

## Super-Pharisees!

- Jesus asking his disciples to be more righteous than the Pharisees:
  - *For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.* (Matthew 5:20)
  - this is a super-radical agenda!
  - but the danger is then that Jesus' disciples - that's us - become the new Pharisees...
  - and sadly that is indeed what has happened at various points down through church history
- So Jesus invites us to do our **right living** for **God's eyes only**
  - we are not earning social standing, but pleasing God
  - and at the heart of these demands is the wonderful truth that Christian obedience is not religious observance!
  - it is the joyful out-working of a love-relationship with God
  - at the heart of Christian is a relationship - take that away and you are left with the dead husk of hypocrisy
  - *(oh, I can see this in my own living!)*
  - and the reward he speaks of? **to know him more!!**

## Driving that home

- I don't think that is particularly controversial, or even hard to understand
  - just tricky to apply!

### Giving

- Does our **passing the plate** help us here?
  - are there other ways that we announce our giving?
  - does this make it harder for us to learn generosity, if all our fellow Christians are secretive about their giving?

### Praying

- Have you ever known someone who loves to be heard praying?
  - are there other ways we can announce our praying to draw attention to ourselves?
  - when do we babble like pagans?
  - is Jesus banning Prayer Meetings? (v.6)
  - why do we need to ask when our Father already knows what we need?