

The Last Week Of Jesus' Life - Matthew 23 - Woeful Religion

Sunday PM 05/12/19

I) The Religious Practices of That Day, vv. 2-12

A. The scribes and Pharisees were acting as lawgivers and judges, **v. 2**

1. They said and did not do (**v 3**)
2. Required others to do what they would not, **v. 4**

B. Their religion was outward to be seen of men, **vv. 5-6**

C. They used religion for personal gain, **vv. 6-7**

D. Developed their own clergy/laity system

1. Rabbi - my master, my teacher, **vv. 8-10**

E. Their day would come, **vv. 11-12**

II) The Eight Woes

A. Hypocrites who will not allow others to enter heaven, **v. 13**

1. They thought of themselves as the gate keepers, deciding who was worthy of heaven who wasn't worthy.
2. They lacked a sincere desire to please God, they fought against Jesus.
3. They were jealous of Jesus' followers.

4. Later they persecuted those preaching the gospel, *Acts 17.1-5*
5. Our aim should not be toward a group or a sect or a denomination but toward God.

B. They took advantage of the less fortunate and gullible, v. 14

1. Religion can be financially profitable. Some have used it for personal gain, *2 Peter 2.3a, 1 Peter 5.2b*
2. Now people are selling religion and their books.
3. Never use God to swindle people or to make merchandise of people.

C. They converted people to their belief and not to God, v. 15

1. The aim of preaching should be that of *1 Timothy 1.5*
2. Never try to convert somebody to the "church of Christ." Convert people to Christ (*Acts 8.35-38*); teach people to serve God and worship Him (*Acts 2.47*); to be a part of the body of Christ (*Col. 1.18*); and to only go by the Bible (*1 Peter 4.11*).
3. Then they will be members of Christ's church.

D. Woe to those that play religious mind games, v. 16-22

1. They had misplaced values. Most hypocrites do not start out want to be hypocrites.

2. Be honest at all times, *Matthew 5.33-37*
3. Be careful of what you promise, *Ecc. 5.4; 2 Corinthians 8.21*
4. Do not use God as a reason to lie or escape your obligations, *Mark 7.11*.
5. Doctrine of mental reservation, mental mind games.

E. Woe to selective obedience due to misplaced values, v. 23-24

1. What part of the Bible can we delete?
2. What part can we break and still go to heaven?
3. Do we see how all of the law works together? *Ps. 119.160*

F. Woe to inward corruption, outward oriented instead of inward, v. 25

1. If we start on the inside the outside will be taken care of, *Matthew 15.17-20*
2. Example of modesty, *1 Peter 3*.
3. Lying, stealing, cheating, fornication, etc. come from the inside.

G. Woe to hypocrisy and lawlessness, v. 27

1. Under the law of Moses touching a dead body would make one unclean.
2. They whitewashed the tombs to identify and avoid them.

3. The tombs were pretty but contained the bodies of rotting corpses.
4. People and churches can be the same way. Outwardly beautiful but filled with spiritually dead people.

H. Woe to killing the spokesmen of God, v. 29

1. Prophets were mouth pieces of God.
2. The disciples were sent to preach the word of God, *Matthew 10.17ff.*
3. Sometimes those preaching the truth are vilified.

Conclusion:

Jesus ends with pronouncing judgment on Jerusalem, *vv. 37-39.*
What will he say about us?