

## Self-Righteousness Part 2

Jack Elder  
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Well, Good Morning to all of you! And I'll extend those greetings once again to all of you that may watching this later on DVD, even include our friends Down Under!

We were actually in Australia. I can't even remember the year, but we were at a little place called Ulladulla which is just south of Sydney about a hundred and thirty-five miles. I don't know what that translates into in kilometers. I don't remember. All I remember about the kilometers; they were big ones. Everywhere in Australia!

John keeps having to remind me to give him the title so that they can make a label for the DVD's. I assured him through e-mail that I didn't mind being reminded. At my age I could use all the reminders and the help I can get.

In fact, last time we were here—it hasn't been that long ago. What two-three weeks? Okay. Anyhow we were kind of joking with the Ahos about age, the elderly and all that. And I got to thinking about that. Arnie and I don't really have too much to say when it comes to age. Both of us, I bet we both still have clothes in our closets that were made in America (laughter). For our friends down under, that's a national joke. We have other national jokes too, but most of those are in Washington, D.C.

Anyhow I did provide John with the title for this message I have today. And a few weeks ago I gave a sermon here that was titled *Self-Righteousness*. Ha-ha, being creative, I simply titled this one: *Self-Righteousness Number Two*. It's just a follow-up to that sermon that I gave.

I think we all realize that anytime any of us get up here and we give a message on a subject from God's Word, we can just barely scratch the surface. We don't cover all the things.

And I kind of got to worrying about it later and thought that maybe I'd left a couple things out that I should have stressed or didn't have time to that first go around. So I'm going to try that again and hope that I can cover and stress a couple of things that I think need emphasized.

Last time when I talked about *self-righteousness*, I gave some definitions on it. Some of the things I mentioned were *confidence in one's own righteousness*. That's a basic definition. It comes right out of Webster's. And some of the synonyms I gave were; a self-righteous person is sanctimonious, or smug, pious, superior, have kind of a holier-than-thou, priggish Pharisaical type of an approach and attitude.

And even though these words describe behaviors, and some of them visible—as I mentioned in that previous sermon—some of the things that have to do with self-righteousness, a person might have are not so visible. But in any case, these

synonyms really are talking about and involve an attitude. And that's my basic approach for this message here. I use that word *attitude* because whenever someone gets in a self-righteous attitude and an approach to things, it does really become a mindset. It becomes their disposition, their outlook, and the way they approach almost everything that they do.

The last time I had Five Points that I used and I'd just like to go through and review those points and perhaps again elaborate on a couple of the areas that I thought I didn't have time for, I thought I was a little lax on last time. Last time I did break it down into an outline where I talked about the self-righteous characteristics or traits that we might or might see in another person. I rarely give a two-part sermon. And I hardly ever give a series, not being the scholarly type. Usually if I can't cover the things, I need to cover in the amount of time that I've been assigned, well, I need to work harder. So just going back and reviewing some of those points, I'd like to just briefly go through those again.

One of the first points I had was that we all have some self-righteousness to a degree. That was the First Point. We all suffer from it to a degree. And I pointed out that although we all strive for God's righteousness, we want to obey God, we want to live God's way of life, we still have this measure of self-righteousness that we have to struggle against from time to time. It's just one of the things that we have to overcome. Actually, as I tried to point out last time, it can be a real big thing that we have to overcome.

The Second Point I had—and these are just brief reviews to kind of catch us up to where I was last time. Even though it hasn't been that long and there's a lot younger folks here, I wouldn't expect you to remember that in any case, but I'll go through them quickly here. Okay, the Second Point was that the self-righteous are blind to their own condition. I used the example of—I quoted Luke 18, Matthew 23—using the example of the scribes and Pharisees. Part of the point there was that these people being the religious leaders of that time and that place, they were so wrapped up in their own self-righteousness, keeping the law, doing all those things, they actually invented their own religion around their own self-righteousness. They were absolutely blind. They could not see the problem they had even though Christ repeatedly told that to them and actually used them for some lessons that even come down to us to this day.

The Third Point I had in that last message was that the self-righteous have a distorted view of the world. I used the example last time where that and I illustrated that approach by the *Us versus Them* kind of a mentality. And I mentioned that unfortunately we've had a tendency to fall into that in our previous life in our previous Church. We had the idea, the attitude that:

We're the elect. The world's pretty much gone. It's pretty much down the tube. We have all this elite knowledge. And we're the ones that are going to make it into God's Kingdom. And the rest of the world's just going to kind of fall by the way and go down the toilet.

And the Fourth Point that I used last time of the five was that the self-righteous have a distorted view. They look down on the world. That also transfers onto the Church. I mentioned before that the self-righteous have a tendency to look down on others in the Church. And I mentioned the example again of the competing groups that we have out

there, the competing attitudes. Sometimes those are overt. Sometimes they are covert. But I think we've all had some experience with those things. The idea that: "My group's doing more of the work than yours is. My group has more of the truth. My group has the best ministers." On and on it goes. And I mentioned too in that point in kind of summarizing that point that God kind of allows this to sort out who really is righteous and who isn't.

And the last point that I had previously was that the self-righteous think they have all the answers. Again I used the example of the attitude that someone had when they made the comment where they thought they were defining what a Christian was, what we in the Church should be doing, how we should be behaving, and all of that. I used the example where the mentality where if we keep the Sabbath, if we keep the Holy Days, if we tithe, if we do this or that, or if we don't eat unclean food, etc., if we do those things, it makes us feel kind of smug. And again, the point there is that we kind of think that with all that knowledge, which really isn't that much knowledge at all—I used the example of a very respected older minister that I know that admitted at a very late age that he didn't have all the answers at all although he had been taught at one point that he did have all the answers; he knew just about everything there was to know about God and about how to live. But that's just not true as I pointed out before. And he discovered that too later on in his life.

So again, a couple of the things that I wanted to stress and maybe emphasize a little bit more that comes out of that message, I had the point there where we all suffer from self-righteousness to some degree. And that's very true. I don't think any of us would have to think about that too much. That we've either been there, we might be there now, or we may be there in the future. It depends on what our approach, what our attitude in life is.

I'd just like to revisit that a little bit because I don't want to leave the impression and I'm afraid I might have left the impression that if we're talking about self-righteousness, we might get the idea, "Well, if we know a little bit about it, maybe we can kind of use that as a calibration point for other people. We can kind of look at them through that self-righteous magnifier." But one of the things that happens with a self-righteous person is that you always see the problem as being someone else's—not ours.

I'd like to go back to—I used Romans 10 verses 1 through 3 before. I'd like to go back. Not use that in the same way but maybe pick something out here.

And like I said, too often sometimes if we get in a self-righteous attitude, we kind of see it in other people. And the point there is that we start to get judgmental. And that becomes one of the problems. And that's one of the things that I want to bring out.

But going over to Romans 10 again beginning in verse 1, verse 1 through 3. It says:

**Roman 10:1.** Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel (the Jews) is that they may be saved. 2) For [though] I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. (KJV)

Verse 3 is really where I'm going here.

**Romans 10:3.** For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. (NKJ)

So one of the ways, if you think about individuals here with an approach that they want to establish their own righteousness, if you think about that for a minute, one of the ways, one of the major ways that occurs is when the self-righteous—and this could include us and I'm including myself in that if we get in this attitude and this mode of being self-righteous—we start to become critical and judgmental of other people. And I think we can see many Bible examples of that—the example that Christ used when He talked about the Pharisees, those other religious leaders—the scribes, the teachers of the law as some translations call that.

If you look at that word in the Greek *to establish* it just means to take a stand. We can think of that—and actually that Greek word is where we get our English word *stand*. I can't pronounce it so I won't even try to do that, but you can look that up in Strong's or your Young's or whatever you might have for a concordance.

Actually in the English, there's about nine different meanings for that. We can have a *stand* that we put flowers on. We can take a *stand* on an issue and it's kind of the idea of drawing a line in the sand. And that's what these individuals were doing. They were taking a *stand* based on their own agenda, based on their attitude and their approach to what they thought righteousness was. They were establishing their own.

In fact, the New English Bible I'd like to read verse 3 out of the New English Bible. It makes it just a little bit clearer to the point I'm trying to drive at. Verse 3 New English:

**Romans 10:3.** For they ignore God's way of righteousness and try to set up their own (NEB)

That's a conscious effort. That's an agenda that they have.

**Romans 10:3b.** and therefore have not submitted themselves to God's righteousness. (NEB)

I used the example last time in Luke 18 and you'll remember that's the Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector. And if you remember that story and how the Pharisee looked down on the tax collector, he thanked God that he wasn't like that tax collector and the other people that he despised, which to those folks were just about everyone that didn't believe the same way they did! They didn't have the same standards of righteousness that they had that they thought was right. So just looking at that, that harsh very judgmental attitude that they had and again that's one of the signs, that's one of the symptoms if we slip into becoming self-righteous. We have a tendency to start being critical of others, being judgmental.

So just to pursue that a little bit further, Christ uses a very familiar metaphor for us to kind of illustrate this. Now that's over in Matthew 7. It's also an account that I want to go to is in Luke 6. So in Luke 6 beginning in verse 37:

**Luke 6:37:** "Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. (NKJ)

Of course that doesn't mean that we can't judge small things. We know that later on, but this is actually talking about a condemnatory approach to judging.

Verse 38:

**Luke 6:38.** "Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you." (NKJ)

In other words, it's going to be compressed down and given back by God if you have that forgiving non-judgmental kind of an approach.

Verse 39:

**Luke 6:39.** And He spoke a parable to them: "Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch? 40) "A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher. (NKJ)

When I read this little parable here where it talks about the blind leading the blind—as you know I worked as an instructor in my previous career and if you're an instructor especially if you have adult students, sooner or later you're going to have the know-it-all in the class. And I would have this one individual that I knew he was coming. And one of his favorite things was—because I couldn't teach him anything. I was just an instructor and he knew everything he needed to know anyway about the topic no matter what it would be. One of his favorite things was to kind of try to take over the class. Well, that was okay. One of my favorite things was to give him plenty of rope because he usually hung himself. He'd just hang himself out to dry and I'd eventually let him do that. That individual later on was asked to move on by the way, to switch careers, kind of ninety-nine percent of it's his attitude, that kind of an attitude he had.

But anyhow it's kind of like what Christ is trying to tell us here. The individual is not above his teacher. And as far as we're concerned spiritually, there's no way our righteousness in effect, which is the subject here, is going to exceed that of Christ. He's teaching us what we need to know and the way we need to live, the way we need to do it, the way we need to conduct our lives.

Actually, if you study this and think about this, verse 38 through 40, what it's basically saying is that it's very important and it's noticed by God how we treat other people. To not be like the blind guide—that's kind of a sideways reference to those Pharisees, those blind Pharisees. We can go back in other Scriptures and see that. They were criticizing other people, being judgmental to build themselves up. And God says, "Don't do that. Be like your Teacher to have a compassionate, a forgiving kind of an attitude and approach," the way God treats us. That's the way we should treat other people.

Verse 41:

**Luke 6:41.** "And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye? 42) "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me remove the speck that *is* in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the plank that *is* in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother's eye. (NKJ)

Now again we know if we study the parables very much that this is all very metaphorical here. It has nothing to do with eyes, sawdust, or boards. It doesn't have anything to do with that at all. What it does have to do with is a judgmental self-righteous attitude. If we see something in somebody else and we're going to use our own measure of self-righteousness—what we think is right—to judge that other person especially in a spiritual sense, we're the ones that have the problem. So that's what this is talking about. Again, our Savior is telling us, "Don't do that. Don't get in that kind of a position."

And the point's driven on actually if we go back and forth in the context here. Let's go back to verse 27. Again, still Luke 6 and this is kind of a tough one. This is a tough concept. Sometimes we get this a little mixed up. Verse 27:

**Luke 6:27.** "But I say to you who hear [That's us!]: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28) "bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you. (NKJ)

The last part there I like the way the NIV puts that. It says: "those who mistreat you" pray for those. Have you ever been mistreated? I would hate to tell you in the thirty-five to forty-plus years that I've worked how many times I was discriminated against in my job, all those kinds of things. Just because of my beliefs! And that wasn't my righteousness. I might have had some of that in there, but I thought and believed I was living God's way of life when I wouldn't work on the Sabbath, when I took off for the Holy Days, etc. So we do get mistreated.

But going on:

**Luke 6:29.** "To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, ((NKJ)

**Luke 6:29b.** do not stop him from taking *your* tunic. (NIV)

Again the last part there's from the NIV.

So what's it really talking about here? The kind of love it's talking about is the *agapao*, God's kind of love, the *agape*. It's really God's attitude in regard to man in general, really. It's the kind of attitude and the love He wants us to have. And that's why He tells us to do that here. It's not a condemning. It's not a judgmental attitude.

When you think about it, God doesn't even have that approach towards all mankind. Nor us that are being judged now! He's not condemning us as He judges as we go along. Hopefully He's going to show us and help us with the things we need to change.

He gives us the room and the leeway to make those changes, to repent and to do what we should be doing to grow.

If you look at that, if you kind of break that down there in Luke 6 and the kind of *love* He's talking about, you're going to see that it has a certain quality to it. Sometimes we get the idea of *love your enemy*, that's a feeling. Well, it's not a feeling. If you break this down here, you're going to see it's an act. It's an action because love itself is an action, right? If we love our wives, we'll demonstrate that in different ways—we'll buy the flowers. If we can do it, we'll buy the diamonds. In other words, we just express our love.

And the other thing is *do good*. That's an action. That's not a feeling. That's an action. God's love is never passive. There's always some action to it.

*Bless and pray for*, those are actions.

The other one: *offer the other cheek*. As hard as that sounds to do, isn't that an action? That's an action.

And the last one there where it talks about if someone takes something from you, *don't resist*. That might sound like an inaction, but it's a response. It's an action on our part. And actually it's going to come from inside of us. It's going to be the right thing to do. That goes entirely against what we want to do. Someone takes a swing at us, we want to duck. And maybe if we know a little bit about fighting, we might want to return that or deflect it somehow.

That's not really what this is talking about here. It's talking about an attitude and approach that's Christ-like that we should have in regard to our enemies or to anyone because that's what God's kind of love covers everyone, including us. And again, all these are an active thing, an active love. In other words, God expects us to do what He would do. He wants us to do something with it.

And the point's actually being driven home even further if we go down to verse 43. And again, I'm going back and forth in the context here because it all pertains to what we're talking about. Verse 43:

**Luke 6:43.** "For a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. (NKJ)

The *fruit* here again, it's not talking about literal fruit. This is metaphorical language. If we look over in Galatians 5, what do we have? We have a list there. We actually have two lists—the works of the flesh and the *fruit* of the spirit. Sometimes I think God gives us that list. He inspired Paul to do that so that we would have a list sometimes we could take an inventory and see what's really going on in our own life.

Verse 44:

**Luke 6:44.** "For every tree is known by its own fruit. (NKJ)

That's singular, right? "By its own fruit;" we're going to each have to answer for that. Again referring over to someplace like Matthew 25 where the ten virgins—the five and the five—some bore fruit, some didn't, etc. You know that account there. The point there is we are going to be responsible for our own fruit, the way we live, the way we conduct our lives for our behaviors.

Going on in verse 44:

**Luke 6:44b.** For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush. (NKJ)

And again, it's not really talking about the literal things here. Can you get carnal from something or someone that's spiritual? Can you get spiritual things from someone that is carnal? That's what that's referring to.

Verse 45:

**Luke 6:45.** "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; (NKJ)

That is he uses God's spirit.

**Luke 6:45b.** and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. (NKJ)

That is a carnal spirit. Again referring back to those lists there in Galatians 5.

Last part of verse 45:

**Luke 6:45 cont.** For out of the abundance of the heart (NKJ)

And that can be a circumcised heart or not.

**Luke 6:45 cont.** his mouth speaks. (NKJ)

You could also extrapolate from there, the individual *acts* because isn't speaking an action? That all has to do; that all has to pertain to this.

Verse 46:

**Luke 6:46.** "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say? (NKJ)

And verse 47 and 48, I like the way the New International puts that. Verse 47:

**Luke 6:47.** I will show you what he is like who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice. 48) He is like a man building a house, (NIV)

And once again, we know that's a spiritual house. That applies to us individually.



**Luke 68b:** who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. (NIV)

Actually some translations say "the rock" because the reference there is Christ. When I think about that *foundation* there, we could think maybe the foundation is Christ. But it says, "the foundation on the rock."

I have to remember years ago when I worked construction, I was working at the University of Washington. And we were driving steel piling down. We were building a new stadium and the stanchions for the stadium which would be an angle like that—a big bowl type of a stadium. Clay soil over there! We had to drive steel piling down. This was fourteen inch wide flange I-beam. We'd drive clusters of those down and the concrete would be poured on that. Then from there, they'd build the stanchions for the stadium. Anyhow in that gumbo, that clay soil over there around the University of Washington, we'd have to drive those pilings down to seventy feet before we hit bedrock!

And that's kind of what reminds me here. And it says going deep. We have to build our lives deep. And we have to do the things we need to be doing, the things we have learned and that Christ had taught us we need to be doing. And we have to build off of that, create our foundation, do those basic things and build on Christ.

Just going on here in verse 48:

**Luke 6:48 cont.** When a flood came, the torrent struck (NIV)

And I kind of liken that, the flood—the torrent, isn't that life itself? Isn't that sometimes how it comes at us? So how do we react to that?

It goes on to say here though it gives an example.

**Luke 6:48 cont.** struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. (NIV)

It was founded on a rock. It had a solid foundation.

Verse 49:

**Luke 6:49.** But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice (NIV)

Again NIV:

**Luke 6:49b.** is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. (NIV)

Without a spiritual foundation!

**Luke 6:49 cont.** The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete." (NIV)

And for us that destruction would be spiritual destruction, right? That'd be not in God's Kingdom.

Again I'm trying to stress the point here, and I hope I'm getting it across that we all have to realize that we have some of this and we're affected by that self-righteousness. And again, if we get into this judgmental kind of an attitude, this critical attitude towards others, that's one of the symptoms that it's affecting us in one way or another.

I already mentioned in Galatians 5, but I mentioned before—and I'm not going to turn there; just as a reference—but where Paul gave the list there. And also in Romans 7 where he talked about he didn't do the things that he wanted to do. He did the things that he didn't want to do. He knew what he needed to be doing. And we're all in the same boat, right? We're all in the same condition. We know what we should be doing. Sometimes we can't do those things we know we should be doing. And what Paul was admitting there that he had a struggle. There was a struggle going on in his life. And it's a spiritual battle—the same one we're in all the time!

And actually, if you think about that—what the struggle was there was in his own mind—was he going to practice and live his own righteousness? Or God's righteousness? That's really what it boils down to. And we need to remember that like Paul did and maybe look at it that way. We're learning right now. And again, we're not going to meet or exceed our Teacher's standards. Those are the standards. That's the bar. That's where the bar is at for us. And that's what we need to be living up to spiritually.

I go to a health club for a couple of reasons. Number one is I need the exercise and the other reason is I'm old. And I'm trying to maintain some flexibility. I like to golf and do some things like that. And I need to do that, but the point I'm trying to get at here is that at that health club, the local hospital has a rehab unit.

And they have folks come in there that are trying to recover sometimes just basic things, just to be able to walk, depending on what kind of a surgery they've had. Maybe they've had heart surgery. Maybe it's like some of the folks we have on our prayer request list. They're struggling. And that's the point: They're struggling physically. And in the same way we struggle spiritually! Sometimes we just limp along. Sometimes we're kind of damaged and we need to recover. That's what we need to be doing. And it is a struggle sometimes.

I spent twenty-five years working for a corporation. And they adopted the management philosophy of just keep dumping on your employees until they couldn't possible handle any more where you just crush them. And that's the way they operated. But we used to have a saying. In fact, I had it written and I had it posted up on the bulletin board by my desk. "When you're up to your heinie in alligators, it's sometimes hard to remember that your initial objective was to drain the swamp." And that's kind of the way life is for us sometimes! Sometimes we are in things up to our heinie. And it's hard for us to keep going, but if we think about that and do the things we know we should be doing, usually we'll come out of that. Won't we?

And it is just like this insidious thing that we're talking about, this self-righteousness, that kind of a really major symptom of being judgmental, being critical towards other people. It's kind of like that if Satan gets to us with that and gets us in that kind of an attitude

and approach, we get bogged down in that quagmire. Pretty soon we can't move. It's just like the Pharisees. Pretty soon they were so deeply into that self-righteousness there was no help for them. Their help is going to be when they're resurrected again. That's when they're going to have their opportunity to get away from that.

So the point I'm trying to make here is: None of us are really in a position, spiritually speaking, to sit in judgment of other people. We can't see into the heart of someone else. We just can't do that. We can make those little judgmental discernments based on observable behaviors. We're told and we're taught through Scripture to stay away from certain kinds of people because of those behaviors. So we can do those kinds of things, but as far as spiritual judgment, we need to stay away from that.

And again, part of the point here is that right now we're like Paul admitted when he struggled against his own flesh to do the things that he knew he should be doing. He realized he was a mixture of self-righteousness and God's righteousness. Again, if we don't buy that, if we don't think we're a mixture, if we think we're pretty good and yet in a subtle way all of a sudden we start being critical and judgmental of others—Brethren, other groups, other people, that kind of a thing—we have self-righteousness maybe knocking right at our door. That's one of the major symptoms. And we need to think about that.

So that's one of the things I wanted to re-emphasize that I really didn't have an opportunity to do in the first message that I gave on this.

Another thing that I wanted to emphasize I don't think I really got across how very serious this condition is. So there's one final place that I would like to go and that's over in Revelation 22. How serious is all this? And I don't know if you've actually thought about these Scriptures in this way or in this context. But Revelation 22 and beginning in verse 6:

**Revelation 22:6.** Then he said to me, "These words *are* faithful and true." And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants [That's us!] the things which must shortly [come to pass]. (NKJ)

Skipping down to verse 8, "John fell down at the feet of the angel" (paraphrased).

Verse 9:

**Revelation 22:9.** Then he [the angel] said to me, "*[Don't] do that*. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep [or observe] the words of this book. Worship God." (NKJ)

Down in verse 11:

**Revelation 22:11.** "He who is unjust, (NKJ)

That's just another way of saying *unrighteous* or *self-righteous*. If you look that up—again if you look up this whole term of righteous and unrighteous scripturally, you're going to see that that's one of the things that used, being *unjust*.

But it goes on to say:

**Revelation 22:11b.** let him be unjust still; he who is filthy [spiritually], (NKJ)

You know dirtied and sullied from the way they're living.

**Revelation 22:11 cont.** let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, (NKJ)

Or "he who does righteously: another translation says.

**Revelation 22:11 cont.** let him be righteous still; (NKJ)

Living, following God's way of life, conducting himself the way he/she should.

**Revelation 22:11 cont.** he who is holy, let him be holy still." (NKJ)

Verse 14:

**Revelation 22:14.** Blessed *are* [they] who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, (NKJ)

*Tree of Life* that's interesting isn't it. To me it points right back to Genesis. Points right back to Adam and Eve. What did Adam and Eve do? They decided for themselves what was right and what was wrong. Correct? They disobeyed God. They set out on their own path of what they thought was right.

But continuing the verse:

**Revelation 22:14b.** and may enter [in] through the gates into the city. (NKJ)

Verse 15:

**Revelation 22:15.** But outside (NKJ)

Not in! Not in God's Kingdom!

**Revelation 22:15b.** *are* dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie. (NKJ)

When I see that word *lie* there, it reminds me back in Revelation 17 where it talks about the great false religion of the world. What's that all based on? It's all based on an entire agenda of self-righteousness. The entire thing! That's the big lie. God's way is the truth. It's not a lie. And God's way will lead to God's Kingdom. These other things will not lead to God's Kingdom. As it says here, they'll lead away from that.

Verse 18:

**Revelation 22:18.** For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: (NKJ)

And you could say that's either Revelation or it's from Genesis to Revelation. You'd be correct in applying that either way.

**Revelation 22:18b.** If anyone adds to these things, (NKJ)

What do the self-righteous do with God's Word? What did the Pharisees do? Did they add anything to God's Word? They certainly did. And the self-righteous will have a tendency to do the same thing, right? Again, like I mentioned before in the previous message that the self-righteous will invent their own religion. They'll pick things out and they make an entire religion out of those things. That's what the Pharisees did. They added to—very common thing.

But continuing on verse 18, last part:

**Revelation 22:18 cont.** God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; (NKJ)

Verse 19:

**Revelation 22:19.** And if anyone takes away (NKJ)

That is takes away the intent, the meaning of what God intends here.

**Revelation 22:19b.** from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part (NKJ)

And what is our part? Our part, basically if you want to analyze that, that's the opportunity that we have. That's the chance we had to do things the way God wants us to do.

**Revelation 22:19 cont.** from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book. (NKJ)

I was in Wal-Mart not too long ago. And I don't remember if I used this example here or somewhere else, but anyhow. I was in Wal-Mart and I was returning something. When I went up to the service counter to return whatever I was returning, I looked over on the wall. And there was a whole list of items there stuck up on the wall with pins, scotch-tape, whatever. It was a recall of products—stuff that didn't work, stuff that might be dangerous, stuff that might be hazardous.

But you know when you think about God's whole plan, the product God gives us there's no recall on it! It's the true thing. It's the sure thing. And it's the thing we ought to be doing and applying in our lives. There's no doubt about that.

So again, just wrapping that up, I just wanted to stress again how sinister and how pervasive this thing of self-righteousness is. And I can only re-iterate again how important it is not to get in that judgmental, that critical attitude towards others. That's one of the sure symptoms that we're slipping. That it's sneaking up on us.

And I also wanted to emphasize and I hope I did there. I hope it does actually God's Word in Revelation where it talked about how serious this is. This can actually keep us out of God's Kingdom. We want to move toward God's righteousness and as far away from we can get from our own righteousness.