Son and Savior.
    3. Confess your sins to the great Friend/Forgiver of sinners; He will not cast you out.
    4. If you have believed on Jesus, do not be content, seek more fellowship (Rev 3:20).
    5. If you need help to learn more about this, find the four sermons preached Oct 2013.
        1.

For Further Study:

1. Forgiveness of a Great Sinner

2. The Worst Sin
3. Jesus Loves Losers
4. Jesus Came for Sinners
5. The Prodigal Son
6. The ‘R’ Factor
7. The Forgiveness of Sins
8. 10,000 Talents
9. Abundant Pardon
10. Self-Righteousness