

CALLING OUT HYPOCRITES!

Matthew 23:1-13

INTRODUCTION: We are studying the things that made Jesus hot! Yes, our Lord Jesus could get hot! Hot enough to see red! We find as we study Jesus life that not much else could make Jesus hot than hypocrisy. In Matthew 23 our Lord Jesus gave His most heated vocal dressing down He ever gave because of hypocrisy. If you hate hypocrisy you are in good company, because our Lord hated it too. Most people's failures did not make Jesus hot, but when the Pharisees talked the talk but didn't walk the walk it made our Lord see red! Jesus called the Pharisees names, He called them hypocrites, children of hell, blind guides, fools, and white-washed tombs! Matthew 23 was the last sermon Jesus ever preached on this earth. His last message was not seeker sensitive or a feel-good sermon but it was a message everyone needs to hear.

I. RECONGNIZING THE CORE OF A COUNTERFEIT!

Matthew 23:1-2: Our Lord recognized the teaching authority of the Pharisees. They had the responsibility to teach the Law of Moses to the people of Israel. The Pharisees had the respect of the people of Israel. On the outside they looked like the real deal but Jesus said:

Matthew 23:3. All truth is God's truth and the Pharisees taught God's truth. All religions teach some truth. That is the sign of a counterfeit, a counterfeit looks like the real deal but a counterfeit looks on the outside like it is right, but on the inside, they don't match up to the truth. The problem is the Pharisees were teaching one thing but living another thing.

II. RECOGNIZING THE CLUES TO A COUNTERFEIT!

Jesus biggest problem is found in Matthew 23:3. Jesus then proceeds to show the signs of a counterfeit: Matthew 23:4. The Pharisees took the 248 commandments and 365 prohibitions and they made rules about the rules and laws about laws and ended up with 1,500 additions to the Law. What became important was no longer what God said but what the Pharisees said. In the Talmud they put rule upon rule and demanded that the people of Israel obey their rules. The Pharisees didn't obey the Law perfectly but expected all the people to obey all their rules: Matthew 23:5. Sadly it was all about the show: Matthew 23:6-7. The mark of a hypocrite is that they love human applause more than the approval of God. Matthew 23:8-10. Do you know what is most important is not what people think of you, but what thinks about you? Counterfeit leaders want you to follow them, not to have you follow Christ!

III. RECONIZING THE CHURE FOR A COUNTERFEIT!

Jesus gives the cure for a counterfeit faith: Matthew 23:11-12. The only cure for hypocrisy is humility! We must humble ourselves and admit that hypocrisy crops up in all of us at times. We must begin to put the Lord first and others as better than ourselves. Jesus wants us to be honest with our God, honest with others and to be honest with ourselves. Jesus said these hypocrites were not only not part of the kingdom of God but they kept others from entering God's kingdom as well: Matthew 23:13. Jesus came preaching God's grace and the Pharisees harped on their own goodness. Jesus was preaching faith and the Pharisees were preaching function. False teachers and false religions today deny God's grace and God's faith. Salvation to them must be earned. We need to honestly look at ourselves and see if we are a bridge to Jesus Christ or a hinderance to those who are honestly seeking Him. Our Lord Jesus hates holy hypocrisy and counterfeit Christianity!