

**Mark 12:38-44 — "Judgment Comes Upon False Teachers & Oppressors of the Weak"**

Satan's greatest ambassadors are not pimps, politicians, or power-brokers, but pastors. His priests do not peddle a different religion, but a deadly perversion of the true one. His troops do not make a full-out frontal assault, but work as agents, sneaking into the opposing army. Satan's tactics are studied, clever, predictable, effective. Therefore, we must always remain vigilant. "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:15-16a). (Tim Challies)

You are hanging over the mouth of hell by a single thread, and that thread is breaking. Only a gasp for breath, only a stopping of the heart for a single moment, and you will be in an eternal world, without God, without hope, without forgiveness. Oh, can you face it? (Charles Spurgeon)

Almost every natural man that hears of hell, flatters himself that he shall escape it. (Jonathan Edwards)

*Background to Mark 12:38-44 (parallel Matthew 23)*

- The question for us: Given Sunday (Hosanna! The JOY!), then *why* Friday (Crucify him! - the hate!)?
  - **Answer:** Monday & Tuesday
    - Monday - **clear** the Temple
    - Tuesday - all the dialogues/debates/the teachings in the Temple courts = **the claims!**
- **What made the Jewish leaders so infuriated?**
  - **JESUS WAS TEACHING TRUTH ...**
    - ✓ EXCLUSIVE WAY TO HEAVEN!
    - ✓ EXPOSING THE EVILS OF FALSE TEACHERS!
    - ✓ EXHORTING THEM TO TRUST & FOLLOW HIM!
    - ✓ EXPLAINING THE GLORY OF SCRIPTURE & HOW JESUS FULFILLS IT
    - ✓ EXCLAIMED THE HOTTEST HELL RESERVED FOR THEM!

**I. JESUS CONDEMNS FALSE TEACHERS! They'll have a greater condemnation in hell (38-40)**

- ➔ this is the *\*heartless greed\** of the scribes
- ➔ what makes God mad? Those who pervert God's Word, distort truth, propagate lies & lead others astray.

Mark 12 is parallel with Matthew 23 (Matt 23 provides much more of the scathing rebukes & the 8 Woe judgments)

**Matt 23:1-10: Jesus exposes the evils of these false teachers & why they deserve 'greater condemnation':**

1. SELF APPOINTED AUTHORITY (2) (he lacks true authority)
2. HYPOCRITICAL DEMANDS (lack integrity) (3)
3. LOVELESS & UNCARING (4) (lacks sympathy)
4. PRETENTIOUS DISPLAYS (5) (lacks authenticity)
5. PROUD & ARROGANT (6-7) (lacks humility)

**The 8 "Woe" judgments Jesus pronounces are public, scathing, truthful and, really, 'signing his own death warrant'.** A "woe" judgment is like a 'funeral lament' (e.g., you're as good as dead; divine judgment upon you)

**Matthew 23 — THE WOE JUDGMENTS — all 8 OF THEM.**

1. Matt 23.13 — Woe to those who shut up the kingdom. (they EXCLUDE people) the heart problem? = THEY DON'T LIKE THE GOSPEL (1 Thess 2.14-16)
2. Matt 23.14 — The religious leaders steal from the vulnerable. (Greedy) the heart problem? THEY ARE GREEDY (Jude 16)
3. Matt 23.15 — The religious leaders led their converts on the wrong path. (they are guilty of SUBVERSION) the heart problem? THEY ARE SELF-MADE GODS: WANTING TO MAKE CONVERTS TO THEIR SECT — NOT GODS
4. Matt 23.16-22 — The religious leaders made false and deceptive oaths. (they PERVERT the Truth) the heart problem? THEY ARE WILLING TO LIE TO GET WHAT THEY WANT. (trying to justify it)
5. Matt 23.23-24 — The religious leaders are obsessed with trivialities, and ignoring the weighty matters. What does GOD want? Micah 6.8 — do justice, love kindness, walk humbly with your God.
6. Matt 23.25-26 — The religious leaders are impure both inside and out. (they care for self)
7. Matt 23.27-28 — The religious leaders have the appearance of good, but without spiritual life in the inner man. what's ironic: the very men who prided themselves that they were Lawkeepers are now condemned as LAWLESS.
8. Matt 23.29-36 — The religious leaders honor dead prophets, but murder the living prophets. The very (blind) prophets who pretend to honor the dead prophets, could see no beauty in a living Christ & wanted to kill him too!

"This doctrine is indeed awful and dreadful yet 'tis of God." (John Gerstner)

Throughout the history of redemption, the greatest threat to God's truth and God's work has been false prophets and teachers, because they propose to speak in His name. That is why the Lord's most scathing denunciations were reserved for the false teachers of Israel, who claimed to speak and act for God but were liars. His last sermon (Matt. 23) consists almost entirely of warnings about them and to them. Matthew 23 is one of the most serious passages in Scripture. Jesus here makes the word hypocrite a synonym for scribe and for Pharisee. He calls them sons of hell, blind guides, fools, robbers, self-indulgent, whitewashed tombs, full of hypocrisy and lawlessness, serpents, vipers, and persecutors and murderers of God's people. He uttered every syllable with absolute self-control but with devastating intensity. (John MacArthur)

**II. JESUS EXPOSES THEIR EVIL GREED! They steal from the poor for their own selfish gain (41-44)**  
 ➔ this is the \*heartfelt giving\* of the widow

**A. CONDEMNATION of the Leaders:**

**B. COMMENDATION of the Widow:**

O Almighty God, who pours out on all who desire it the spirit of grace and of supplication: Deliver us, when we draw near to you, from coldness of heart and wanderings of mind, that with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections we may worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. *[from the Book of Common Prayer, 16th century]*

**Psalm 8. *A Psalm of David.***

- 1 O LORD, our Lord,  
How majestic is Your name in all the earth,  
Who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens!
- 2 From the mouth of infants and nursing babes You have established strength  
Because of Your adversaries,  
To make the enemy and the revengeful cease.
- 3 When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers,  
The moon and the stars, which You have ordained;
- 4 What is man that You take thought of him,  
And the son of man that You care for him?
- 5 Yet You have made him a little lower than God,  
And You crown him with glory and majesty!
- 6 You make him to rule over the works of Your hands;  
You have put all things under his feet,
- 7 All sheep and oxen,  
And also the beasts of the field,
- 8 The birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea,  
Whatever passes through the paths of the seas.
- 9 O LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth!

**PRAISE TO JESUS CHRIST (Isaiah 53)**

You were left, despised, forsaken  
 Man of sorrows, grief unspoken  
 To the cross our sins you carried  
 Struck by God so it was finished there

Pierced alone for our transgressions  
 Crushed for our iniquities  
 We like sheep have gone astray  
 For our debt the price You paid

***Praise to Jesus Christ in Heaven  
 You in love for us were given***

***God's great mercy coming through You  
 Lamb of God who takes away our sin***

Holy God was pleased to crush You  
 As the guiltless sacrifice  
 Raised in power You give salvation  
 God's good pleasure prospers in Your hand

Final Lord of all creation  
 Heav'n and earth will sing your praises  
 Lion of Judah, Lamb of slaughter  
 Of Your worthy name we'll always sing

**CHRIST IS ALL**

I've found a treasure that can't be taken  
 Found a well that won't run dry  
 O worldly pleasure be now forsaken  
 Behold what love what life is mine  
 Could endless striving now make me righteous  
 Could all my works now grant me hope  
 Oh hallelujah the blood of Jesus  
 My only plea my only boast

***Christ is all Christ is all  
 And my song will ever be  
 Christ is all, All in all***

***And my song will ever be  
 Christ is all***

And in the trial when storms are raging  
 Though tears may fall my soul will rise  
 For there's a peace that is mine unchanging  
 There is a joy that never dies  
 When life is passing and strength is fading  
 I'll see the One that I adore  
 Let this world vanish oh give me Jesus  
 My great desire my true reward

**I STAND AMAZED (MY SAVIOR'S LOVE FOR ME)**

I stand amazed in the presence  
 Of Jesus the Nazarene,  
 And wonder how he could love me,  
 A sinner, condemned, unclean.

***How marvelous! How wonderful!  
 And my song shall ever be;  
 How marvelous! How wonderful!  
 Is my Savior's love for me!***

He took my sins and my sorrows,  
 He made them his very own;  
 He bore the burden to Calv'ry,  
 And suffered and died alone.

When with the ransomed in glory  
 His face I at last shall see,  
 'Twill be my joy through the ages  
 To sing of his love for me.