

THE LIFE OF JESUS

The Danger Of Self-Righteousness

Luke 5:27-32 - Later, as Jesus left the town, he saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at his tax collector's booth. "Follow me and be my disciple," Jesus said to him. ²⁸ So Levi got up, left everything, and followed him. ²⁹ Later, Levi held a banquet in his home with Jesus as the guest of honor. Many of Levi's fellow tax collectors and other guests also ate with them. ³⁰ But the Pharisees and their teachers of religious law complained bitterly to Jesus' disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with such scum?" ³¹ Jesus answered them, "Healthy people don't need a doctor—sick people do. ³² I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners and need to repent."

³³ They said to Jesus, "John the Baptist's disciples fast and pray regularly, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees. Why are your disciples always eating and drinking?" ³⁴ Jesus responded, "Do wedding guests fast while celebrating with the groom? Of course not. ³⁵ But someday the groom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast."

³⁶ Then Jesus gave them this illustration: "No one tears a piece of cloth from a new garment and uses it to patch an old garment. For then the new garment would be ruined, and the new patch wouldn't even match the old garment. ³⁷ "And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. For the new wine would burst the wineskins, spilling the wine and ruining the skins. ³⁸ New wine must be stored in new wineskins. ³⁹ But no one who drinks the old wine seems to want the new wine. 'The old is just fine,' they say."

All religions fall into one of two categories in how they view salvation and eternal life:

- **Human achievement**
- **Divine accomplishment**

In every religion other than biblical Christianity, man achieves salvation by his own efforts.

Self-righteousness vs. The Way Of Jesus

- **Self-righteous people view themselves as righteous .**
Jesus taught the necessity of repentance.
Luke 5:32 – Jesus said, "I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners and need to repent."
- **Self-righteous people are proud of their religious status.**
Jesus taught the necessity of humility.
James 4:6, 10 - God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.
- **Self-righteous people focus on ceremony, ritual, rules, and traditions.**
Jesus focused on what is in a person's heart .
1 Samuel 16:7 - The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.
- **Self-righteous people love the approval of others.**
Jesus offers the approval of God.

Sample prayer for salvation. The most important thing about the prayer is the sincerity of your heart.

Jesus, I admit I am a sinner. I need and want Your forgiveness. I accept Your death as the penalty for my sin and recognize that Your mercy and grace is a gift You offer to me because of Your great love, not based on anything I have done. Cleanse me and make me Your child. By faith I receive You into my heart as the Son of God and as Savior and Lord of my life. From now on, help me live for You, with You in control. In Jesus' name, Amen.