

# Pharisees Think That Holiness Is in the Style of One's Clothes

by Zac Poonen

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*Zac Poonen's sermon challenges the notion that holiness is defined by outward clothing styles, emphasizing the importance of inward purity instead.*

**Scripture:** Numbers 15:38, Matthew 11:8, Matthew 23:5, 1 Timothy 2:9, 1 Peter 3:3

**Topics:** "Outward Holiness", "Heart Sanctification"

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## Description

Zac Poonen preaches about the Pharisees' tendency to focus on outward appearances, such as lengthening their tassels and broadening their phylacteries, to appear holier than others. He highlights how some modern-day Pharisees also emphasize 'holy' clothing as a measure of spirituality, missing the true essence of holiness found in the heart. Poonen emphasizes the importance of meditating on Scripture to align our thoughts with Christ's teachings, rather than being swayed by societal expectations or judgments based on outward appearances.

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## Transcript

"The Pharisees broaden their phylacteries (small cases containing Scripture texts worn on the forehead) and lengthen the tassels of their garments" (Matthew 23:5).

Another characteristic of Pharisees is to glory in the "holiness" of their clothes!!

God had told the Israelites to attach tassels (a bunch of loose threads bound at one end and hanging free at the other) to the hems of their clothes with a blue cord - to remind them every time they saw those tassels of God's commandments that came from heaven (Numbers 15:38).

The Pharisees would make their tassels a little longer than those of others. They could then glory that while the tassels of others were only 3 inches long, theirs were 6 inches long - proving that they were holier!!

There are many Pharisees today too who glory in the "holy" clothes that they wear!! Someone once gave me a very colourful Hawaiian shirt. What would you think of me if you saw me wearing that shirt? It would shock some Christians. That would reveal their Phariseeism to them. We have so many ideas that are completely contrary to Christ's - because we don't meditate sufficiently on the Scriptures. We are afraid of

what people will think of us if we wear a certain colour of shirt. But Jesus' holiness was not in His clothes.

Pharisees observe others carefully to see what they are wearing - clothes, shoes, earrings, etc., - in order to find something to criticise. They have eyes like an eagle for such matters.

Jesus spoke against men wearing "effeminate (malako - Greek) clothing" (Matthew 11:8). And the Holy Spirit exhorts women to dress "modestly, discreetly and simply" (1 Timothy 2:9; 1 Peter 3:3). Other than that, holiness is not found in the clothes we wear. Holiness is primarily inward.

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Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/pharisees-think-that-holiness-is-in-the-style-of-ones-clothes/>

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