

Matthew 23:25-28

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

New Years Resolutions, a lot of people make them, and a lot make resolution to go to the gym and workout and look better, which is a good thing, but it's not the most important thing. If you read today's verses, Jesus is making it clear that we need to really deal with our inside before we focus on the outside.

† *first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also.*

What I find interesting is that people work so much on the outward appearance, then if they have time, they will work on the inside. Even as believers, we are just as guilty at trying to help new believers look good and holy on the outside with the way they dress and talk and things they do. But isn't that backwards according to what Jesus just taught? "*first cleanse the inside*" We should be teaching them spiritual things, and once they (and us) get that, then the outward will start to change automatically, because the spiritual body will dominate the flesh, instead of the flesh dominating the spirit.

† **Romans 8:5 & 9a** *For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you.*

Maybe you go to the gym or workout several times a week. When you go, how long are you actually there? 30 minutes, an hour, two hours or longer?

† *appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.*

Let me ask you something. If you worked out as long as you spent in God's word, what would your physical body look like?

Maybe you only spend just the five minutes it takes you to go through this devotional. Maybe you spend five or ten minutes reading God's word, or maybe you are hard core and do a entire 30 minutes of reading. So, what would your body look like and how healthy would you be with just 5 or 10 minutes of working out a few times a week?

Now let's switch it to what Jesus is teaching us. Say you do spend 30 minutes or an hour or even two hours at the gym. What if you spent that much time in God's word instead.

"Oh, I can't do that, I can't read that long, plus I get bored" you may be thinking.

So are you saying that you are getting bored spending time with Jesus for that long? (It's ok to say such at this point.) But if you think about it, are you willing to spend that much time with your friends in a stinky, sweaty, smelling gym, but not with Jesus....

Once again, I am not saying working out and taking care of your physical body is bad, because it's not. Even Paul wrote to Timothy saying.

† **1 Timothy 4:8** *For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.*

So was Timothy a gym monkey or health nut? I don't think so, I believe Paul was saying this to get a point across, just like Jesus was, and that is that we need to set our priorities and realize what's more important, and that is the spiritual body (inward appearance), rather than the physical body (outward appearance).

† **Matthew 6:31-33 (NLT2)** *So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?' These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.*