

The Pharisee Fallacy

by John Launchbury

Questions to consider, discuss or journal.

Is there a “religious rule” that you follow that is an extremely helpful aid for your spiritual growth? How can you protect against this aid becoming a hard and fast rule that must be kept at all costs?

We often refer to the Christadelphian body as Pharisaical. Separating ourselves and devoting ourself to God sound audible on the surface, but where do you think we, as a body, have perhaps taken this too far?

John summarizes hypocrisy as “the mechanisms of rules have become elevated over any original purpose those rules may have had, and even negate those purposes’. Do you, or does your ecclesia, continue to maintain traditions that have long survived the initial purpose? That you no longer remember why a certain tradition started?

How does thinking about Jesus feeling deeply sad for and about the Pharisees change your view of this sect? And perhaps, ourselves?

John states, “When we think that rules are Christianity—when we elevate the importance of regulations above inner spiritual transformation—that’s when we have lost our way.” It is easy to look at others and see how they have lost their way: but what about you as an individual? In what ways have you lost your way?

John states, “Internal spiritual transformation is actually more challenging and more rigorous than simply following external rules. It requires a lifelong commitment to humility before God, a willingness to let the selfish ego die.” How do you put this into practice?