

WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIBLE CLASS
NOVEMBER 25, 2020
MATTHEW 23:23-36

INTRODUCTION:

1. Three facts about the scribes and Pharisees relative to Matthew 23.
 - a) The Pharisees desired the praise of men. (Matt. 23.5; John 11.45,46,53; Matt. 27.18)
 - b) The Pharisee desired to be teachers. (Matt. 23.15)
 - c) The Pharisees desired to be seen as righteous. (Matt. 23.28)
2. We invite hypocrisy into our lives when we emphasize our outward appearance more than the person of the heart. To the Pharisees, it was all about perception. [Read Matthew 23.23-36]

I. THE DISPLAYED PERFECTION

- A. The scribes and Pharisees projected an appearance of perfect law keeping.
 1. **MATTHEW 23.23:** *“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin”*
 - a) Tithe (apodekatoo): Apo – “away from”; Dekatoo – “a tenth.” Literally to give away one tenth. (Num. 18.21,25,26; 2 Chr. 31.4-6; Mal. 3.8-10)
 - b) The scribes and Pharisees boasted about their adherence to law. (Luke 18.12)
 2. **MATTHEW 23.23:** *“and have neglected the weightier matters of the law”*
 - a) Neglected (aphiemi): Literally, to send away. Translated “forgiveness” (Acts 5.31)
 - b) **MATTHEW 23.23:** *“Justice and mercy and faith”* This is also law. (cf. Luke 11.42)
 3. **MATTHEW 23.23:** *“These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.”* Serving God is both of the heart and mind. (Ecc. 12.13,14)
- B. Do we *“strain out a gnat and swallow a camel”* by making an issue out of trivial matters but neglecting the weightier matters? (Matt. 23.24; Gal. 5.1-4; John 14.15; 1 John 5.1-3)

II. THEY DISPLAYED PURITY

- A. The scribes and Pharisees emphasized the perception of purity.
 1. **MATTHEW 23.25,26:** *“For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence.”*
 2. **MATTHEW 23.27,28:** *“For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness.”*
- B. Emphasize the inside and the outside will be beautiful. (Prov. 4.23; 23.4; 1 Pet. 3.3,4)

III. THEY DISPLAYED PIETY

- A. The scribes and Pharisees displayed righteous indignation toward the mistreatment of murder of the prophets.
 1. **MATTHEW 23.29:** They honor the prophets of the past.
 2. **MATTHEW 23.30:** They indict their fathers from the past.
- B. They were no different than their fathers.
 1. **MATTHEW 23.31:** *“you are sons of those who murdered the prophets.”* To be called a son is to be like the father. (Luke 6.35,36; John 8.37-44)
 2. **MATTHEW 23.32-36:** This generation would be punished for sins against the prophets.
 - a) **MATTHEW 23.32,33:** They share in their father’s guilt.
 - b) **MATTHEW 23.34:** They will persecute His messengers. (Acts 5.40; 7.51-53; 8.1)
 - c) **MATTHEW 23.35,36:** Judgement was coming *“upon this generation”*