

**Real Repentance, Real Obedience, and a Real Savior**

- When you're expecting something to be gen/auth/real, it's rude surprise when you get cheap knockoff. You think you're buying gen, high-qual, brand name product; turns out be a fake. Maybe it's: cheap, imitation Louis Vuitton handbag; or full carat diamond that turned out be cubic zirconia; or junk metal shop tools falsely labeled as high-grade steel. Whatever the product, fakeness is rude surprise, because you're expecting something real, not a cheap knockoff. Same goes for food: if want authentic Italian, no can Chef Boyardee; genuine Mexican, no Taco Bell. It's just the same.
- Now, maybe some/this: little trivial because there may be times you're in mood for spaghettios, or you kinda like price tag on costume jewelry or cheap imports. But it's another matter entirely when talking re ppl. It's a very rude surprise, disheartening/disappointing, when you think someone is gen/honest/sincere/trustworthy, but turn out be fake/dishonest/deceptive, not real. You thought: your friend, but really just using you; thought they genuinely had your best interests in mind, but really just making a sale. It's rude surprise when what see on outside doesn't match up w/what's on inside; it's disingenuous, dishonest, insincere, fake, not real.
- God knows difference btw fake & real, as well. And he wants fake followers about as much as you want fake friends. Today we're talking re sprtl sincerity; bottom line: God sees heart, and he knows difference btw showmanship & gen Xianity. Xianity is not re doing/saying right things to look good in eyes/others – certainly not eyes of God! Real Xianity starts in heart, where J wants to find real repentance, real obedience, real faith in real Sav.
- And so today, in face/fakest/fake, most pharisaic/Phars, J tells Prbl 2 sons. It's pretty straightforward: dad tells his 2 boys work in vineyard. 1<sup>st</sup>: very disrespectful to Fr: "No dad, ain't doing it; not a chance; don't ask me again" – but later, has full change/heart, repents & obeys. 2<sup>nd</sup>: knows right thing say, and says it w/smile. "Yes, sir; right away, sir. I'll get right on it, dad. You got it" – but never does anything. So J asks point blank: **vs. 31a**, obviously. And then J launches into fierce attack vs Phars for their sprtl insincerity. **Vs. 31b-32**. J: "That son who first said yes but never went to work: that's you Phars! You put on a fine show, you say all right words, look good on outside; but on inside you're fake. You don't love Lord anymore than son loved dad – otherwise you'd've actually listened JB, or me, when we tried teach you way of rights. But you reject God's prophets/Son, so not part God's kingdom. But you know is? Ppl you consider scum/society: TCs/pros – those who most definitely have disrespected Fr but who also: full change/heart. When they saw trouble/error/ways, they made real change w/real repentance & real faith in God's real forgiveness. They're 1<sup>st</sup> son, the genuine ones."
- Now, couple things I want say re this prbl. 1) We've got JB here. This reading begins w/Phars asking J, "Who gave you authority do any/this?" J: "I'm ask you question: who gave JB authority?" Answer for both: Lord authorized JB & J. And remember who came hear JB preach out in wilds at very beg of J's min? 2 groups: Phars & sinners like TCs; the Phars he called brood/vipers; the TCs he baptized, because they repented. What other TCs for Bbl you think of? Mt, writer this Gos; Zacchaeus. They repented. So did several pros. Remember woman who cried on J's feet, poured on perfume, wiped w/hair? She: pro; repented. Today in SS: Rahab, pro, who helped Israelites in OT. So all these sinful ppl are having huge change/heart, repenting. But not Phars. Even here, at end J's min, it's still same: they remain unmoved, unwilling to change.
- 2) This is not only time J contrasts real repentance w/fake piety. Best example: prbl Phar & TC, where TC beat breast, "Have mercy;" and Phar, "Thanks for making me better than rest." Real repentance vs fake piety. Or think of Lk 15, Lost Ch, lost: shp, coin, (prodgl) son. That prodgl son showed real repentance, which Fr loves. But at very beg of that Lost Ch: **"The TCs & sinners were all gathering around to hear J. But the Phars & teachers/law muttered, 'This man welcomes sinners & eats w/them'" (vs. 1-2)**. So again, same 2 groups/ppl: those who know broken, know need J; and those who know how look pious & sound pious, but who don't have real repentance, real faith, real godly living; they're fake!
- 3) J tells prbl on Tues of HW. Gethsemane & Judas kiss: 2 days away. So J: running out of time to say what wants say. And in his final days what J wants say: fiery rebuke of the Phars' hypocrisy (which, I'll just add, is what finally pushes them over edge, convinces them: crucified). So, on this Tues/HW, J tells this prbl of 2 sons. Also: prbl of tenants (hear it wk fr today), where landowner sends his own son into vineyard, but tenants (Phars) kill son (J). Then tells prbl of wed banquet (2 wks fr today), where king (God) sends out



srvnts (prphts) to invite bunch ppl to son's (J's) wed banq; but ppl (Phars) refuse come; some even kill srvnts. So J has this string of vitriolic prbls where he's delibrly rebuking Phars for rejecting him as God's Son. And smtm (maybe not right now) just look up Mt 23. The whole ch, top/botm, is just J condmning Phars. Why? Bec of same point he's making here in this prbl 2 sons: God hates a sham; God hates sprtl insincrtly; what he wants is for sinners (even TCs & Pros) to truly repent, change their hrt, change their life. They: ones entering kngdm/God.

- So now, how we apply this prbl to selves? Well, ask self: which son are you? Are you like 1<sup>st</sup> son? Are you, right now, caught up in lifestyle: extrmly disrspctfl to Fr? Are you saying: "No, God, ain't going do that; change; not a chance." Are you behaving like sprtl TC/Pro? If are, then you have got to repent! It is time today for you to change: change your heart, change your life; start listening to voice of your Fr!
- Or are you like 2<sup>nd</sup> son? Do you know how make self look really Xian, sound really pious, but on inside you're just a sham/fake? Go ahead: test self & see! I will. I'm a Luth Pr. Do I bel what tch, practice what prch? Or am I a hypocrite? How about you? Do you come to ch, sing hymns, pray prayers, walk walk, talk talk; but Sun afrtrn thru Sat night (Mon: all rest/wk) you talk, live, act, thnk, behave like fake Phar? That's hypocrisy! And God sees thru disingenuous Xianity; he knows when you fake it to make; and in this prbl, he's calling us out on it, all/us, bec I hate to say it, but there's Phar in ev one/us. Look at your life & find where you're fake. We're good at looking good on outside. But if we don't let Word/God, Son/God truly change us on inside, then our Xianity is not gen; it's fake; it's sprtl insincrtly.
- Now, if it troubles you to see a little too much of yourself in 1 of these 2 sons, then I want tell you this: there's a 3<sup>rd</sup> son in this prbl. 3<sup>rd</sup> son, in prbl 2 sons – where? He's the one telling the prbl; the 3<sup>rd</sup> son is J. And when Fr asked his Son J to come to earth & work in vineyard, he neither refused disrspctfly nor feigned obednc. He: pure on inside & outside, and he took up wrk Fr assigned him w/humble obednc & faithful dedctn: to Fr & to us, bec work/J was: suffer/die in our place; to make self nothing, take very nature/srvnt, & humble self, becoming obednt to dth even dth/cross (Php 2). At the cross J paid for our fakeness, our sins of sprtl insincrtly. And because of J we are fully forgvn by our faithful Fr in hvn. J: real deal, real Son, our real Sav, whose real death/res bring us real forgvns for our real sins. There is nothing disingenuous re J, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Son, who obeyed Fr perfectly and died to forgive us.
- So today, as we hear/pondr this prbl, I pray that it'd: 1) help us to see our innate tndncy twrd shwmnshp & fakeness; 2) help us see our perf/sinless/gen/auth/real Sav; and 3) lead us to real repntnc & real faith in our real forgvns, and move us to a life of real obednc to Fr/hvn, out of thanks to our real Sav, 3<sup>rd</sup> Son, perfect Son.

### Matthew 21:23-32

<sup>23</sup> Jesus entered the temple courts, and, while he was teaching, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him. "By what authority are you doing these things?" they asked. "And who gave you this authority?"

<sup>24</sup> Jesus replied, "I will also ask you one question. If you answer me, I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. <sup>25</sup> John's baptism—where did it come from? Was it from heaven, or of human origin?"

They discussed it among themselves and said, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will ask, 'Then why didn't you believe him?'" <sup>26</sup> But if we say, 'Of human origin'—we are afraid of the people, for they all hold that John was a prophet." <sup>27</sup> So they answered Jesus, "We don't know."

Then he said, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

<sup>28</sup> "What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work today in the vineyard.' <sup>29</sup> "I will not," he answered, but later he changed his mind and went.

<sup>30</sup> "Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, 'I will, sir,' but he did not go.

<sup>31</sup> "Which of the two did what his father wanted?" "The first," they answered.

Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. <sup>32</sup> For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.