

**SERMON NOTES - Mt.12.43-50 -  
Reformation Versus Relationship #175  
July 24, 2022**

Morality by itself, without a right relationship to God, is more dangerous than immorality.

Outward righteousness is one of the greatest hindrances to the Gospel.

The Pharisees were classic moralists - they were self-sufficient & self-righteous.

- ❖ Under the illusion of their own goodness, they became unreachable with the message of the Gospel.
- ❖ They could not imagine Jesus' message having relevance for them.
- ❖ Jesus said their self-righteousness was the most insidious form of unrighteousness (5.20).

There has never been a group of men more committed to a demanding religious & moral code than the Pharisees & never a group of men so far from God.

Their need was for: inner transformation - theirs only as they trusted in Jesus for salvation from sin.

I. **THE DANGER OF REFORMATION VV.43-45**

The severe consequence of religious & moral reformation apart from a right relationship to Him.

- \*Reformation is not permanent if not accompanied by saving faith
- \*Where Christ does not live, demons are free to live

Religious legalism tends to get progressively more ungodly from generation to generation.

It is much easier to reach someone who is overwhelmed with a true sense of His sin than someone who is overwhelmed with a false sense of his righteousness.

Whether in the broad range of history or in an individual life, the same principle applies:  
outer reformation without inner transformation brings susceptibility to even worse evil than that from which one turned away.

II. **THE POWER OF RELATIONSHIP VV.46-50**

Reformation is:

- ❖ not salvation,
- ❖ not regeneration,
- ❖ not redemption.

In order to have salvation there must be a new and right relationship to God  
the family of God is the only family that ultimately matters.  
Obedience accompanies True Faith

**CONCLUSION:**

- ✚ At best, reformation changes only the outside of a person;
- ✚ at worst it becomes a barrier to his being changed on the inside.
- ❖ not reform them.
- ❖ Until a person claims that truth, no other can be of any benefit.

The great message of the Gospel, & of the Church;

- ✚ is not a call to morality but
- ✚ a call to deliverance from sin through the Lord Jesus Christ.