

Church of Christ
140 West 15th Street
Front Royal, Virginia 22630



Mid-Week Connection

Connecting to God & to Each Other

June 12, 2019

Join Us

Worship Sunday 11am
Bible Study Sunday 10 am
6 pm
Wednesday 7 pm
Tuesday Ladies Class 10 am

FrontRoyalChurchofChrist.com
SimpleBibleLessons.com
ministerfrcoc@gmail.com
RSW 2nd & 4th Thursday
540 635 2613

Serving

June 16, 2019

Lords Table

David Born*

Isaac Pepin

Art Candenquist

Bob Baleskie

Song Service

Peter Diaz am

David Born pm

Scripture Reading

Art Candenquist

Fellowship Meal

June 16, 2019

"Woe to You, Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites!"

Matthew 23

It is important to note that Jesus spoke Matthew 23 during the last week of his life. The Teacher spent much of his ministry appealing to the Pharisees in terms meaningful to their perspective. As Jesus' death approached, nothing changed in the Pharisees' perspective.

Usually it was the Pharisees who tried to confront Jesus either by direct or indirect remarks. For example, they criticized Jesus to his disciples for eating with tax collectors and sinners (Matthew 9:11). They called into question Jesus' power source for casting out demons (Matthew 9:34). They criticized Jesus' disciples for a declared Sabbath violation (Matthew 12:2). They criticized Jesus' disciples for violating accepted Jewish tradition (Matthew 15:1,2). They requested a sign to test Jesus (Matthew 16:1). They asked him what they considered an impossible question to test him (Matthew 19:3). They tried to trap him in his speech (Matthew 22:15;34-36).

Jesus frequently appealed to the highest authority the Pharisees respected and revered--scripture. Pharisees profoundly respected scripture. It was God's voice to the ages. No matter how Jewish society changed, scripture addressed the situation. Scripture was God's authority. It answered any question. Every person belonging to God must respond to scripture's message.

Therefore, frequently, Jesus' response to their criticisms appealed to scripture. To understand his association with tax collectors and sinners, they needed to understand Hosea 6:6. When they accused Jesus' disciples of a Sabbath violation, he referred them to David's action in 1 Samuel 21:1-6 and to Hosea 6:6. When they demanded a sign, he referred them to Jonah and to the queen who visited Solomon. When they accused his disciples of violating Jewish tradition, he referred them to Exodus 20:12; 21:17; and Isaiah 29:13.

This does not imply everything was cordial and congenial! It merely notes a cycle revealed in Matthew. The cycle is one of confrontation and teaching. The Pharisees confronted. Jesus responded by teaching--utilizing the authority they respected and appreciated.

Did the Pharisees appreciate Jesus' efforts to teach them? Absolutely not! They, not Jesus, were the teachers! They, not Jesus, understood scripture's correct meaning! The one needing understanding and change was Jesus, not them! People who must

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Fun, Food Fellowship
& Gods Word
Songs, Crafts, Games.
June 22, 2019—9:00am
Final Meeting 6/16



The Lord's church
George Diaz, Serious Heart
Attack In critical condition
Debbie Martin
Bob Baleskie
Eddie Benfit
Sharon Derflinger
RSW Jail Ministry
John Woodall
Hazel Clark
Nancy Barnes

be right, who are certain they are correct, whose religious survival depends on "being right," are irritated by the suggestion they are mistaken, or need to reconsider their position, or need to learn. Matthew 12:14 states, "But the Pharisees went out and conspired against Him, as to how they might destroy Him."

Jesus spent his ministry challenging the Pharisees to reflect on their conclusions, to rethink their positions on scripture, to come to new insights and understandings. Yet, they would not. They increased their resentment of him, his actions, and his teachings. Their resentment grew to this conviction: they were serving God's purposes by destroying Jesus! During the last week of Jesus' earthly life, Matthew 26:3-5 says this: "Then the chief priests and the elders of the people were gathered together in the court of the high priest, named Caiaphas; and they plotted together to seize Jesus by stealth and kill Him. But they were saying, 'Not during the festival, otherwise a riot might occur among the people.'"

"The chief priests and elders" was a Jewish way of noting the leadership of the Jewish nation. It included prominent Pharisees. In Jesus' use of hypocrites, this group represented the core of hypocrisy. Note the words Matthew used: "plotted," "seize," "stealth," and "kill." They reflect a calculating, covert intent to destroy. The only way they could "defuse" the "crisis" created by Jesus' presence, actions, and teaching was to destroy him. Consider the irony: God's people thought they could champion God's cause by destroying God's son!

In that irony is the core of the Pharisaic hypocrisy. As trained as they were in scripture, they concluded the appropriate way to preserve God's values was to murder Jesus. They so misunderstood God, God's word, and God's purposes that they misrepresented who God was and what God was about. To them, it was consistent with their understanding of God to destroy someone they could not control. Thus in a determination to "defend God's interest" they in good conscience could destroy God's son--never realizing he was God's son! The hypocrisy: they were convinced they represented God while their minds, emotions, motives, and actions opposed God.

Thought Questions:

1. As the lesson began, what important fact were you asked to note?
2. How did the Pharisees commonly react to Jesus' actions or teachings?
3. According to them, what were some of the sources of Jesus' power?
4. What was the Pharisees' attitude toward scripture?
5. Frequently, how did Jesus respond to their criticisms? Why do you think Jesus did that?
6. What were some of the scriptures Jesus used?
7. What cycle did Matthew reveal? In that cycle who did what?
8. Did the Pharisees appreciate Jesus' efforts to teach them? Explain your answer.
9. Early in Jesus' ministry, what did the Pharisees conspire to do? (Matthew 12:14)
10. What words does Matthew 26:3-5 use to reveal the depth of the Jewish leadership's hostility toward Jesus?
11. What irony are you asked to note?
12. Discuss this statement: "It is in God's interest to destroy Jesus."
13. Interaction question – How can people who follow God quickly become God's enemies?