

USE GOOD JUDGMENT WHEN SAILING

On Paul's journey to Rome the ship in which he was traveling as a prisoner stopped at a place called the Fair Havens (Acts 27:8). The season for safe sailing was past and it was dangerous to set sail again until the storm season was past (verse 9). Paul warned the centurion who was responsible for him of the dangers, but he chose to believe the master and owner of the ship instead (verses 10-11). It was their intention to depart to Phenice because the Fair Havens were not commodious to winter in (verse 12). The Fair Havens were safe, but not commodious. As you probably already know, they sailed away from the Fair Havens right into a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon in which they would likely all have perished had it not been for the grace of God and His plan for Paul to stand before Caesar (verses 22-25).

Life as a child of God can be likened to having reached a place of safety, our Fair Haven. When one obeys the gospel, the Lord adds them to His church, a place of safety (Acts 2:47; Eph. 5:23). However, often times we have a tendency to see greener grass on the other side, so to speak. In other words, we decide that this Fair Haven is not as commodious as we would like for it to be. Sometimes things are just not comfortable enough for us.

There is work that must be done. The child of who does nothing has decided for the sake of comfort, they will just lie back on the couch of "do nothing". This may be comfortable, but it is a departure from one's place of safety. The end is not pretty (Matt. 25:26-30).

There will be mockers that will make fun of the child of God who stays in their Fair Haven. One may be ridiculed for not joining in with the so called fun of the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life. Often people flee safety because of the words of others.

Some will see what they think is a more commodious place to abide out in the denominational world and set sail for that land. However, the tempestuous winds of apostasy will result with one being eternally lost (II Pet. 2:20-22).

By the way, just as there turned out to be hope for those who left the Fair Havens for a place more commodious, there is still hope for he who casts aside the safety of our spiritual Fair Haven. If we will repent of our sins, confess them and pray, God will forgive us and our Fair Heaven will be restored (Acts 8:22; I John 1:9).

Robert

THOSE DESPICABLE PHARISEES

But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in" (Matt. 23:13). Many are the passages as the one above that speak of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. Often we use them as an example of what not to be. But, is it possible that we are just as hypocritical as they? It is possible that our speech and our actions are in opposition to one another? This could be found to be true in many areas, but there is one in particular that we wish to give consideration to. Each Lord's day, as a part of our worship, we sing songs. Do we actually do what we sing?

Often we sing songs concerning the carrying of the gospel to the world. "Rescue the Perishing", "Send the Light", "The Gospel is for All" and others focus on the saving word of God and our obligation to carry it into all the world. We sing the songs, but are we carrying the gospel into all the world?

Or, how about the subject of commitment and sacrifice. We sing, "I Surrender All", "Where He Leads I'll Follow", "None of Self and all of Thee" and others and yet are we willing to sacrifice even a little to live faithfully for the Lord? Is attending the services too much to expect? Is financially supporting the work of the church by fulfilling the command to give as prospered upon the first day of the week too great a sacrifice?

We sing songs about prayer, and then spend very little time on bended knees. We sing of trust in and dependence upon the Lord and then put all our eggs in the earthly treasury basket. We sing of unity and then harbor ill feelings with our brethren. We sing of counting our blessings and then take them all for granted. On and on the list could go.

I certainly do not mean to even insinuate that all are guilty of all of these hypocritical actions, however they should serve to make us do a little self examination. It is really hypocritical of us to call the Pharisees hypocritical while we do no better than they. "*This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me" (Matt. 15:8).*

Let us not cease to sing the songs mentioned in this brief article, nor any of the other good songs and hymns we sing. Instead, let us be sure we do what we are promising to do!

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