

## Overview

**1-V1-3** Jesus now blows the cover of the pastors and theologians of Israel. He says do what they say but not what they do. He says, "*the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees are the official \_\_\_\_\_ of the Scriptures. So practice and \_\_\_\_\_ whatever they say to you, but don't follow their \_\_\_\_\_.* For they don't practice what they teach."

**2-V4** These frauds had about 500 religious rules for daily living which a person had to adhere to --- to be as outwardly holy as they were. However, it was \_\_\_\_\_ for the average person to do their work and live without becoming ritually defiled.

**3-V5-12** Some people do good - the servants of humanity. Many others gather money, degrees, social status and commonly serve only their own privilege and prominence. The Pharisees as a class had long ago sold out to the world. They did things for \_\_\_\_\_. They wore clothing with \_\_\_\_\_ boxes and \_\_\_\_\_ that set them aside as reverends. As a class they sat at the \_\_\_\_\_ tables in community gatherings. They sat upfront on the stage in the \_\_\_\_\_. They trained the flock to call them \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. They \_\_\_\_\_ themselves.

**4-V13-16** Jesus said \_\_\_\_\_ things were ahead for these \_\_\_\_\_. They were the clergy – seen as the doorkeepers of heaven...but they wouldn't \_\_\_\_\_ in themselves and were in fact hindering real spiritual seekers from entering the Kingdom of \_\_\_\_\_. They crossed land and sea to make \_\_\_\_\_ to their institutionalized religion but in reality were only making their converts twice the sons of \_\_\_\_\_ as they were. They were \_\_\_\_\_ guides who did not know the way to God and eternal life.

**5-V16-22** Jesus had said, "*Just say a simple, 'Yes I will,' or 'No, I won't.'* Your word is enough. To strengthen your promises with a vow shows that something is wrong." (Matthew 5:37) These were not honest men so they were always making oaths—swearing by "God's \_\_\_\_\_, by the \_\_\_\_\_ in the temple, by the \_\_\_\_\_ in the temple, by the \_\_\_\_\_ on the altar. Their oaths and legal documents meant nothing.

**6-V23-24** They used their \_\_\_\_\_ to show how spiritual they were and perhaps to require God to bless them with more money rather than giving the tithe to break the hold of money on their life, to place their trust in God and not money, and to generously fund the work of the Kingdom of God. Jesus said "*You should tithe, \_\_\_\_\_, but you should not leave undone the more important things of the law - \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and faith.*"

**7-V25-26** "*How terrible (God is not fooled) it will be for you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. \_\_\_\_\_! You are so careful to clean the \_\_\_\_\_ of the cup (your life) but \_\_\_\_\_ (in your heart) you are \_\_\_\_\_ - full of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_!*"

**8-V27** God told his people in the Law to keep themselves holy in outward ways. For example, they were not to \_\_\_\_\_ the dead, or the tombs where the dead were buried. When they had to, they went through a purification rite. Jesus said that these men were whitewashed and looked \_\_\_\_\_ but they were tombs filled with dead men's \_\_\_\_\_ that defiled people with their bad government and examples of hypocrisy and \_\_\_\_\_.

**9-V29-30** The rich and powerful of every society make monuments to their \_\_\_\_\_ and great leaders who were killed by their \_\_\_\_\_ people just like them for their inconvenient truths.

**10-V31-39** This was a different time for Israel. The Son of God, the Messiah, was present in their generation and they were going to kill Him. "I \_\_\_\_\_ you, all the accumulated \_\_\_\_\_ of the centuries will break upon the heads of this very \_\_\_\_\_."

## Word Study • CHILD OF HELL • BLIND • TITHE • WHITWASHED

• IMPOSSIBLE • FOR SHOW • JUDGEMENT • EXALT

**1.V 4** \_\_\_\_\_ The Pharisees and teachers of the law lived by more than 500 outward religious observances every day. This allowed them to be ritually clean. You would have to be professional clergy do it all and do it all right. No working person could possibly do all of these things or avoid getting defiled. • For example, one of the reasons that the religious men passed by the man that the good Samaritan helped was because touching the blood of his wounds would make them ritually unclean. • The truth is no one is "saved by the works of the Law." The disciples asked the Lord who could be saved when they considered they were all into some impurity: greed, ambition, lust, or hatred. Jesus said, "*Humanly speaking, it is impossible but with God all things are possible.*" Matthew 19:25

**2.V5** \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus said that we should not to show off spiritually. "*Shut the door behind you and pray to your Father in secret.*" "*When you fast comb your hair and wash your face. Then no one will suspect you are fasting . . .*" What matters to the Father and makes a person genuinely spiritual is the "secret life with the Lord" they have. Matthew 6:5-6, 16-18 God sees in secret. Nothing is hidden, including the secrets of the heart, from the Holy Spirit.

**3.V12** \_\_\_\_\_ Exalting oneself means putting oneself above others-- that is pride and is unloving. On the other hand, even God among us was humble. "*Don't be selfish, don't live to make a good impression on others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourself. Don't think only about your own affairs but be interested in others, too, and what they are doing. Your attitude should be the same as Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not demand and cling to his rights as God. He made himself nothing. He took the humble position of a slave and appeared in human form. And in human form he obediently humbled himself even further by dying a criminal's death on a cross.*" Philippians 2:3-8

**4.V15** \_\_\_\_\_ Spiritual leaders who make converts to themselves rather than to Christ are actually separating the converts from Christ and setting them up for great disenchantment or destruction down the road.

**5.V16** \_\_\_\_\_ Self-deception can become very entrenched when spiritual leaders agree among themselves that gold is more important than God. You can tell by people's lifestyles what is more important --the prospering of Jesus and His Kingdom or of the religious leader.

**6.V23** \_\_\_\_\_ Two smoke screens about money. (1) That Christians aren't required to tithe. Jesus clearly says we must. (2) That the tithe and outward forms of holiness are righteousness in God's eyes. Jesus said we cannot neglect "the more important things of the law—justice, mercy, and faith." A person who gives all sorts of reasons for not promoting the happiness and prosperity of every person in their country and world is under judgment.

**7.V27** \_\_\_\_\_ The Law said an Israelite was ceremonially defiled by touching anything associated with the dead-- including walking unknowingly over a grave. The person had to go through a ceremony of cleansing. Defilement of the soul is far greater. For a simple man to entrust his soul to an outwardly spiritual man – a Pharisee – a priest – a theologian – a clergyman – a saintly person who was actually a bad person is eternal defilement. That is why Jesus said that it would be better for a religious leader to have a millstone tied around his neck and thrown into the sea than lead a little one astray. Mt 18:6

**8.V36** \_\_\_\_\_ The worldly mindedness of many generations now finally hardened the hearts of the religious to the point that they would crucify their God. The result was that the Romans came and destroyed Jerusalem and scattered the people of Israel.

What does this Scripture say to you? \_\_\_\_\_