The Pharisee Filter

A Devotional Guide for Seeing Ourselves Clearly and Christ More Fully

AN INTERACTIVE 4-DAY DEVOTIONAL BY ROD LANDIS



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Introduction from Rod Landis

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We don't like to think of ourselves as Pharisees.
It's easy to read the Gospels and shake our heads at the religious elite—those who missed the Messiah standing right in front of them. But if we're honest, many of us are more like them than we care to admit. We know the Word. We follow the rules. We serve faithfully. But somewhere along the way, pride can creep in unnoticed, cloaked in good intentions and spiritual habits.
This devotional isn't meant to shame—it's meant to sharpen.
The Pharisee Filter is a four-day invitation to pause, reflect, and let the Holy Spirit reveal any area where we've traded intimacy with Jesus for outward appearance or self-reliance. It's for leaders, faith-based content creators, ministry personnel, and everyday believers who want to remain teachable and tender—anchored not in performance, but in grace.
Jesus didn't come to affirm those who thought they were already righteous. He came to rescue those humble enough to know they weren't. My prayer is that this resource gives you space to rediscover that posture—and to walk with clarity, conviction, and deeper communion with Christ.
Let's allow His truth to do what it's always done best: set us free.

Rod

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DAY ONE

The Company Jesus Kept

Scripture: Luke 5:29–32
Key Thought: Jesus didn't come to affirm the righteous, but to rescue the willing.



Devotional Thought:

In Luke 5, we find Jesus reclining at a table with tax collectors and sinners—a move that offended the Pharisees but reflected the very heart of His mission. Jesus came not for the proud, but for the humble. Not for those who believed they were already righteous, but for those who knew their need.

The religious leaders saw the company He kept as a threat to holiness. But Jesus saw it as an opportunity for healing. The table became a place of transformation.

Are we making room at our tables for the broken? Or are we still trying to curate a version of righteousness that keeps others out?

Reflection Questions:

- Who in my life might feel unworthy of grace? How can I extend an invitation to them?
- Do I ever hesitate to share my faith with someone who seems "too far gone"?
- How does the way I interact with others reflect the mercy I've received?

DAY TWO



When Knowing Scripture Isn't Enough

Scripture: Luke 5:21; Romans 3:10
Key Thought: Biblical knowledge is powerful—but without humility, it can blind us to truth.

Devotional Thought:

The Pharisees knew the Scriptures inside and out. Yet when the Living Word stood before them, they called Him a blasphemer.

This sobering truth reminds us that knowing about God is not the same as knowing Him. Head knowledge can become a stumbling block if it's not accompanied by heart surrender. Jesus doesn't just want our intellect—He wants our intimacy.

Spiritual maturity is not measured by how much we know, but how deeply we are known by Him.

Reflection Questions

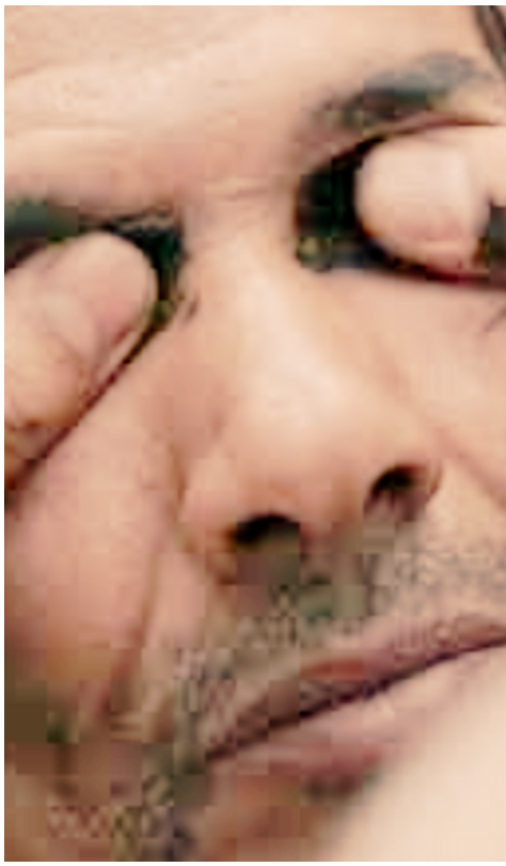
- Has my time in the Word become more informational than transformational?
- Do I use Scripture to draw closer to Jesus, or to prove a point?
- In what areas of my life do I need to trade pride for pursuit?

DAY THREE

The Blindness of Self-Righteousness

Scripture: Matthew 23:27–28

Key Thought: Pride blinds. Humility opens our eyes.



Devotional Thought:

Self-righteousness is one of the most deceptive forms of blindness. It doesn't always announce itself with arrogance—it can hide behind ministry titles, polished platforms, and disciplined routines. Jesus wasn't harsh with the broken. He was bold with the proud.

The Pharisees knew how to keep the law but failed to recognize the Lawgiver standing in front of them. Their hearts were far from God, even as their lips repeated His words.

Jesus didn't rebuke the Pharisees to shame them—He did it to expose the danger of spiritual pride. Because when we believe we're healthy, we stop seeking the Healer.

Reflection Questions

- Have I ever mistaken spiritual activity for intimacy with God?
- When was the last time I asked God to search my heart for hidden pride?
- Do I find myself frustrated or judgmental toward others who don't "get it right"?
- Is there an area of my life or leadership where I've been "whitewashing the tomb"?
- What's one practical step I can take this week to replace performance with presence?



DAY FOUR

The Heart that Hears

Scripture: Matthew 13:15–16

Key Thought: A teachable spirit invites transformation.

Devotional Thought:

Throughout His ministry, Jesus often said, *"He who has ears to hear, let him hear."* Hearing, in the Kingdom, is more than soundwaves reaching our ears—it's about receptivity. A heart that hears is a heart that responds.

The Pharisees had access to truth but lacked the posture to receive it. They were too full of themselves to be filled by God. We must daily choose to cultivate a spirit that listens —not just to information, but to invitation.

Let us be those who hear and respond. The ones who listen and obey, who remain soft, surrendered, and sensitive to the Spirit.



Reflection Questions

- Do I approach God's Word with expectation or obligation?
- When I sense the Spirit prompting me, do I respond with action or hesitation?
- How can I create more space in my life to listen for God's voice?

A PERSONAL PRAYER OF REPENTANCE

Search Me, O God

Scripture: Psalm 139:23
Key Thought: True repentance begins with the courage to be fully seen by God.

Lord, search my heart and reveal what I cannot see on my own.
Show me where pride has taken root. Where performance has replaced presence.
Where I've chosen religion over relationship.
Forgive me for the moments I've stood at a distance, convinced I was fine without You.
Break every blindfold that keeps me from seeing You clearly.
Make me teachable. Make me tender. Make me more like You.
In Jesus' name,
Amen.

Reflection Questions

- What has God revealed to you through this devotional?
- Where is He inviting you to further surrender?

Additional Notes

AUTHOR'S NOTE:

If you've made it to this page, thank you. Thank you for the courage it takes to look inward and invite the Holy Spirit to do what only He can—search, reveal, and transform.

My hope is that this devotional has not only challenged but also comforted you in the truth that God sees everything—and still draws near. He is not afraid of our brokenness. He's only ever resisted pride.

May we become people who are slow to assume and quick to examine. Who live from a place of surrender, not self-sufficiency. And we must never forget that grace flows freely to the humble.
May your heart be kept soft, your ears open, and your eyes fixed on Him.

With gratitude,



Rod

