

The Weightier Matters

Matthew 23:23 – 24:3

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~ Some of us are still smoldering at three hundred sixty-five degrees from Jesus burning down our house in our last report from our Spiritual Safari. If the fire department was called it's already too late; because this fire is out of control - out of our control, at least. If you come out the other side of this fiery and audacious report, you will believe in the Lord Jesus Christ of the Bible, my beloved – I promise you that. If you do not make it through reading this entire report you will either believe in the liberal Jesus – or nothing at all. There is no record of the liberal Jesus Who never judges nor says an unkind word, though; so, if you believe in that one then you're just wasting your time here. If you love, trust and follow the Lord Jesus Christ of the Bible – prepare to burn for a few reading minutes!

Woe, woe, woe was our last report as the Lord Jesus Christ of the Bible denounced the religious rulers of the nation Israel with blistering sarcastic indignation and reduced them to insignificance; that is, the Pharisees and the Sadducees. We came across the harshest language that we will see in the entire Word of God – and they came straight from Jesus lips. No Old Testament prophet denounced sin as brutally as the Lord Jesus does in this section of Scripture. My opinion is that the liberal religious man has never even read this chapter and has no idea it is in the Bible. There is a HUGE misunderstanding in the church about Who the Lord Jesus Christ really is today. The liberal has given us the impression that Jesus is a love child; and they say all He ever talked about was love. Only those who are abjectly Biblically illiterate would see Him that way.

A banner at the Berkeley protests so long ago read, "Jesus – Yes; Church – No!" The church is misunderstood because the church gives the world the wrong impression of the Lord Jesus Christ! Our modern-day church has completely lost sight of Who Jesus is – so they can't introduce the world to Him! The Lord Jesus Christ isn't some sentimental fool, friends; He is as offensive and repulsive to most people as He ever was – probably more so today than ever. Yes, He loves sinners and He died for sinners, but friends,

He is going to judge that sinner! If you don't have the correct perspective, things will not be well with you in the Day of Judgment. God and His Son are so WILDLY misunderstood today that the average perception of God by professing believers is not even remotely Biblically based.

There is no record of any Jesus that was not virgin born, for example. There is no record of any Jesus that did not perform miracles. There is no record of any Jesus that didn't die on the cross, get buried and raised again, rising bodily from the grave. That religious person the liberal calls Jesus never lived and never will. When people call Jesus a myth, that is the Jesus they are talking about – the mythical, liberal Jesus. The documents we are examining are genuine and we can trust them as authoritative - and as the Word of God – and they teach the correct, complete and true Jesus Christ, the Son of God! The only Jesus that ever lived is completely unknown to most who say they know Him. The popular, liberal Jesus is as made up in the imagination of man as Peter Pan, Tinkerbell and the rest of the cartoon world. I have no problems when the world says Jesus is a myth. They're usually shocked when I say I think that Jesus is a myth, too; because I know which Jesus they are talking about. They don't. Not everyone can receive what we are saying today....

XXIII

23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

~ These Pharisees had the unmitigated audacity to bring condiments as tithes, friends. Let that sink in. I used to grow all types of things and I can not imagine cutting off a little patch of mint – or whatever – and offering that as a tithe. To me, that is insulting to God, and I think He just might kill some people who do that, honestly. The Pharisee was strict about taking a tenth of his little herb garden to the temple – which amounted to nothing; because they also had their tradition that used tithing as an excuse to not support their parents, you may recall. Either way, the Pharisee ignored the weightier matters of the Lord Jesus Christ! They ignored the weightier

matters because those things would have brought them to repentance. That would mean they were going to the cross with Him and THAT is what they were not willing to do! Well, going to die on the cross is no laughing matter....

24 Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

~ The cross isn't funny, but I would have laughed out loud if I were there when the Lord Jesus said this. The scribes and the Pharisees weren't laughing. I think there were many who were laughing because most of them knew these religious rulers by name but had never thought about it like THAT! We have so many people who make so much of the little things; but let the things that matter to God go unattended. They have many huge problems in their life. Some of these lovey-dovey Christians have the meanest tongue around. Their insults come under the guise of love. Whatever they do isn't so bad, but the things YOU do – well, you'll always be wrong in substance, method – or both. Just desire some little earthly thing – and they'll call YOU a Pharisee so fast it will make your head swim.

The Pharisee always tries to identify you with them unwittingly. They have NO IDEA of the self-psychological implications of their self-assessment made in their own WORDS! You would think a statement, such as I just made, would make someone take note....but it doesn't! The Pharisee didn't seem to realize they had black paint on the end of that tongue. They are forever painting it black – you know – black as night, black as coal; always smudging the character of another while also blotting the sun out from their own sky! It's amazing how succinct the Lord Jesus is with His words and it's frightening how REAL they apply to our life today. Well, maybe not for YOUR life – but in my life for sure! I don't know about you, but I enjoyed stopping in this very humorous section of Scripture for a moment....

25 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

~ I would say this is an accurate picture of the average church today. They are building the biggest, most beautiful structures I have ever seen. What

goes on inside is a spiritual horror show as crowds lick up the residue from the rotting corpses of dead flocks. They're all a bunch of buzzards eating each other, and you will get bit hard! They go through the ceremony of pure pageantry; they have the best musical equipment and instruments. Everything looks right as they speak so piously and sweetly. As long as you're talking about trivial matters all is well; but they do not deal with SIN on the inside there! They shut that talk out and they will shut YOU out, too, if you speak of the weightier matters! So, they have it all cleaned up except for the inside and that is the entire problem. They won't even MENTION that dirty word "sin" because they have no intention of cleaning it up in their lives....

26 Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter that the outside of them may be clean also.

27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.

28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

29 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,

30 And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

31 Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.

32 Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.

~ This is where Jesus levels the shotgun with both barrels and pulls the trigger on the most frightful statement I can find in the Word of God. Even in Revelation chapter eight I don't tremble as I do at this passage we just read. We first saw the picture of the cup cleaned up on the outside - and

that speaks of the church; but THIS is a picture of the average professing church member who has no earthly idea Who Jesus really is. They have a form of godliness but they deny the power thereof. Our churches are saturated with them. They just don't and won't talk about taking a sinner and regenerating them by the Gospel of Christ. They will agree to try ANY other way except that! Well, until this happens – your church membership is denied or null and void! You are nothing in the world but a hypocrite! The typical method for getting church members is to round up a bunch of nice people that have some tithe money and it is the biggest scam on the face of this earth.

I estimate that a full seventy percent of the world's population is the member of some type of church-themed organization; maybe more. 99.666% of them are accepting of drinking alcohol, using profanity, accepting homosexuality and innuendo that would make an ancient Roman hooker blush. They're living the exact same way the world is living because there is no difference between them! They just go to different functions – some go to the movies, and some go to a church for their entertainment. We have a whole lot of white-washed sepulchre church members walking around today with nothing but dead bones rattling around in there. It's no wonder zombie and vampire movies are so popular today because that's what the world really is! When Jesus says they are dead in their trespasses and sins that is some strong language. Jesus has just denounced the religious rulers and rightfully so.

The church is completely astray today; so, if you have a Bible believing teacher or church in your community you better thank God for them. You better be thankful when they rebuke, exhort and admonish you in the Word of God. Most importantly, you should support them with every available resource. If you know someone that is trying to teach this book – the Word of God – properly, completely and correctly – for Christ's sake, people – stand with him – or her. You two need each other; and we need people who will actually STAND for the sound doctrine of the apostles in the Word of God. Every great theologian and preacher or teacher was denounced in their day; Spurgeon, Moody and R.A. Torrey – all denounced – and just look at the quotations that live on from all of them. God knows human nature and it hasn't changed one bit....

33 Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

~ If that doesn't blanch your soul then you are absolutely spiritually dead! Those who think Jesus would never hurt anyone's feelings or swat a fly; well, Jesus has just dealt the death blow to the universal brotherhood of mankind and the universal father of God. No sailor in the world could make a stronger statement than that. Those who claim the universal fatherhood of God: it's time to realize God does not claim YOU! You are as dead as it gets and Christ wants you to come to Him as the sinner you are. If you reject Him then He will reject you. There is only one way to come to Jesus...."as many as have received Him gave He them the right to become sons of God..." – all you have to do is BELIEVE! Now, don't blame me for this report because I AM nice and sweet but Jesus, apparently, isn't. I'm just repeating what He says and I can't give it to you any stronger than this – or I would amp it up. I know this medicine is just too strong for the liberal-minded man today....

34 Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city:

35 That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

~ Between verses thirty-four and thirty-five Jesus starts at the beginning and brings it all the way down to an incident we don't know anything about: the Pharisees had recently murdered someone between the temple and the altar. This idea that everyone will ultimately be saved is pure garbage - and the Jesus of the Bible also says, "Not so!" So, as we move on, finally – Jesus looks forward to the destruction of the temple in 70 AD. The same Jesus that has pronounced these terrible woes is now on the verge of tears. Jerusalem has rejected Him so Jesus - although He loved them – has denounced them because judgment now must come. If we're honest, Jesus is the only Man that can preach on hell. If you're not indwelled and

compelled by the Lord Jesus Himself to preach on hell your best bet is to keep your mouth shut completely. Remember, many thought Jesus was Jeremiah – because Jeremiah was the weeping prophet. I think we should be very careful of any commentary unless we are being carried away in the Holy Spirit of God. If we're not sure, it would be best to remain silent....

36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

XXIV

1 And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.

~ This chapter begins the Olivet Discourse. We're going to deal with this doctrinal division entirely, objectively and Scripturally on this safari. The inhabitants of the city of Jerusalem – the Pharisees – the Sadducees – the scribes and the political leaders, the Herodians, not to mention the apostles – are all in a state of shock at this very moment. Most are realizing they don't even know this man named Jesus. Everything is taking a very strange turn for the disciples at the moment. They thought the Kingdom was going to be established and that Jerusalem would be the capital city. They are just now becoming dimly aware of that certain unease in the air in which their houses might be left unto them desolate, too. I think they may have had a very bad feeling in their stomachs at this moment. I know I do.

Well, between now and the cross the apostles will have a few questions other than who is going to be first in the Kingdom. We went ahead and

read the first three verses of the Olivet Discourse; but we will back up and give it a proper introduction in our next report. Honestly, I just couldn't end this report with that much hell fire – it's too much for me, and it's too much for you, too. Jesus now departs from the temple. He had just told them that this temple, which was already some forty-five years under construction, would be destroyed. Of course, it was destroyed in seventy AD by Titus the Roman. The disciples looked over Jesus shoulder at all those elaborate buildings and they thought - and probably rightly so - that He might be losing His Mind! None of it was desolate right now. The disciples could see it all with their own eyes - so they asked Jesus if He saw it!

Well, do you see your city, your town, your neighborhood, your street, your house – as God sees it? We cannot see the judgment that's coming as we pick out socks at the mall and come home to put away the groceries. Judgment is coming upon all of this stuff you can see. Our cultural centers and our attraction, national monuments and parks, schools and universities, skyscrapers and megalopolises – it's all going away real quickly. It's all coming down – every stone and girder will be on and in the ground. Now, the disciples were certainly in shock from the first statement - but when Jesus sees that shock He decides to just go ahead and traumatize them acutely. These men are really in a very bad way right now emotionally and, probably, physically....

2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

3 And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, (1) Tell us, when shall these things be? and (2) what shall be the sign of thy coming, (3) and of the end of the world?

~ The apostles have three specific questions for Jesus, and they are going to get three definite answers. The Olivet Discourse is another section of Scripture that the modern-day religious fanatic, cult and ism all seize on some verse of and distort it for some personal gain. The Lord Jesus is NOT talking about everything under the sun here, friends – this is very, very specific to what the disciples just asked Him in verse three. Jesus isn't

talking about the church, either - because the church isn't in existence at this time we are studying. Jesus is answering three specific questions: (1) when shall these things be? That is, when will the time come when one stone shall not be left upon the other? (2) what shall be the sign of Thy coming? (3) what is the end of the age? We know the world is without end, but this modern age IS going to end quickly. Well, these are the three questions we will deal with in the next report - and no other questions; but the Lord Jesus will, ultimately, answer ALL of our questions on this Spiritual Safari ~

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