

Providence Reformed Baptist Church – Sunday, October 8, 2023

Sermon Series: The Gospel of the Kingdom – Matthew

Message 106. “Whitewashed Tombs” – Matthew 23:23-28

Pastor Phillip M Way

Intro: Jesus condemns the religious leaders as false teachers and hypocrites and demonstrates the dangerous beliefs and practices that are leading them to judgment. In these 3 woes He focuses on the drastic difference between what they do on the outside and who they are on the inside.

- I. Woe for Neglecting What Matters – vs. 23-24 (Blind Guides)
 - A. Principles of Tithing – Lev. 27:30; Deut. 14:22
 - B. Weightier Matters – Micah 6:8
 - 1. Justice – doing what is right for the right reasons – Prov. 21:15
 - 2. Mercy – Matt. 9:13 (quoting Hosea 6:6)
 - 3. Faith – faithfulness to God – Gal. 5:22-23
 - C. Straining at Gnats, Swallowing Camels – majoring on minor things
 - 1. Aramaic *qalma, gamla*
 - 2. Smallest and Largest unclean creatures – Lev. 11:4, 20-23
 - 3. Speck and Plank
 - 4. Choke on an insect, Swallow a camel “hump and all”
 - 5. Argue and insist about small things while ignoring or being blind to big things
- II. Woe for Cleaning Only the Outside – vs. 25-26 (Blind Pharisee)
 - A. What’s in the Heart Comes Out – Matt. 15:18-19
 - B. Pretend Purity
 - 1. Ceremonial/Outward Cleanness with no Internal Morality
 - 2. Done for Show and the Garner Praise
 - C. Plunder and Lack of Self-Control
 - 1. Violence, robbery
 - 2. Greed and covetousness
 - 3. Unrestrained selfishness – “I will do anything to get what I want.”
 - D. External Holiness Requires Internal Holiness
- III. Woe for Deceitful Appearances – vs. 27-28
 - A. Whitewashing Tombs
 - 1. Cover Up Flaws – Ezek. 13:10-16
 - 2. Avoid Defilement – especially at Passover time – Num. 6:6-7; 19:11-13; Lev. 21:1, 10-11
 - B. Beautiful Tombs Hold Decomposing Corpses
 - C. Lawlessness – Matt. 7:23; 2 Cor. 6:14
- IV. The Cure for Corrupt Inversion: Conversion – Matt. 18:3; Col. 2:11-15

Cross References

Leviticus 27:30

30 And all the tithes of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord’s. It is holy to the Lord.

Deuteronomy 14:22

22 “You shall truly tithe all the increase of your grain that the field produces year by year.

Micah 6:8

8 He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?

Proverbs 21:15

15 It is a joy for the just to do justice, But destruction will come to the workers of iniquity.

Matthew 9:13

13 But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."

Hosea 6:6

6 For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.

Galatians 5:22-23

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

Leviticus 11:4

4 Nevertheless these you shall not eat among those that chew the cud or those that have cloven hooves: the camel, because it chews the cud but does not have cloven hooves, is unclean to you;

Leviticus 11:20-23

20 'All flying insects that creep on all fours shall be an abomination to you. 21 Yet these you may eat of every flying insect that creeps on all fours: those which have jointed legs above their feet with which to leap on the earth. 22 These you may eat: the locust after its kind, the destroying locust after its kind, the cricket after its kind, and the grasshopper after its kind. 23 But all other flying insects which have four feet shall be an abomination to you.

Matthew 15:18-19

18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. 19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.

Ezekiel 13:10-16

10 "Because, indeed, because they have seduced My people, saying, 'Peace!' when there is no peace—and one builds a wall, and they plaster it with untempered mortar— 11 say to those who plaster it with untempered mortar, that it will fall. There will be flooding rain, and you, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall tear it down. 12 Surely, when the wall has fallen, will it not be said to you, 'Where is the mortar with which you plastered it?' " 13 Therefore thus says the Lord God: "I will cause a stormy wind to break forth in My fury; and there shall be a flooding rain in My anger, and great hailstones in fury to consume it. 14 So I will break down the wall you have plastered with untempered mortar, and bring it down to the ground, so that its foundation will be uncovered; it will fall, and you shall be consumed in the midst of it. Then you shall know that I am the Lord. 15 "Thus will I accomplish My wrath on the wall and on those who have plastered it with untempered mortar; and I will say to you, 'The wall is no more, nor those who plastered it, 16 that is, the prophets of Israel who prophesy concerning Jerusalem, and who see visions of peace for her when there is no peace,' " says the Lord God.

Numbers 6:6-7

6 All the days that he separates himself to the Lord he shall not go near a dead body. 7 He shall not make himself unclean even for his father or his mother, for his brother or his sister, when they die, because his separation to God is on his head.

Numbers 19:11-13

11 'He who touches the dead body of anyone shall be unclean seven days. 12 He shall purify himself with the water on the third day and on the seventh day; then he will be clean. But if he does not purify himself on the third day and on the seventh day, he will not be clean. 13 Whoever touches the body of anyone who has died, and does not purify himself, defiles the tabernacle of the Lord. That person shall be cut off from Israel. He shall be unclean, because the water of purification was not sprinkled on him; his uncleanness is still on him.

Leviticus 21:1, 10-11

21 And the Lord said to Moses, "Speak to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say to them: 'None shall defile himself for the dead among his people, ... 10 'He who is the high priest among his brethren, on whose head the anointing oil was poured and who is consecrated to wear the garments, shall not uncover his head nor tear his clothes; 11 nor shall he go near any dead body, nor defile himself for his father or his mother;

Matthew 7:23

23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

2 Corinthians 6:14

14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?

Matthew 18:3

3 and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

Colossians 2:11-15

11 In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, 14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. 15 Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

