

## Self-Righteousness

Every once and a while, I receive a response from someone who claims that I am self-righteous. I think it is curious that people call me self-righteous, because is it not a little self-righteous on their part? People are often guilty of the very sin of which they charge others! That is being hypocritical and is thoroughly condemned in the scriptures (Matthew 16:3; Romans 2:1-3).

The Pharisees were truly self-righteous. Luke 16:14-15 says, *"And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him. And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."* This self-righteousness was further illustrated in passages such as Luke 18:9-14 and John 8:4-9. But today there seems to be a definite misconception concerning self-righteousness.

People who boldly proclaim the gospel are often said to be self-righteous. Acts 4:29, 31 says, *"And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word,... And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness."* Do you suppose that the apostles were self-righteous? Or were they simply discharging their responsibilities given to them by the Lord (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16)? When we go forth standing for truth, are we not discharging the duties we have given by the Lord? If that is what the world considers "self-righteous," I guess I will take the characterization with honor!

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