

- I) V1-12 INTRO: Then Jesus spoke to the *multitudes* and His *disciples*
- II) MT 23 CONTAINS JESUS' LAST PUBLIC SERMON
- III) FACT: It is not about *salvation, resurrection, or even principles for kingdom living*
  - a) RATHER: It is a sober warning concerning *false teachers*
- IV) V1 INFORMS US: That Jesus is speaking to the *multitudes and His disciples*
  - a) This reveals His concern for both the saved as well as the unsaved
- V) FALSE TEACHERS: Turn people away from God
  - a) They teach things that are not true, and thus contradict what *is true*
- VI) AN EXAMPLE: Of this is how many say that Muslims worship the same God as us
  - a) This is simply not true: Allah is not God the Father
    - 1) "Say He is God, the One and Only God, the, Eternal, Absolute. He begets not, nor is He begotten. And there is none like unto Him!" Qur'an [112:1-4]
- VII) OBVIOUSLY: This contradicts what the bible teaches concerning Jesus
  - a) Jn 1:14 Jn 1:14 The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.
- VIII) GENUINE TEACHING: Is eternally important and should be understood as such
  - a) Your eternity actually rests on what you believe concerning Jesus
    - 1) Gal 1:8-9 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, *let him be accursed*. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, *let him be accursed*.
- IX) FALSE TEACHERS: Can render genuine disciples ineffective in their service to God
  - a) They do this by giving them an incorrect understanding of God and His ways
    - 1) They do this by elevating their own opinions above God's declarations
- X) BELIEVING AND SHARING ERROR: Actually results in a loss of rewards
  - a) Many Christians are unaware of this

1) 1 Co 3:11-15 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

I) CHRISTIANS: Are to be aware of how false teachers effect us, and avoid their teachings

a) Ro 16:17-18 I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them. For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people.

b) 2 Jn 8 Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for, but *that* we may receive a full reward.

II) I WILL: Develop this further as we continue in our study

III) JESUS: Is speaking to the multitudes and to His disciples

a) As He does so, He begins to speak concerning Israel's religious leaders

IV) NOTICE: As He speaks he declares that they are *insincere, unloving, and prideful*

V) IN THE: First *seven* verses, I have isolated *five characteristics of false teachers*  
THEN: In the *following five* verses, I have isolated *five characteristics of true teachers*

VI) FALSE TEACHERS: Were not a new phenomena in the history of Israel

a) Throughout scripture God spoke concerning them

VII) ONE EXAMPLE: Of this is found in the book of Jeremiah

VIII) JEREMIAH: Was a prophet who ministered from 627-580 BC

a) He was sent by the Lord to warn the nation concerning concerning false prophets

1) Jer 23:14 Among the prophets of *Jerusalem* I have seen something horrible: They *commit adultery and live a lie*. They strengthen the hands of evildoers, so that *no one turns from his wickedness*. They are all like Sodom to me; the people of Jerusalem are like Gomorrah

2) Jer 23:16 This is what the LORD Almighty says: Do not listen to what the prophets are prophesying to you; *they fill you with false hopes*. They speak visions from *their own minds*, not from the mouth of the LORD.

IX) **OBVIOUSLY:** *In our day*, false teachers continue to exist

a) 2 Pe 2:1-3 But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them--bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.

1) This passage gives us insight into the characteristics of *False* and *True* Teachers

I) **V1 THE DIALOGUE:** Between Jesus and the Pharisees has now ended (22:46)

II) **AT THIS POINT:** Jesus gives a stinging rebuke and clear warning to them  
**HE BEGINS:** By speaking directly to the multitudes, as well as His disciples

III) **THIS TAKES PLACE:** In the Temple courts

a) Mk 12:35 While Jesus *was teaching* in the temple courts

b) Mk 12:38 *As He taught*, Jesus said, *Watch out* for the teachers of the law.

IV) **SETTING:** People have heard Him speaking, and have gathered around Him

V) **REMEMBER:** Jesus is very popular with them at this point (Mk 12:37)

VI) **AS THEY:** Are around Him, Jesus begins to warn them concerning false teachers

VII) **HE BEGINS:** By exposing the deception and hypocrisy the Scribes and Pharisees

VIII) **V1 NOTICE HE BEGINS BY SAYING:** The scribes and the Pharisees *sit in Moses' seat*

IX) **FIRST:** Who were these people?

a) **SCRIBES:** Legal experts who were responsible for copying the Law and preserving it, as well as teaching and interpreting it: They were the *primary spiritual leaders* in Israel

b) **PHARISEES:** Were like a religious denomination: Numbering around 6,000:

Many Pharisees were also Scribes, and were authorities in Jewish law, both Scriptural and Traditional: They were the dominant religious group in Israel

- X) NOTICE, JESUS SAID: Scribes and Pharisees sit in *Moses' seat*
  - a) This is the First characteristic of a false teacher: *Self-appointed authority*
  
- XI) IT IS BELIEVED: Every synagogue in Israel would have a special chair, *Moses' seat*
  - a) The most respected scribe in the community would sit in this chair
  
- XII) THE POINT: To *sit in this seat* was to wield spiritual authority
  
- XIII) AS A GROUP: The scribes and Pharisees were seen as occupying *the place of authority*
  - a) They taught the people concerning the Law of God, as revealed by Moses
  
- XIV) THE PROBLEM WAS: They were *not appointed* to this position by God
  - a) They had taken the position *for themselves*, because they liked having *power*
  
- XV) THE WORD *SIT*: Literally, can be translated *Have seated themselves*
  - I) FACT: True biblical authority is not the result of a selfish desire for *position*
    - a) Biblical authority is not to be sought after in a prideful self serving manner
  
  - II) SPIRITUAL POSITION: Comes from God
    - a) Ps 75:6-7 For exaltation comes neither from the east Nor from the west nor from the south. But God is the Judge: He puts down one, And exalts another.
    - b) Jn 15:16 You have not chosen me, *but I have chosen you*, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain:
    - c) Eph 4:11-12 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up
  
  - III) JESUS' AUTHORITY: Was from His Father and was recognized by those who heard Him
    - a) Mt 7:28-29 When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority and not as their teachers of the law
    - b) Jn 14:10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak to you I speak not of myself: but the Father who dwells in me, He does the works.

- IV) **AUTHORITY:** Is given by the Lord, and recognized by elders and a congregation
  - a) Spiritual authority comes through a spiritual channel
    - 1) 2 Ti 1:6 Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of *my hands*.
    - 2) 1 Ti 4:14 Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you.
  
- V) **THOUGH:** They have set themselves as spiritual leaders, their teachings should be heard
  
- VI) **V3 JESUS SAYS:** Insofar as they correctly taught the Law, they were to be followed
  
- VII) **V3 SECOND:** They demand from others that which they will not do themselves
  
- VIII) **JESUS SAID:** Whatever they tell you to observe, that observe
  - a) In other words: Whatever conforms to Scripture, obey
  
- IX) **IN PRACTICE:** They will tell you what to do, but won't do it themselves
  - a) Ro 2:21-23 You, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? You who say that people should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who brag about the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law?
    - b) Jas 1:22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. *Do what it says*
  
- I) **V4 THIRD:** False teachers have no love: no compassion for the hurting
  
- II) **NOTICE:** They *bind heavy burdens*, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders
  - a) They overload you, like you were camels, donkeys, or any other beasts of burden
  
- III) **THEIR TEACHINGS DO NOT SET YOU FREE:** They only enslave you to legalism
  - a) Because they are not free themselves, they cannot set you free, either
  
- IV) **FACT:** Their teachings only produce fatigue from effort to become acceptable
  - a) Heavy condemnation ministries, producing bondage (Church of Christ)

1) Col. 2:20-22 Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: "Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!"? These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings.

V) IN THIS: They reveal that they have no love for people, because they ensnare them

VI) GRACE SETS YOU FREE: Because it releases you from the burden of perfection

a) Grace teaches us to trust in God, and not in our own efforts

1) Mt 11:28-30 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and *you will find rest* for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

VII) V5 FOURTH: False teachers desire *attention from people*, not honor from God

a) AS A RESULT: All their religion is *on the outside*, not from the inside

1) They pray, fast and give so others will admire them

VIII) FOR THEM RELIGION IS A SHOW: Because they desire to be admired by men

a) Phylacteries: Small leather cases, boxes, or capsules containing scriptures

1) Before eyes, left arm (closest to their hearts) to remind them of God's law

2) They were widening the straps, making them easier to be seen!

IX) THEY: Enlarged the border of their garments

a) Jewish men had tassels on the corners of his garments

1) Nu 15:38-40 "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: `Throughout the generations to come you are to make tassels on the corners of your garments, with a blue cord on each tassel. You will have these tassels to look at and so you will remember all the commands of the LORD, that you may obey them and not prostitute yourselves by going after the lusts of your own hearts and eyes. Then you will remember to obey all my commands and will be consecrated to your God.

I) V6-7 FIFTH: False teachers do not have humility

a) They loved places of honor at banquets, and would fight for the seat next to the host

1) Lu 14:7-11 So He told a parable to those who were invited, when He noted how they chose the best places, saying to them: When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place, lest one more honorable than you be invited by him; and he who invited you and him come and say to you, 'Give place

to this man,' and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, 'Friend, go up higher.' Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

II) **FACT:** They prized the chief seats in the synagogues: Front seats, so they could be seen

III) **ALSO:** They loved the public attention they would receive: Rabbi, Rabbi

a) Rabbi: Supreme one, eminent one, most knowledgeable one, great one!  
Doctor!

IV) **V8-12 WHAT ARE TRUE SPIRITUAL LEADERS LIKE?** Five characteristics

V) **V8 BUT YOU:** Do not be called Rabbi for One is your teacher

VI) **KEY:** It is not that a teacher should not be recognized, or esteemed for being faithful

VII) **KEY:** Honor is commanded to be given to the one that deserves such honor

a) 1 Th 5:12-13 Now we ask you, brothers, to *respect* those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other.

b) 1 Ti 5:17 The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.

c) Phil 2:29-30 Welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honour men like him, because he almost died for the work of Christ, risking his life to make up for the help you could not give me.

VIII) **THE SAD FACT IS:** Often genuine shepherds are not regarded and false ones are

a) 2 Co 12:11 I have made a fool of myself, but you drove me to it. I ought to have been commended by you, for I am not in the least inferior to the "super-apostles", even though I am nothing.

b) 2 Co 12:15 I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved.

IX) **THE THOUGHT IS:** Do not yearn for rank or special recognition over others

a) True shepherds do not seek elevated titles, but are simply servants of Jesus

- I) **GENUINE TEACHERS:** Are respected but do not seek to be the center of attention
  - a) 1 Co 3:5 What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe--as the Lord has assigned to each his task.
- II) **V8 ONE IS:** Your teacher the Christ and you are all brethren
- III) **SECOND:** Jesus is their primary teacher, not some great Rabbi or religious tradition
  - a) Do not fall into the trap of following after man's traditions, which result in divisions!
- IV) **THERE:** Are no super Christians who are spiritually superior and above others
  - a) We are brothers and sisters, and this causes us to love and respect one another
    - 1) Eph 5:21 Submit *to one another* out of reverence for Christ.
- V) **V9 DO NOT:** Call *anyone on earth* your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven
  - a) The scribes were regarded as spiritual fathers, and loved having such a title
    - 1) They grew to pride themselves on such relationships, demeaning the people
- VI) **THIRD:** They answer to God, first and do not place man's authority over God's Word
  - a) Do not elevate any man or woman to a higher spiritual station
    - 1) This will cause you to neglect your own responsibilities before God
    - 2) God is the One you look to for this, not some great teacher or system of Theology
- VII) **V10 DO NOT:** Be called teachers for One is your Teacher, the Christ
- VIII) **FOURTH:** True teachers are not elevated above the church but are members of it
- IX) **FACT:** Genuine teachers do not strive for preeminence and recognition
  - a) Phil. 2:3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.
- X) **V11-12 BUT:** He who is greatest among you shall be your servant and whoever exalts

**XI) FIFTH: Godly leaders not only avoid exalted titles, but they actually seek lowly service**

**a) The story is told of two brothers who grew up on a farm. One went away to college, earned a law degree, and became a partner in a prominent law firm in the state capital. The other brother stayed on the family farm. One day the lawyer came and visited his brother, the farmer. He asked, "Why don't you go out and make a name for yourself and hold your head up high in the world like me?" The brother pointed and said, "See that field of wheat over there? Look closely. Only the empty heads stand up. Those that are well filled always bow low."**