

## *“What Must I Do To Be Saved?”*

Acts 16:30

### **Learn The Gospel**

John 6:45; Romans 10:17; James 1:22-25

### **Believe On GOD In CHRIST**

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16; James 2:14-26

### **Confess CHRIST**

Romans 10:9-10; Matthew 10:32-33; 7:21

### **Repent Of Sin**

Acts 3:19; Matthew 3:8

### **Be Baptized**

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6; 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:21

### **Be Steadfast**

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

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detailed devotion. They were just actors playing a role, posers, impostors. Among the woes Jesus pronounced against the hypocritical Pharisees was that they “*outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside... are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness*” (Matthew 23:28).

The Lord requires His disciples to be strict like the Pharisees, but unlike that ancient sect, He expects Christians to be sincere about it (Philippians 1:9-10; 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 1:5).

# *“Sound Doctrine”*

Titus 2:1

## **UNDERCOVER AGENTS FOR CHRIST**

Terry Bennett

Have you ever been intrigued by stories of men and women going behind enemy lines to gather information during a time of war? In order to be successful, these spies must completely adapt themselves to the foreign environment. They must blend in with their surroundings so that they are indistinguishable from any other citizen walking the street. It is imperative that they understand and adhere to the culture, traditions, and speech of those around them. The slightest slip would not only mean failure of their mission but likely would result in their death.

It seems that some Christians prefer to take on a similar role in our spiritual warfare. Instead of being on the front lines fighting the battle, they prefer to infiltrate the enemy camp. They may ‘secretly’ attend worship services with the saints but as soon as they leave the building, they become **undercover agents for Christ**.

Only the undercover agent’s closest friends may know that he ‘attends church’ somewhere, but religion is never discussed between them. After all, that might cause a problem. Many of the undercover agent’s coworkers and neighbors would never even suspect that he was a Christian because he blends so well into the environment. Oh, this undercover agent may not curse, but he does not object when others do. He may not tell off-color jokes, but he listens to others do so ... and may even laugh at some of them. This undercover agent frequents

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## *“The Assembling Of Ourselves Together”*

Hebrews 10:24-25

### **Sunday**

10:15 am.....Worship

Las Vegas Library

833 Las Vegas Boulevard North

### **Monday**

7:00 pm.....Acts Study

On hiatus

### **Tuesday**

7:00 pm.....Ladies’ Study

On hiatus

### **Wednesday**

7:00 pm.....Various Studies

Jerry & Beverly Dockens residence

## *“Give Attention To Reading”*

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4:13

Reading assignments this week:

Sunday.....1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles 11-13

Monday.....1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles 14-16

Tuesday.....1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles 17-19

Wednesday.....1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles 20-22

Thursday.....1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles 23-25

Friday.....1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles 26-28

Saturday.....

1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles 29-2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles

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# "THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE... PHARISEES"

Bryan Matthew Dockens

For all their notoriety, it will surprise many to learn that Christ regarded the Pharisees as righteous. *"For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven"* (Matthew 5:20).

Though the Pharisees, as a group, are correctly known to be among the most ignoble in scripture, the reason they are so lowly esteemed today varies considerably from the reason Jesus criticized them. Many perpetuate the notion that the Pharisees' problem was their strict adherence to the law, suggesting the worst thing any Christian could do would be to become a stickler for the rules. Yet this simply is not so. The Lord implied that the Pharisees were righteous, teaching that all who follow must exceed the Pharisees in righteousness in order to be saved. Righteousness, by the way, is simply "the character or quality of being right or just" (Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words). Although He often rebuked them, Jesus acknowledged that, in some sense, the Pharisees were right!

*"Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, saying: 'The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do. For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers'"* (Matthew 23:1-4). In unmistakably plain language, Jesus instructed His disciples to obey the Pharisees, but modern religious types openly defy this concept.

The major fault of Pharisaism was not, as so many presume, legalism; it was hypocrisy. Neither Christ nor His apostles ever suggested the Pharisees stood to be blamed for their strict adherence to the law of God. The constant criticism against them was their "Do-as-I-say; Not-as-I-do" mentality. In a single discourse, Jesus, no less than seven times, proclaimed: *"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!"* (Matthew 23:13, 14, 15, 23, 25, 27-29). The word "hypocrite" is derived from the Greek for "actor". The Pharisees were not sincere in their

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the same places, watches the same television shows, talks like, walks like, and acts like everyone else around him.

In Matthew 5:14-16, Jesus said, "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." One cannot be both the light of the world and an undercover agent for Christ.

As Christians we must recognize that we have been called out of the world. We are but strangers and pilgrims on this earth journeying toward our heavenly home (Hebrews 11:13-16). We are separated from the world by the truth of God's word (John 17:15-17). We are to walk as children of light and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness (Ephesians 5:8-13). We are to resist the devil (James 4:7) and abstain from even the appearance of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22).

Let none of us ever be ashamed of the gospel of Christ (Romans 1:16). Let us be distinct from this world. Let us put on the whole armor of God (Ephesians 5:10-17) and rally behind His royal banner. We serve the King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 17:14). His victory is assured!

Let us sound the battle cry and march into battle. There are souls to save!

**Vegas Valley Church Of Christ**

*Romans 16:16*

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