

Two men went to the temple to pray, reported Luke.

Four hours, or times of prayer in the temple court, 9 A. M., 12 noon, 3 P. M., and 6 P. M.

Now the camera is on first the Pharisee.

The word means separate one, so many rules covering every movement, every action each day that the Pharisees separated themselves from the ordinary business of life. They cut themselves off from their fellowmen as well.

They were not bad men as we think of bad.

They knew they were good and believed everyone else to be bad. At least morally and spiritually inferior.

A Rabbi said if there are only two righteous men in the world, I and my son are these two. If there is only one, I am he.

Why this camera would show this man to be unworthy for he trusted in his own goodness and he looked down upon others.

Jesus said about self-righteousness, as little Jack Homer sat in the corner, eating his Christmas pie, he pushed in a thumb, and pulled out a plumb, and said "what a good boy am I."

Doctor Pusey said the Pharisee was a Jew with a divine light but without divine love. Paul was once a Pharisee

"CANDID CAMERA"

Luke 18:9-14

INTRODUCTION:

Jesus gave parables, certain people confident of their goodness and look down on others.

The amplified says a Pharisee took his stand, began to pray with himself. God I thank you that I am not as the rest of the men, extortioners, robbers, swindlers, unrighteous in heart and life, adulterers, and like this tax collector here.

Moffitt "I assure you that he was the man who went home, accepted by God, rather than the other man. For everyone who sets himself up as somebody will become a nobody. And the man who makes himself nobody, will become somebody."

Have you seen "Candid Camera"? Hidden from the persons being taped or televised by movie cameras.

Some feel this is not right and it invades privacy.

Some have been informed by producers after they have been photographed and recordings made.

Shows only films which permission is obtained.

Incidents, conversation, are very amusing. They have had such things as somebody rolling a car into a filling station without a motor in it. Then to see what kind of expression the attendant has when he lifts the hood. They have also experimented with people in telephone booths on an elevator, and the thing starts up as they begin talking. Or in a restaurant they have the person to take away the food before they have finished eating. They had one of a nice looking school teacher, a man who calls in a couple girls, young girls for an interview, and he asks him how they would like to be in his class. He is going to start something special and new, and then the telephone rings finally, and he leaves, and the expressions and the reaction of these girls is filmed. And it is really amazing.

What would happen if Candid Camera should catch church members, and make a record of the actions and the speeches where you go.

For example this past Sunday, say between 11 and 12, I wonder what kind of sound would be recorded. Probably the rustling of a newspaper, the noise of power tools, and maybe even some snoring, and some pictures I had better omit.

But if it caught those who go to church and some who come in the right kind of spirit, for example it might flash on a mother who sinks into the pew, "I made it." Got all the children here clothed, if not in their right minds.

Another pair would be conversing. Another pair would be restless and other whose minds were not on the singing when the hymns were being sung.

Here is one man that is already asleep.

Here is another person who hopes the sermon lasts 20 minutes today.

Here is another who would whisper, "Did I turn the stove off?"

"Now I've seen everything, that old sinner is in church."

Some are interested, some are worshipping, some are praying.

The sound would be help me to do better, bless my sick friend and heal this one, or give the preacher a message for our souls, words of praise to those who serve, or words of welcome to the visitors who attend.

Suppose we had a wide angle lens upon our church. I don't think we'd dare use that film.

But Jesus put the camera on the place of worship and he put the camera on a church member.

the responsibility. How do you serve your Sunday School Class. What part do you take in your church. Is your life marked by Christian maturity. Can God look at you today and say you are carrying your obligation and your responsibility.

If we should look today and see the grievous wounds being placed in the church by those who claim have clean hands, and yet not a contrite heart.

What causes all the contentions anyway. Paul was a tremendous man in the church, and where did these things come from. Paul was gentle, peaceable in his Christian life. It comes because men fail to admit that they are sinners.

Richard Baxter said a great hinderance in the Heavenly walk is our too frequent disputes. He said we have a spirit of disputing at every sign and at everything thing. This is a sure sign of unsanctified spirit. They are men usually less acquainted with the Heavenly life who are the most violent disputers with the circumstances of religion. Though you were sure that your opinions were right, yet when your chief zeal is brought before the grace of God, it soon decays. I could wish you were all men of understanding and ability to fend every truth of God but I would have you chief in your thought about

and he began that famous chapter in Corinthians, describes himself as being perfect. And every finished Pharisee he tells us, had not only the tongue of a man, but the tongue of an angel. In some instances he had the gift of prophecy, he could understand some of the mysteries in the Bible, he had some knowledge, and they actually had some faith to remove some mountains. While he was giving his tenth and bestowing his goods on the poor, his heart was not right. And he was cast a way from Heaven. Now this is a staggering explanation to us. The Pharisee was wholly without love in his heart, or brotherly kindness. The true Pharisee of our Lord today had plenty of divine light but he was lacking in love in his heart.

And how they loved the Bible and they tried to keep the Sabbath Day, and none of this could do it better, all the church ordinances, but the thing that was wrong, he was wrong in his heart. You remember St. Ignatius said, I am a Devil and not a Saint. And there was no good within him.

But this man says of God, I thank thee. He was self selected and separated man. He was so much better than others, he put all other men to one side, and he thanked God that here he was, that every other worshipper in the church, he was holier than they were. And God puts his camera on the church. Here that same spirit can tear to

pieces the church of God of Israel and it can tear to pieces a church even today. Whereas you see any man who thinks he is high or low, great or small, who feels he is superior to all other men, has more knowledge about God and about the church, he is a true Pharisee. And he thinks not of the Christian unity in the church. As I read an editorial about "Has The Church Had It". Now nothing seems right in the church about the ordinances, the sermon, the worship, the mission, and above all about the people in the church today. One wonders why all of this was not said 300 years ago. Were men so different then or if the church is as bad today, as some of her experts say it is, then it ought to be pitched out into the Dark Ages. The word of God speaks of the church as the body of Christ. I am the vine, you are the branches, it is a living organism. It is not just a gathering of interested folks who sing a few of the same old gospel hymns.

Time after time in history, we have seen that those "go get 'em operators" who would like to make the church kind of a coffee house beatnik type of thing, that would extract one foot from Heaven and keep the other on the ground.

What is a great church. One that is committed to the Christian message it has received, one who confesses with

those of its own day and appeals to the sinful hearts of men. No, the church has not run its course, and it has not ignored the eternal things of the day. But I think it is very basic, as Candid Camera spotlights the situation. A friend called my attention to an article in Decision Magazine, February, 1966, it is a real eye opener. And it is written by Geo. B. Dunken, and he says there are people in our churches who are trying to live the Christian life before they have ever become Christians. They are just merely church members, they live a sub-standard life which is not even Christian at all. He goes on to describe how in the church he said, he is forced to treat people like babies. He had to feed them in that way. That some of them know nothing at all about prayer and the Holy Spirit is unknown to them, they bear the marks of a baby. He said, you could give them some costly gift, they'd put the gift aside and play with the tissue paper cause it makes a nice noise. Now lot of people, he said, who are through with the church, say they are through with the church because of this or that and they are seeking to direct the work of the church because they have no sense of values. And he said the disciples were first called Christians -- they did not call themselves Christians, they were recognized as that. And when we become grown up we find that we have

first say it looks like a man I know. You turn over and you look at another, well you know that man. And by and by you come to another and that looks just like my brother. And pretty soon, you are getting close to home. And you turn over and you say, well I declare, here is a man that lives on the same street I do. Why he is my next door neighbor.

And then you come upon another, and I see myself. Now my friends if you read the Bible, you're gonna find your picture there. It will just describe you. As Jesus said to John, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

But you say I am not a Pharisee, I am just a poor sinner and look at this man's prayer.

See this prayer, I thank God, I am not, I fast, I give, I possess. And if you would put his prayer in the hands of a printer, he would have given out of "I's" in a hurry and had to order some more. It is just, I thank God, I,

I, I. And when a man prays that way, and exalts himself, and he feels that he is a formal Christian and he gets up and thinks he is better than other people, he is just full of himself.

What do you more than others. Must be the outward acts, positive, moral, love, service, humility, unselfish concern

eternity.

I think as the camera falls upon the church, it would fall upon the community. The same spirit is out in the community. There are those who have the spirit of the Pharisee, and those who have the spirit of the Publican. Those who have the same spirit of the elder brother, those who have it of Cain and those of Able.

There is snobbishness this is a distasteful sin, it is self worship, and it puts self at the center of the world. "I thank God that I am not as other man are". Full of pride one of the greatest enemies of the Son of God that he has to day I believe. And it keeps more people out of the kingdom than anything else.

Pride is dangerous, it cuts off growth, it is self congratulation. And pride grows in dirty climate. You remember even in Heaven Lucifer was cast out. It was pride that cast out Nebuchadnazzar and he lost his throne. He said is this not the great babylon which I have built and yet he lost his throne.

Pride cuts off from fellowmen. When we draw a circle to cut off anyone because of background, economic status, social rating, religion, we certainly become a hated people

And many of the Pharisees lived only in form of religion.

They did not want the wheat, they wanted the shell.

Many men today have become drunkards broken, their health gone, and yet they are full of pride, and they still feel that they can save themselves.

Pride cuts off from God. This is the supreme tragedy -- I thank thee I am not and he listed them.

The manger at Bethlehem by tradition has a low doorway. And it is called a door of humility, even a child must bow down and bow low to enter. We must bow or kneel in the power of love. But the Pharisee found outside the church, "I thank thee I am not like the hypocrites who cheat on weekdays and say prayers on Sunday and parade."

Well, I think if he would have been alive today he would have said, well, of course I'll give this money to charity, I think it is a pretty good cause. If you can get my name in the newspaper, announce that John Jones gave \$50 to help build this church or for this good cause, I'll patronize it. Now his heart was not with the gift. This man said.

"I fast twice a week." A great many people now-a-days because they eat meat on Friday -- not on Friday, (but fish) they deserve great credit. Although they go on sinning all the week.

Look at his prayer, this is no confession. Why she has gotten so bad that even the Devil has so covered up his

Confession was - Communion - Fountain. sin that he is above confession. And sin is all around his heart. And the moment he gets off his knees, he probably goes back to swearing again.

A man just as well get a string of beads and pray to them and it would do him as much good. Because he shows no spirit of contrition.

Lord I thank thee, he said. Now there was not a petition in his prayer. It was a prayerless prayer. It was down right mockery and he just got in the cradle and rocked himself to sleep with the Devil pushing the cradle.

How many people just go through the form, they cannot rest unless they say their prayers. But their praying does not do them much good. A great many people have the rule of their own by which they measure themselves. And they do not measure themselves by Christ, but if only they could take a good look and see that they are on Candid Camera.

His appraisal, well he was miles in distance actually from his character. It was in the negative. "I have not."

(It was commendable.) I could say I do not gamble, cheat, or steal but this does not qualify me for Christ's company.

You are on camera when you go to somebody's home, they pick up old album and I tell you, the Bible is just like a picture album. And you look at this picture and you

for peace.

It is not how respectable am I in the eyes of the Pharisees but rather how obedient am I to Christ's command.

A Sunday School Teacher told this parable -- expanded on it and closed. Now children, let's us thank God we are not like that nasty Pharisee."

II. The Camera Is On The Tax Collector

Richard Crashaw "two men went up to pray, oh rather say. One went to brag, the other to pray."

Now the distance from the altar is simple and honest.

Gesture, despair is beating upon his breast.

Prayer, God be, and he told the truth. We would call him a grafter but you think of the Beatitudes say, blessed are the poor, and blessed are they that hunger. Matthew 5:3.

There was no capitol "I" and God be merciful unto me to this Pharisee. No, God be merciful to this old man that has injured me. No, God be merciful to these church members who are always rangling. No. What is his prayer. Why, he thanked God he got to himself. He was very short but his heart was as black at Hell. And certainly as we look at this man, why he is standing a far off. He couldnt even leave his sheep. For he was not a blameless man. He

So. Nov- Jan 30, 1966 A.M.

Now
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had a lot of sins and he was familiar with it. The exact terms he used, he didn't brag about his righteousness.

Now this is not the first or the last time that two men have come down to the temple to pray. It has been often as the Pharisees and he has gone home despised. But this man came down to pray.

How can we keep teachable and penitent. One, keeping Jesus constantly in sight.

Second, realize every day we are beggars.

Third, keep our hearts open to help.

What happened to the Pharisee, he went confirmed in his pride. What happened to the Publican, he went justified.

God search our hearts that we might not be self satisfied, excusing sin, unforgiving, and condemning.