

# Verse by Verse Matthew 23:5-22

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Preacher: Pastor Wolski

[ 0 : 00 ] There's a few. The Bears won, so that's a plus. We played football. I told you we were trying to play football. A couple of us got together, and we had a good time. And the trouble, though, was the wind.

It was howling. It was hard to throw a pass, and hard to catch a pass for some. But we enjoyed ourselves. It was kind of a quick thing, but we sure had fun. Maybe we can keep that going and make it a tradition. So get in your Bibles in Matthew chapter 23, and we'll continue where we left off. Well, we'll begin at the start of the chapter and review where we left off and then continue on. Matthew chapter 23 this morning.

My mom and dad flew out Friday morning and arrived back in 32 degrees, they said, in Boise. And we just heard this morning that Pennsylvania, where we're from, got their first snow last night. And so Carla's thinking we might take the snow clothes along for the kids to sled and I don't know. All right, so Matthew 23. Let's have a word of prayer together and then we'll begin back into the text. Father, thank you for this morning. Thank you for each one that got up and came out to church this Sunday morning. Lord, we count it a privilege to be able to come together and to worship you and to open up your words and be able to read and study them. So Lord, please, Lord, just help us out here and open our eyes to the truth and feed us from your word.

[ 1 : 38 ] And Lord, help us to have the right heart, the right response to anything that's uncovered here in this book of truth. And Lord, be with the kids and let them enjoy themselves and learn something from your word as well. Be with those that couldn't be with us, those that have any health issues or traveling and things of that nature. God, just keep them safe. We pray you bring them back soon to be with us again. We pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. All right, Matthew 23. And so Christ is finished with these, I was saying, three-round knockout with these Herodians and the Sadducees and then the lawyer, the one that's called a scribe in the other gospels. And he answers all their questions and then he puts forth a question to them that they can't answer and they realize we don't, we're not even going to mess with this guy anymore in the last verse, verse 46, that no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.

So he's solidified himself in this debate format. Nobody's touching him. This young man, this man of 33 years old, is just too much for the scribes and the lawyers and they can't trip him in his words or entangle him in his talk, as the Bible says. So now he's going to go and speak to the multitude in verse 1 and to his disciples and for the first 12 verses address them, but then turn in verse 13 and go after these religious elite, these that have positions.

And this is a side of Christ that if you want to see what something he's got in him, it's in Matthew 23 he goes after him and he doesn't hold back, he doesn't pull any punches, he lets it fly.

And it's a side of Jesus Christ that you rarely hear talked about, but it's, he's a man, he's not intimidated by others, he doesn't have respect for someone who doesn't deserve it, and he's just flat out plain. He's a, it's enjoyable to read this and I don't want to exalt this side of him and pretend like he was just harsh and mean and nasty to everybody, but those who needed to hear it, he gave it to them and he spoke the truth.

[ 3 : 50 ] And if they had a problem with him, he knows who he is, he's a, he's the son of God, he's their Messiah. And anything that they say cross against him, he didn't, he didn't say, well, you just don't understand yet, or you just don't have enough faith yet.

No, he knew the heart was wrong and he went after them and he revealed it. And what he did more, more than just putting them in their place, was he's revealing their hypocrisy to the crowd, to the multitude that's following them.

So he's opening their eyes. It's not about converting the Pharisees, they're not going to bow to him, but he's going to make sure the multitude knows, you don't follow these guys either. All right, so verse number two, he says saying, he's teaching them, saying, the scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat.

And we saw last week, that's the seat of judgment. All therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do. But do you not after their works, for they say and do not.

So they're a hypocrite. And we see that through this chapter, that's his pet word for them. They bind heavy burdens and grievous to be born and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

[ 5 : 00 ] But all their works they do, for to be seen of men. Now that's a mark of a Pharisee is the works that they do, they have no spiritual quality or content to them at all from the heart.

It's to be seen of men. Even if it sounds spiritual, it's to be seen of men. It's getting up to sing a special in church, but making sure that you invite all your friends to come and hear you sing.

It's not about glorifying the Lord with your voice, it's about making sure they are here to hear you.

It's that idea, it's to be seen of men. And Christ said earlier they have their reward back in earlier in Matthew.

Look at, keep your place here obviously, but go to John chapter 12 and just get an idea of the mindset of the people. John 12.

This Pharisee, he just needs to be noticed. John chapter 12 and look at verse 42.

[ 6 : 16 ] Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also, many believed on him, but because of the Pharisees, they did not confess him. Why? Lest they should be put out of the synagogue for they love the praise of men more than the praise of God.

That's a problem. Caring about what men think, no, more than that, it's desiring for men to praise you. That's pride. And it's inside every one of us.

We love to be praised. We love to hear that we did a good job. We like people that talk nice to us and tell us how good we are. They're easy to like, aren't they? And that's a problem with these men is they love the praise of men more than the praise of God.

And these Pharisees, they need to be noticed and they get their fulfillment out of the praise they get from men. And these men, these Jews, have been taught and trained to submit, to follow, to obey, to praise the Pharisees.

Now back in Matthew 23, all their works they do for to be seen of men. And now here's a few things that they do. They make broad their phylacteries and enlarge the borders of their garments and love the uppermost rooms at the feast and the chief seats and the synagogues and greetings in the markets to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.

[ 7 : 44 ] They love the attention. They love the recognition. They love the praise and the prestige and to be exalted and lifted up. In verse 5, they have their phylacteries.

This is the only time it's mentioned in the Bible and the best sense of what this is, I'll take you to the scriptures here quickly. Look at Exodus chapter 13. I think what this is is more tradition than it is scripture.

Get Exodus 13 and get Deuteronomy 6. And I'll just show you the scriptures in the law that it seems that they're attempting to fulfill but to do it in extreme fashion.

You say, what's a phylactery? Well, Schofield has a note in his Bible here saying that passages of scripture enclosed in a small case bound upon the arm or the forehead.

And so the thought there is that they put scripture and carried it on their person. but outwardly to be seen of men. So Exodus 13 and look at verse back in verse 8.

[ 8 : 59 ] Now shall it show thy son in that day saying this is done because of that which the Lord did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt and it shall be a sign unto thee upon thine hand and for a memorial between thine eyes that the Lord's law may be in thy mouth for with a strong hand have he brought forth thee out of Egypt and thou shalt keep this ordinance and so forth.

Now come a little bit later to verse 16. It shall be for a token upon thine hand and for frontlets between thine eyes. So those are the words and I'll come to Deuteronomy.

A sign and frontlets and a memorial are the words used here in Exodus. Look at Deuteronomy 6 and this is that great commandment in verse 4 and 5 and then in verse 6 and these words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart that's most importantly and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children shall talk of them when thou sittest in thine house and when thou walkest

by the way and when thou liest down and when thou risest up and thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

And thou shalt write them upon the post of thy house and on thy gates and so forth. And so it seems that they took that literally and believed that they should have the scriptures on their person in an outwardly visible way.

And just reading up on this I have a note here that says there's no evidence that this was done until after the captivity and it doesn't mean it wasn't done or practiced but there's no evidence of it anyway and it's possibly after the captivity became a perfect time for traditions and for things like these to allow a group to be set apart above the rest and therefore the Pharisees are birthed and start to take over becoming the leaders and the spiritual leaders.

[11:00] And so in Matthew it says they make broad their phylacteries and they're not just doing it for a sign they're doing it for a show. Their Bible's bigger than yours because they must love it more.

And then in verse 5 at the end it says they enlarge the borders of their garments. Come back to Numbers 15 and see what this is all about. This is God's bearing or a place in the scripture but they take it to the next level for to be seen of men.

They enlarge the borders of their garments. Numbers 15 and we'll all the way to the end of this chapter verse 37 the Lord spake unto Moses saying speak unto the children of Israel and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribbon of blue and it shall be unto you for a fringe that ye may look upon it and remember all the commandments of the Lord and do them that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes after which ye used to go whoring that ye may remember and do all my commandments and be holy unto your God.

I am the Lord your God which brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God. I am the Lord your God. So it's supposed to be something they see with their eyes to remind them of what? of the commandments of the Lord so that they do them and they don't seek after their own hearts.

So what do the Pharisees do? Well they put that border on their garment like they're told to but what if I made it a little bit bigger? What if I made my border bigger than everybody else's?

[12:43] What would that show them? What did that I would stand out wouldn't I? Well I'm just because I just want to make sure that I remember the words and commands of God and obey them. That's all I'm doing.

Well they're just doing it to be seen of men according to Christ. They're setting themselves apart from everybody else and it's an outward thing with their phylacteries with their borders and then in verse 6 they're loving the uppermost rooms and so they love these guys are just attention seeking babies spiritually speaking it's all they are.

They just need attention they need somebody to love them somebody to talk to them and worship them and that's all they are. And so they're consumed with their position with being honored being elevated.

The greetings in verse 7 greetings in the markets that is they love being recognized in public places and they walk through with their holy show and people recognize them and they greet them and you can get the idea of how that would go and they greet them and to be called of men Rabbi Rabbi which is a title for a teacher or for a professor it's one that's to be spoken with respect and reverence.

My pastor I grew up under that's passed away now he used to hate it when anybody called him reverend and nobody called him reverend except for like the radio broadcast that he would preach on the reverend such and such or somebody when he preached a funeral and they printed it in the paper they'd call the reverend whatever and he hated that he'd say there's nothing reverent about me and there's nothing reverent about you and so I liked his take on that thing well not these guys they loved the titles and here's three titles in the next few verses that are forbidden according to Christ here in verse number 8 9 and 10 in verse number 8 it says but be not ye called rabbi for one is your master even Christ and all ye are brethren and call no man your father upon the earth for one is your father which is in heaven verse 10 neither be ye called masters for one is your master even Christ so rabbi father and master are three titles and we have to take this in the context of which it's given

[15:12] I've heard guys and I've read some of their writings they come off saying you're not supposed to call any man father if you're saved so if you're a dad no this is in the realm of religion and hypocritical religious leaders that in the context need the prestige need to be seen of men need

to be praised and he says you don't submit to that you don't bow down to their authority and ask them and revere them and lift them up because you can go straight to God God is your father and this is a national thing as he's speaking to the multitude and to his disciples your father one is your father which is heaven our father which art in heaven and he is the father of the nation of Israel whom he's speaking to at this time there's no church there's none of that going on yet but nevertheless they're not to submit and the context here is where a man becomes an authority over another man this has nothing to do today with going into the courtroom and saying your honor you better do it right

I got called in the jury duty one time and I went up and because of some history they called me forward they were discussing you know who's going to be on and they picked my number to talk and they were looking over my credentials and said you got a problem with that you got a problem with that and one guy was like yeah I don't want them and the two lawyers were fighting over who they can get on and so they called me up there in front of the judge and the two lawyers there and he turned on the white noise so that the rest of the people couldn't hear the conversation and I walked up there like am I supposed to say your honor and like talk like that I've never been around this nobody instructed me on how to because we weren't instructed on this stuff yet because we weren't really expected to be speaking to the judge and so I didn't know what to say and the judge asked me a question I just answered him just like man to man plain and I just it wasn't smart it wasn't anything like that but the one lawyer just snickered and I thought did I mess up was I supposed to be reverent here and I wasn't or what was I supposed to do and I just but I said Matthew chapter 23 judge no no that's not the truth at all this has nothing to do with the military with identifying someone who's earned a position has nothing to do with school or with a profession or anything it has everything to do with religion and it doesn't have anything to do with the term pastor either and I've read this as well people get thrown out you don't call any man pastor because that's a title that's a religious title and Christ forbids it again context it's about men that are not servants or ministers he's going to hit that again before this is over this is men that want to be elevated you address me as this and I am this to you I am your master I am your teacher and rabbi you don't do anything without my blessing you can't read the word of God and so that's the idea where he's telling them don't you follow that crowd that's what they are they're a bunch of hypocrites you don't submit to them you don't revere them they're liars you know what he tells them later look at chapter 33 this is one of the reasons why you don't call them these names and submit to them because they're serpents verse 33 ye serpents ye generation of vipers how can you escape the damnation of hell they're lost they're not submitting to

God or his word or to his son Jesus Christ so that's the idea for somebody to take those verses and this thought here and try to plug it into today's church and say don't use titles or ever in life that's just wrong that's not the right application here of this scripture so coming back to verse number 10 he says neither be called masters for one is your master even Christ and now he repeats some verses he said back in chapter 20 but he that is greatest among you shall be your servant and whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased there's the Pharisee and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted so again the context here is religious leaders and their job is to minister their job is to serve it's not to be pampered and praised and worshipped that's wickedness those men if they're going to be leaders their job is to seek to be humble and to seek to minister and serve others rather than to be exalted so the first 12 verses

Christ speaks to the multitude and to his disciples but then he turns face to face and in verse 13 on just rips on these Pharisees he's already you know talking indirectly to them as he's addressing the multitude but now he's going to turn into their face lay them out and he's doing it so that the multitude and his disciples understand and hear and receive who they really are and stop following them and worshiping them and obeying them so verse 13 but woe unto you I think there's eight maybe it's nine woes he pronounces here through this chapter woe unto you scribes and Pharisees hypocrites for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men for ye neither go in yourselves neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in remember what we just read back in John 12 that they believed on him but they were afraid to confess him because they get kicked out of the synagogue thank you

[ 20 : 59 ] Pharisees well they're holding people back from following Jesus Christ they come out to John's baptism did they submit to John's baptism no way all they did was came out there and questioned him what are you doing who are you why are you doing this they could have been

receiving it but they're not going in themselves and they're not allowing those that are following them to go in either so they're hypocrites and that baptism of John back at the beginning here of Matthew was the passageway into receiving Christ he was the voice crying in the wilderness he was the one that was making ready this people to receive the Christ and they came out and resisted it and they refused it and they refused the Lord Jesus Christ as well later in Matthew that that night he was crucified the chief priest and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas and destroy Jesus look at John chapter seven

John chapter seven they rejected John the Baptist they rejected the Lord Jesus Christ they're not entering into the kingdom of heaven and they're not allowing others that would enter to go in either John seven and look at the way they thought when officers that were commanded to go take Jesus and bring him they didn't do it in verse 46 the officers answered he's speaking to the chief priest and Pharisees verse 46 or 45 they say why have you not brought him the officers answered never man speak like this man and then answered the Pharisees are you also deceived have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed on him the answer is no they're not receiving him and they're not entering into the kingdom of heaven and they're using that they're holding men back as well if we haven't believed on him and we turn the tide of Israel you follow what we believe and we're against him so they kept the nation against him look at chapter 9 here's a family just a normal family this is where their sons blind and he's of age to answer for himself and look how his parents feared in verse 22 they were afraid to answer the Pharisees that Jesus

Christ healed their son these words spake his parents because they feared the Jews for the Jews had already agreed that if any man did confess that he was Christ he should be put out of the synagogue and that kind of thought there from back in the Old Testament that if you didn't follow through with the law and the covenant that God had with his people you were cut off from among the people and that's the kind of power that they supposed they held over the people that's how they feared them that if we're put out of the synagogue we're cut off from the covenant of God we're out we're excommunicated and that's the feeling that's the fear and so they're not allowing by not believing on Christ they're holding the nation back as well back in Matthew 23 and verse number 14 woe unto you scribes and Pharisees hypocrites for ye devour widows houses and for a pretense make long prayer therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation now that's interesting and I'm not going to run you around the Bible this morning about this but there seems though there are degrees of damnation in one place in the scripture it says that it refers to hell it refers to the lowest hell and anyway there's a couple places we go even here in Matthew to kind of reveal some of that thought there but these guys are going to receive the greater damnation and in this case they're devouring widows houses what's up with that well in the Old Testament you read multiple times that God defends the widows and defends the fatherless and he says vengeance is mine I'll repay I'll take care of them but you keep your hands off of them and so God defends them and the hypocrites though these Pharisees take advantage of them and for a pretense for pretense that means they're pretending they're spiritual pretenders they're fakers they're pretending to help out they're making a long prayer but the truth is what Christ accuses them of is devouring their land and property their houses so a widow can't pay she can't pay or she can't come up with whatever she needs they come in to take it and they do it in the religious realm give it to

God you know what the Roman Catholic Church has done for years is they've come upon such a case and they said if you'll such and such died or the family dies maybe not the widow especially maybe she dies and they're left with the property what do we do if you'll give it to the church donate it to the church we will you know say prayers for whatever we'll make sure they're okay first of all you have to believe that they're burning and suffering and purgatory right now and torments but we got you if you just give us the land we'll make sure that everything's okay with them like they have power in the afterlife of course if you make up a thing like purgatory and get your people to believe it you can just do about anything if they'll believe everything you say with no scripture to back it up the possibilities are endless look at look at Romans 16 Paul warns us about pretenders he warns us and so does Peter we'll look at what

[ 26 : 50 ] Peter says in a moment these guys are doing it with this religious long prayer oh it must have sounded nice they probably all said amen afterwards and dotted their foreheads and their belly buttons and crossed their shoulders Romans 16 verse 17 now I beseech you brethren mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned and avoid them for they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ but their own belly and by good words

and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple so there's somebody to be marked somebody to be avoided and how do you know them not just by their good words and speeches but because they're contrary to the doctrine when you spot somebody like that you don't listen to how well they speak and how good they look and how rich and successful they are and how many people are following you study them by the book look at 2nd Peter chapter 2 chapter 2 mark them and avoid them and call them hypocrites 2nd Peter chapter 2 and now

Peter's warning about false teachers that are coming in the future as he writes and he says that they're going to be bringing in damnable heresies and verse number 2 it says many shall follow their pernicious ways by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of and through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you feigned like fake like pretend they just talk the talk that you want to hear and just say the words that you want to hear so that you'll keep coming back so that you'll follow them why does Peter why does Paul why does Christ warn against this and by the way it's always in the realm of religion he's not talking about politics I don't think he cares too much about that he's talking about religious men that carry a bible and dress nice or not and lay out something that try to get you to follow them and give and give your land and give your money through covetousness make merchandise of you somebody who's after your wallet he's got a smooth tongue be careful

I'm not after your wallet so don't worry about it and I don't have a smooth tongue either not at all I get tongue tied more than anything else and praise the lord I have to think for a long time before I say stuff because I'll say something wrong and that's that's how it is so I think God has kept this curse off of me of being sharp with the tongue and quick witted and just eloquent I don't have it and tell you the truth I don't want it and if I had it you know what my flesh would try to use it it would try to use it to get advantage of men because I'm wicked like that in my flesh so praise the lord don't want to be a slick talker so come back to Matthew 23 and verse 15 woe unto you scribes and Pharisees hypocrites is that three verses in a row that he says the same thing and calls them a mean nasty name to their face isn't that rude why would

Jesus talk like that well I think he wouldn't talk like that if he didn't need to or if it wasn't accurate and it wasn't necessary for the crowd to hear him put them in their place and call them what they are they're hypocrites and they need to be called out in verse 15 woe unto you scribes and Pharisees hypocrites for you compass sea and land to make one proselyte and when he's made you make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves they're twice as damned so to speak now I don't think this is a degree of damnation like the previous verse but the idea is that they're already lost they're already a sinner that's condemned according to John 3 18 and now they're converted to a false religion to their faith then is misplaced into something else and they believe it's right rejecting truth receiving error you're a twofold child of hell not only are you lost but you're believing something that's not true and these guys are proselytized today it's it still goes on today it's religions traveling the pope coming across to

America traveling to South America traveling the world to keep the numbers up to keep some public relations going and making converts it's the Jehovah's witnesses and the Mormons traveling not to give them the gospel of Jesus Christ not for sinners to get saved from their sins and hell but no rather to convert them to their religion and to their system and to make them disciples of themselves and to put on the white shirt and the name tag and start walking on the streets with them they're making proselytes but they're not saving souls and they're not winning souls to Christ they're encompassing sea and land they're hypocrites because they're trying to make somebody it's a man-made religion to make somebody become like them that's the bottom line verse 16 and let's finish this section here 16 to 22 and follow this logic woe unto you ye blind guides there's a new term which say whosoever shall swear by the temple it is nothing but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple he is a debtor ye fools and blind for whether is greater the gold or the temple that sanctifyeth the gold huh we never thought of that and the same thing's true about their sacrifices in verse 18 and there's another thing they say and whosoever shall swear by the altar it is nothing but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it he is guilty ye fools and blind for whether is greater the gift or the altar that sanctifyeth the gift whoso therefore shall swear by the altar sweareth by it and by all things thereon and whosoever or whoso shall swear by the temple sweareth by it and by him that dwelleth therein and he that shall swear by heaven sweareth by the throne of God and by him that sitteth thereon so saying the temple's nothing but the gold in the temple is something it's just foolishness it doesn't make sense it's one of their man-made pet doctrines that they've come up

with the same with the gift it's the altar that's holy it's the altar that sanctifies the gift it's not the animal that's holy it's the altar that makes it holy it's the temple that makes that gold special it's not the gold at all and that's just common sense for some reason they're so far off in their thinking and foolish with their doctrine that Christ has to call them out and just say here's something you don't even make sense you're so foolish you're so blind you're a blind guide you're leading these people teaching this this doesn't even make sense you fool I bet they were hot I mean these are older men these are aged men these are wise men in their own right and in their you know culture and have this guy just laid them out and reamed them out one thing after another you can imagine the anger and the blood starting to boil you know you know what they wanted to do to them they wanted to kill them on the spot and so we'll stop there and pick it up next week we're still in the middle of this it's going to go another week at least and it's not going to get any easier he's going to continue to call them out for their hypocrisy he's going to continue to call them names he's going to continue to point out the things that they're doing that are wrong and why they are so and so church beware of slick talkers beware of beware of men that are fakers and don't worship God in spirit and in truth and don't submit let's just take a 10 minute break there and we'll come back for the second hour pop it up pop it up you that's so we'll just ok

[ 35 : 38 ] welcome to the spoiler it's beware like so it's waiting come please see theesso it's it's on so