

## Mathew 23:1-39

### Hypocrisy

There's a popular concept today of Jesus -- that is not the biblical Jesus.

A)It is the Jesus the Great Reformer. – **A COOL GUY**

B)The guy who smiles at everything and would embrace any belief system and any practice at all and go, "Oh, well, it doesn't matter because I'm Jesus and everything's cool."

C)The mild, meek reformer who lets anybody do whatever they want to because Jesus is all about love! – Oprah and many others

**That is NOT JESUS / NOT LOVE!!! – Any parent knows that! You discipline your kids because YOU LOVE THEM!!**

A)I am sure like me – you have had one of your kids say – after you disciplined them – **YOU DON'T LOVE ME.**

B)The Opposite is true- You disciplined them because you loved them.

C)Here in Matthew 23 we see Jesus- Love Incarnate saying some of the harshest words he ever uttered ABOUT the religious leaders.

1)He is CALLING THEM ON THE CARPET for their HYPOCRISY!

D)He pulls no punches – His words are harsh- but not hateful.

1)BUT He will refer to them as Hypocrites several times, as well fools, white washed tombs  
2)**blind leaders and even murderers**

E)He couldn't be any more DIRECT IN HIS APPROACH

1)There is no need for – a Tell us how you REALLY FEEL JESUS!

F)Everyone was hearing it LOUD AND CLEAR

But at the end of this just in case there was any confusion about his motives we see His heart: Look at v. 37 37 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children

together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!

A)This is not a hateful heart – but a heart that is hurting –

B)The heart of a parent who time and time again has tried to REEL in their prodigal –

C)Your heart aches for them because in all your warnings – in all your displays of TOUGH LOVE  
1)Your motive is love and RESCUE – and they just continue to be rebellious and resistant

D)You finally have to let them go –or kick them out – because you know that until they reach their pig pen

1)They are never going to come to their senses and wake up.

E)That is the heart of Jesus as he speaks to the multitudes about these religious leaders.

F)In this presentation – Jesus is going to give us 12 different characteristics of HYPOCRISY!

**Hypocrisy means to wear a Mask – ACTING**

A)You pretend to be one thing on the outside when in reality you are something completely different on the INSIDE or in Reality

B)This is important for us to see – Unbelievers often say: I don't want to join a Church the church is full of HYPOCRITES

C)I don't think that is an accurate statement – Because Hypocrisy denotes and on going – Habitual life style

1)I don't think the church is FULL of people like that – there are some for sure – but NOT FULL – NOT THE NORM

D)However – I do think there is a tendency at times for every single one of us to play the Hypocrite – to be Hypocritical in our outlook or response

E)And it is important for us to see these characteristics and how offensive THEY ARE to Jesus!

Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, The context of "THEN" is after Chapter 22

– recall – a series of inspections – confrontations with all the religious groups {Sanhedrin – Pharisees/ Herodians – Sadducees – finally a Scribe.

Jesus has effectively silenced every one of them in their attempts to trip him up.

**So after the final confrontation – Jesus turns to the multitudes and his disciples – but the religious leaders are still present – JESUS SAYS V. 2**

“The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. 3 Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, **that observe and do**, **but** do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do.

### **12 Characteristics of Hypocrisy**

#1 A Hypocrite is someone who says it should be one way but they don’t live that way themselves.

A)The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses seat: - Moses seat was the seat of authority – MASTERS OF THE LAW

**B)Jesus says: What they are teaching you is true-follow their teaching/the teaching is not the problem.**

1)The problem is NOT their teaching/ it is THEIR LIVING

**C)They don’t live what they teach!**

1)So follow their teaching / but not their EXAMPLE.

It was said of one particular preacher: When he was in the pulpit he preached so well –no one wanted him to come out of the pulpit –

but when he was out of the pulpit he lived so wrong that people no longer wanted him to get into the pulpit.

D)These religious leaders had the same problem.

1)So Jesus says – pay attention to their teachings but not their living!

### **Integrity is the opposite of Hypocrisy!**

A)We live in a culture that celebrates talent more than integrity, but we’ve got it backward.

B)Talent depreciates over time, just like our bodies.

1) Our physical strength and appearance diminish.

C)We may even lose our minds. But we never have to lose our integrity.

1)Integrity appreciates over time - over eternity!

### **Take for example Bobby Jones**

A)Bobby Jones is one of the greatest golfers in history and was the first player to win four majors in one year.

B)But Jones was an even better person.

**He won thirteen majors before retirement at the age of twenty-eight, but it’s the one he lost that set him apart.**

A)See it happened when Jones took a one-shot penalty at the 1925 US Open, even though no one else saw him touch his ball with his club.

B)In fact - Jones wasn’t altogether certain he had touched the ball,

1)and rules officials encouraged him not to take the penalty, but Jones took the penalty just in case.

C)Jones lost the tournament by one stroke, but he kept his integrity intact.

**You see to Bobby Jones Winning the US Open wasn’t worth a one-stroke penalty on his integrity.**

A)When tournament officials complimented him for his choice, Jones said,

You might as well praise me for not breaking into banks. There is only one way to play this game.”

B)Mark Batterson put it this way: You aren’t defined by who you are when everyone is looking. You are defined by what no one sees, save the All-Seeing Eye. That’s who you really are.

C)Your integrity is your legacy. Your integrity is your destiny.”

**1)The religious leaders in Israel didn’t get it**

4 For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

### **#2 They Complicate instead of Simplify.**

A)Many examples but- A Classic example was concerning the Sabbath – GOD’S TOP 10 – keep the Sabbath – day of REST –

B) A day to be rejuvenated physically and spiritually

C) If you were to go through the OT law and find out how much the OT says about keeping the Sabbath,

1) you'd find a few paragraphs total, that's it,

D) a few paragraphs about what the Sabbath means and what you don't do and what you should do on the Sabbath.

**But they took that simple command and wrote volumes upon volumes of what it meant to break the Sabbath – They complicated it**

A) And most of them they didn't follow themselves. – Jesus called them out on several occasions

B) That is what religion does – it complicates – LISTEN – this was never meant to be about Religion – ALWAYS ABOUT RELATIONSHIP

1) Relationships – contrary to many opinions – are not meant to be complicated

**C) Relationships are built on the simplicity of Love, Respect and trust**

1) And relationships built on love, respect and trust are going to FOSTER – FREEDOM

D) BUT religion is built on rules, regulations and conformity – breeds LEGALISM

**Legalism wants to put burdens and restrictions on others –**

A) Legalism takes ONE person's convictions and puts them on everyone – why? MISERY LOVES COMPANY

B) If I can't do that – neither can you – If I can't go there – no one else should go there. Watch that – no one should watch that!

1) If I am miserable everyone else is going to be miserable too!

**C) That was the mindset of these religious leaders – but even they didn't consistently follow their own CONVICTIONS**

JESUS CONTINUES

5 But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments.

**#3 Hypocrites do their works to be seen by men V.5**

A) They love to be seen by men!

**B) Jewish men would wear a little wooden box covered in leather called phylacteries - On their heads – contained the Shemah**

1) Important scriptures – they wore them on their heads because God said he wanted His word to always be on their minds.

C) Bible sticker on your forehead – Not what he meant

1) He wants his word so hidden in our hearts – that it is always on our minds helping to guide us each day

D) They took this to the extreme: the Bigger the phylacteries- the more spiritual you were.

**They also wore Blue Tassles on their garments – reminder that heaven was their destiny – this world was not their home.**

A) The religious leaders would Enlarge their tassles – appear more spiritual

B) Today: Christians who carry giant bibles not because they can't see the letters but as a sign of their spirituality.

1) A Pastor was doing a house visit – family – they happened to have a big family Bible –

C) Sitting down for coffee – the mother said to her little girl – go get that big book that momma loves so much!

1) **The Little girl came back with the JC Penny Catalog**

**More prevalent today: Hyper spiritual lingo – The Christian who can't have a normal conversation without quoting a Bible verse every few minutes**

A) Or the person who ends each sentence with a thank the Lord – praise Jesus

B) I personally find that annoying – Who are you trying to impress

C) Jesus didn't talk like that – why do you?

1) You wonder why most of the people around you think you are weird

### **Hypocrite does what they do to be seen and heard by men**

A) Jesus taught in Sermon on the Mount – When you pray..... marketplace – seen by men – When you fast – shower shave new clothes – seen by men

B) When you give – don't sound the trumpets – seen by men – rather don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing!

6 They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, 7 greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.'

### **#4 Hypocrites love titles! V.6-7**

A) They love the seats of prominence – they love to be called – Rabbi – teacher.

B) People introduce themselves as I am Dr. so and So – Which I am fine with – someone – doing heart surgery or taking out your appendix

C) Pastors get introduced as the Most Holy Reverend So and so

D) Sometimes people will call me Reverend Salvato – I gently correct them /Rob is fine I am not a Reverend-

1) really I thought you were a Pastor- I am

E) but in Scripture – Only God gets called – Reverend –

1) So you can call me Rob – Fine! – I call people in the body – This is Rob Salvato, they say, "who?" – Pastor Rob

### **The Hypocrite loves titles and to be seen as important.**

A) Sit here – best place for you.

B) Term Minister in the Bible – Under-rower –

1) Paul referred to himself as a Slave – proper picture

C) Jesus continues

8 But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. 9 Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. 10 And do not be called

teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. 11 But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. 12 And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

### **#5 Hypocrites love control V.8-12**

A) Jesus says don't call anyone on earth your father! – not talking biological Or even spiritual –

B) Paul viewed himself as a spiritual father to the believers in Corinth

1) You have many instructors but only one father

C) That is not what Jesus is talking about - Jesus is addressing the tendency of some to LORD – authority over others – **My father / My teacher**

1) Shepherding movement in some churches – who you marry has to be approved by the leaders of the Church –

D) We require premarital counseling – NEVER to determine whether a couple should or should not get married –

1) But to prepare them for MARRIAGE

E) OR if you wanted to purchase a car or house – or even change Jobs all of that would have to be approved by your spiritual leaders

1) RIDICULOUS

Jesus is telling us – Hypocrites love control but true spiritual leaders humbly SERVE!

**AT THIS POINT: Jesus is going to pronounce a series of woes on these religious leaders –**

**Warnings – WAKE UP – see the problems**

13 "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.

### **#6 There is no redemption in their message V.13**

A) You shut up the kingdom of heaven!

B) The message of legalism and performance keeps people out of heaven

C) That message focuses on what we need to do in order to draw near to God instead of realizing what God did to DRAW NEAR TO US

D) God accomplished in Jesus what we could not do for ourselves

1) Jesus paid the price – IT IS FINISHED

E) Veil Rent – OPEN HOUSE – WELCOME

14 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation.

### #7 Hypocrisy manipulates and takes advantage of others V.14

A) In that day if you as a husband were getting old – close to dying you would meet with a scribe – affairs in order – WILL OR LIVING TRUST

B) The Scribes would take a payment – a % of your WILL – but many of the scribes were taking more than they were supposed to.

1) Defrauding and ripping off widows

C) Today TV preachers who prey on poor widows emotions – compelling them to give to their ministry or cause.

D) Pastor Chuck – Where God guides – God provides

1) We don't need to beg for funds –

Sometimes ministries – If you don't give we are going under –

A) Listen if God is into something – It doesn't need to be propped up by us

B) If it needs propped up or sustained by us – just evidence that God is not in - Let it go UNDER

But there is a horrible manipulation that can go on in the church

A) If you had enough faith – God can do anything – so give – to show your faith

B) But in reality those leading the ministry don't have faith – because to manipulate – they say: If you don't give we are going under – RIDICULOUS

C) NOTE: Therefore you will receive greater condemnation.

15 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and

when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.

### #8 Hypocrisy reproduces after it's kind V.15

A) Hypocrisy breeds more hypocrisy – If you are a hypocrite – your kids are either going to rebel from the Church

B) Or they are going to have the same characteristics of hypocrisy that they see in you.

C) If you are Men or women of integrity – there is a better chance your kids will be too!~

1) They will model what they see in you!

16 “Woe to you, blind guides, who say, ‘Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obliged to perform it.’ 17 Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that sanctifies the gold?

18 And, ‘Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is obliged to perform it.’ 19 Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift? 20 Therefore he who swears by the altar, swears by it and by all things on it. 21 He who swears by the temple, swears by it and by Him who dwells in it. 22 And he who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by Him who sits on it.

### #9 Hypocrites play games with semantics V. 16-22

A) Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness—for integrity, truth, and simplicity.

B) The Pharisees weren't hungering for righteousness. They were playing games with semantics and vocabulary.

C) The Sadducees would refer to the temple as a Holy Place – but they didn't treat it that way. –

1) They were the ones who ran the scam in the temple.

Out of obedience to God's Word they refused to swear by the name of God (as commanded in Exodus 20:7)

A) Yet they constructed an elaborate system of oaths, some of which were binding and some were not.

B) It was a way of making a promise while keeping fingers crossed behind one's back.

C) In Jesus' day, if one took an oath saying, "I swear by the temple," he could be lying through his teeth, and that would be acceptable.

1) It was only when he said "I swear by the gold in the temple," that he was obligated to tell the truth. Thus, righteousness became a game.

For which is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift?

A) Here Jesus emphasized that the altar itself is greater than the sacrifice made upon it.

B) The altar is the established meeting place between God and man, and our altar is Jesus Himself and His work on the cross.

He who swears by the temple, swears by it and by Him who dwells in it:

Jesus reminded them that every oath is binding and God holds the oath-maker to account, even if they excuse themselves.

23 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. 24 Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!

#10 Hypocrites major on Minors V.23-24

They would count their little cumin seeds and anise seeds one by one to make sure they've given a tenth to the Lord.

A) Now, Jesus doesn't have an issue with that - If I might paraphrase it, Jesus would say, "Cool, I applaud your exactness

B) but in your exactness, you've left out the most important parts and that is justice and mercy and faith.

1) You should tithe in other words but don't let your weekly TITHE - be your excuse for showing mercy to someone in need or taking steps of faith .....

Then Jesus calls them Blind guides and gives an example that was meant to be sarcastic -

A) You strain out a little gnat - but you are eating a camel

B) According to Leviticus 11, the largest unclean animal was a camel. The smallest was a gnat

C) The religious leaders would go through a lot of trouble to drink with a strainer over their drinks - as to not accidentally swallow a gnat.

1) You are going through all this trouble in something small -

D) But you are openly eating a camel

The Crowd was no doubt laughing - It was meant to be funny -

A) All this effort to avoid a little thing - imagine - the process of eating a camel .

B) So concerned about the little things - failing to realize there are these glaring inconsistencies in your witness and lifestyle

25 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. 26 Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also.

27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. 28 Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

#11 Hypocrisy is preoccupied with the outside and neglects the heart V.25-28

A) Imagine a beautiful coffee mug - awesomely cool - outside - looked at the inside - dirt and spit - would you drink from it? - NO

B) WORSHIP GUY - CUP WITH CHEWING TOBACCO - MISTAKENLY DRANK FROM IT

C) Jesus is saying the outside of the cup of your lives looks great - but the inside is filthy -

1) Consequently God wants no part of you.

Then he gave another analogy: I mentioned a few weeks ago - during the feast of Passover - people coming from all over. - Spring cleaning

A) Roads - bridges - they would even whitewash the tombs - the reason was they didn't want anyone accidentally stumbling over them

B) Ceremonially unclean touching that which was connected to the dead

C) So they whitewashed them to make them  
**VISIBLE**

### **WHITEWASHED TOMBS LOOKED NICER ON THE OUTSIDE**

A) **LIKE a coffin today – Beautiful – expensive –  
but there is no life in them**

B) **Full of dead men's bones**

C) **Jesus saying – You look good on the outside but  
you are dead on the inside**

1) **Listen that is never a good thing**

29 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!  
Because you build the tombs of the prophets and  
adorn the monuments of the righteous, 30 and say, ‘If  
we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not  
have been partakers with them in the blood of the  
prophets.’

31 “Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves  
that you are sons of those who murdered the  
prophets. 32 Fill up, then, the measure of your  
fathers’ guilt. 33 Serpents, brood of vipers! How can  
you escape the condemnation of hell? 34 Therefore,  
indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes:  
some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of  
them you will scourge in your synagogues and  
persecute from city to city, 35 that on you may come  
all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the  
blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah,  
son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the  
temple and the altar. 36 Assuredly, I say to you, all  
these things will come upon this generation.

### **#12 Hypocrisy doesn't like to be confronted V.29- 36**

A) **Hypocrisy will become violent when faced with  
the truth –**

B) **You killed the prophets - - You rise up against  
those who call out your sin**

C) **They were going to crucify Jesus**

D) **He calls them a Brood of Vipers a bunch of  
snakes – Hypocrisy is venomous and poisonous**

**From the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of  
Zechariah, son of Berechiah: Jesus is  
encompassing all the righteous martyrs of the OT**

A) **Abel was clearly the first, and in the way that  
the Hebrew Bible was arranged, Zechariah was  
the last.**

B) **2 Chronicles is the last book of the Hebrew  
Bible, and Zechariah's story is found in 2  
Chronicles 24.**

1) **Abel's blood cried out (Genesis 4:10), and  
Zechariah asked that his blood be remembered  
(2 Chronicles 24:22).**

C) **Hypocrisy murders others**

### **12 Characteristics of Hypocrisy Jesus spoke so strongly about these religious leaders for two reasons.**

A) **First, He did not want others to be deceived by  
them.**

B) **Second, He loved these men.**

1) **These men were the farthest from God and they  
needed to be warned of coming judgment.**

### **C) True love WARNS**

1) **What Jesus really wanted was their repentance, not  
their judgment.**

37 “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the  
prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How  
often I wanted to gather your children together, as a  
hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were  
not willing! 38 See! Your house is left to you  
desolate; 39 for I say to you, you shall see Me no  
more till you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the  
name of the Lord!’

### **These are powerful words.**

A) **They tell us the patience of God and the  
pleading of Jesus. "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how  
often I wanted to gather you." like a hen gathers  
her children under her wings.**

B) **I wanted so to nourish and protect you**

C) **but it also tells us the power of choice. You are  
not willing.**

### **Good Proof text against Calvinism –**

A) **That believes Man doesn't have a Choice – God  
chooses who is saved and who is damned**

**B)If that is true – then these are crocodile tears and mean nothing – Jesus weeping over Jerusalem**

<sup>17</sup> And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take <sup>s</sup>the water of life freely. Revelation 22:17

**C)They were not willing and would suffer the consequences -**

**38 See! Your house is left to you desolate;**

**But there is a day coming in the future where Israel will see Jesus again – 2<sup>nd</sup> coming**

**A)They are going to recognize him as the one they rejected**

**B)Zechariah – look on him pierced – where wounds? in the house of my friends**

**C)As I read this I can't help but wonder about our nation presently**

**1)Jesus weeping saying Oh America, America – how I have wanted ..... NOT WILLING**

**Will we suffer consequences – Judgment**

**A)In some ways we already are** because according to Romans Chapter 1

**B)the first step in God judging a person or a nation is that He gives them over to what they ask for.**

**C)When they start pushing God out of their thinking -- Romans 1 –**

**1)God gives them over to a reprobate mind to do anything they want to do and defile any law they want to defile**

**D)including killing millions of innocent children / rejecting marriage all in the name of tolerance**

**There is not a lot we can do for our nation but Pray**

**A)But – Is God maybe calling to you tonight by name**

**B)Rob, Rob – oh how I have wanted .....**

**1)But you were not willing**

**C)God is not going to force his will upon us**

**1)If we resist he will let us**

**D)But if we RESPOND – HE will do great things in us and for us and with us and thru us**

**E)Whosoever wills – let him Come**