

Matthew 23 –16 February 2020

“The Rebellious Need Only Hear Woe!”

Introduction

Christ has come into Jerusalem for the last week of His earthly ministry and life.

This is the culmination of His dedication to save our souls as the Lamb of God, our substitutionary sacrifice.

He’s been showing how we can tell that the Pharisees are bound to a dead religion

#1-They’re not converted, #2-They’re cruel & selfish,
#3-They don’t value the things of God

Sum it up...They don’t believe God way of salvation!

They’re left in a state of rebellion. How do we deal with those that choose to rebel against Christ?

We warn them. This is known as the chapter of woe!

Tonight, we look at 3 aspects of this warning message using W.O.E. as our outline

#1 – Give the rebellious a Winsome warning (Chap 23:1-12)

Read Vs 1-4

1. Vs 1 – This msg given in Temple to the masses to help/warn all people of the Pharisee's lifestyle.
2. Vs 3
 - a. Don't disrespect the Sword of the Word of God, b/c of the awful way some men wield it.
 - b. We need to agree w/ fools when they say something right. (They're not 100% wrong)
3. Vs 4
 - a. Jerusalem Council seeking to know if Gentiles should follow the Law (Now Read Act 15:10)
 - b. Matt 23 – the Pharisees added another 600 rules that no man could keep up with.
 - c. This isn't our Jesus – He had a winsome msg of “Come to Me, all ye who are weary... For My yoke is easy, and...” Matt 11:28-30

Read Vs 5- 12

1. The multitudes are ruled by Rome, but they're also ruled by the Jewish religious leaders.
2. Jesus is saying that life should be a fellowship or brotherhood of servants.
 - a. Equality in Christ, offering compassion.
3. Those that seek self-promotion and a "title" bring carnal needless division, not unity.
4. Do we present ourselves as "better than others" when speaking to non-Christians? God forbid.
 - a. We should present as someone who's just trying to help others along to know Christ

Transition

1. As much as there are always elements of unity and equality in Christ, there's also always a choice that needs made to come to Christ in the 1st place.
2. Choice insinuated something is right and something else is wrong. That's offensive!
3. Accepting Christ always has offensive elements

#2 – Give the rebellious an Offensive warning (Chap 23:13-33)

1. Most loving thing you can do for someone who's living a harmful lifestyle is to put your finger directly on the things causing the harm.
2. 8 woes (grief) – “You should be grieved b/c...”

Read Vs 13 – 1st Woe

1. Hypocrites – wearing a mask – present themselves as keeping rules but they didn't
2. Pharisees were complicating the way to eternal life. Extra rules – wrong, confusing, burdensome
3. Give the gospel to others in the simplest terms

Read Vs 14 – 2nd Woe

1. They financially took advantage of people but gave an outward show that they were praying for the best for them.
2. Televangelists do this still today! We'll send you this prayer hanky....for your money.

Read Vs 15 – 3rd Woe

1. Evangelism is only as good as the substance of the evangelism. What's the msg you're giving?
 - a. Pharisees were giving lies & burdens.
 - b. Like the people that say they "have faith".
 - i. Have faith...in what! B/c it matters!
2. Why "twofold more a child of hell"?
 - a. B/c you've inoculated them to the truth.
 - b. When offering some similar but different 'in the name of' the true thing, you make them think they've tasted the genuine article.
 - c. They may never come back for a taste of the real thing b/c they think they already have.

Vs 16-22 – 4th Woe

1. Read vs 16-17
 - a. "It is nothing" – meant – this kind of promise can be broken.
 - b. "He is a debtor" – meant – have to keep this

2. Read vs 18-19
 - a. They made the material thing of greater significance than the spiritual thing.
3. Read vs 20-22
 - a. He's saying every oath or promise should be binding.
 - b. Read Matt 5:37 – “Let your yea be yea and your nay be nay”.
4. Application
 - a. Many people see their commitment to their boss at work as more important than their commitment to the Lord.
 - i. “I told my boss I wouldn't be late for work”
 1. Don't want to break this
 - ii. “I told the Lord I'd come to church”
 1. Don't mind breaking this
 - iii. If this is your thinking, you're stuck in a works-based dead religion.
 1. The believer joys to be with the Lord and His people.

Read Vs 23-24 – 5th Woe

1. They gave great attention to material concerns but little to no attention to spiritual concerns.
2. “These ought you to have done” – It’s good to give attention to material devotion to the Lord.
 - a. But it’s meaningless if you don’t care for the major issues.
 - b. Example: Baseball player that looked amazing (uniform) but never disciplined himself to learn hitting and fielding.
 - i. It’s an easy conversation to say, “See this new bat I bought at the store?”
 - ii. It’s a harder conversation to say, “Learn any new hitting drill that have helped?”
3. Application
 - a. It’s easy to ask someone how their work is going.
 - b. It’s harder to ask someone how their commitment to the Lord is going.

Read Vs 25-26 – 6th Woe

1. They never thought to deal with their wicked, thieving hearts.
2. Change the heart and the behaviors will change
3. Don't ask non-believers to clean up behaviors, the Holy Spirit will do that once they're converted.
 - a. What are you going to do, clean them up and send them to hell #2? Foolish.
 - b. In this order, belief, behavior, belonging.

Read Vs 27-28 – 7th Woe

1. Not only are they only performing outward acts to “look good”, but the inward is actually lifeless!
2. Before Christ converting us, we are helpless to honor Christ and do good.
3. Things can sometimes look good, but it comes from a striving and labor to will burn you out!
4. When God is doing great things, there's no striving/burden. “Not by might, nor by power...”

Read Vs 29-36 – 8th Woe

1. The prophets came of old to give forth the Word of God & the fathers despised & rejected it.
2. These Pharisees have done the same thing to John the Baptist and Jesus.
3. Vs 34-35 – These Pharisees will yet do it again with Jesus' disciples.
4. Similarly, some scoff at Israel having to wander 40 years in dessert.
 - a. “Well if I were there, I would have been obedient to God.”
5. Many denominations cherish their history, but despise and reject the very substance of Jesus Christ that it was based on.

#3 – Give the rebellious an Empathetic warning (Chap 23:37-39)

Read Vs 37-39

1. Jesus not only wants to help them, but He wants to protect them from danger. (As a hen)
2. “Their house is left desolate” – spoiled or robbed.
 - a. Christ’s offer of salvation isn’t an offer to “make your life better”.
 - b. It’s an offer to save you from the destruction to come.
3. The heart of God is to show kindness and empathy with the goal of conversion of a soul.
 - a. But you can’t force a rebel.
4. Luke 19:41 tells us Jesus wept looking over Jerusalem. One of only two times He wept.
 - a. We should share this heart for people.

Conclusion

This isn't an expression of an individual irritation but an expression of a Winsome, Offensive, Empathetic Warning

1. **Winsome**

- a. Winsome insomuch that we are the same as them. We're not better than them – ground is level at the cross.
- b. All of us can cease from striving and rest.

2. **Offensive**

- a. Offensive insomuch that we have to present a choice.
- b. This will naturally confront the rebellious.

3. **Empathetic**

- a. Empathetic insomuch that our goal is the saving of a soul.
- b. We want to prevent bad things from coming to them.