

How People Are Turned off to the Kingdom of God

Matthew 23:13

Introduction:

- A. With some friends, God needs no enemies.
- B. Pharisees professed devotion to God.
 - 1. A few, like Saul, were sincere —most were hypocritical.
 - 2. Sat in Moses seat, but many walked in Satan's shoes.
 - 3. Looked for the Messiah and His kingdom. (Cf. Luke 17:20).
 - 4. With kingdom at hand, now refused to enter and hindered others.
- C. Even as citizens of the kingdom, we will turn people off if they see us wading in the *steps* of the Pharisees:

Discussion:

- I. By Giving Only Lip-Service To God's Law. (vv. 1-3; cf. Matt. 15:8).**
 - A. Pharisees talked a good game (vv. 29-31)
 - B. Actions often louder than words. (cf. Jas. 2:14-18; 1 Pet. 3:1).
- II. By Using A Double Standard. (v. 4).**
 - A. In what one expects and demands of another and himself.
 - B. In what teaches another and himself. (Rom. 2:21).
 - C. In what he criticize or judges another and himself. (Rom. 2:21; Matt. 7:1-5).
- III. By Practicing Religion for Show. (vv. 5-12; cf. Matt. 6:1-6).**
 - A. Not wrong to be seen or heard doing any religious act. (Cf. Paul & Silas in jail).
 - B. Is wrong if it is done to be seen of men or to impress them with our devotion.
- IV. By Inventing Loopholes to Sidestep God's Will. (vv. 16-22.)**
 - A. Pharisees' loopholes. (Cf. Mt. 15:5)
 - B. Denominational loopholes.
 - 1. Mark 16:16 - "Does not say he that is not baptized. . ."
 - 2. Acts 20:7 - "Does not say 'every' first day...."
 - C. Our own loopholes.
 - 1. Misuse of relative terms. (Long, modest, etc.)
 - 2. Demand specific condemnation - ignore general principles.
- V. By Practicing Selective Obedience. (v. 23)**
 - A. Problem was not in insisting obeying in *smallest* detail.
 - B. Problem in was not insisting on obeying in *every* detail.
 - 1. Offend in one point - guilty of all. (Jas. 2:10).
 - 2. Obeying "religious" acts - neglect inward purity.
- VI. By Religion Coated Ungodliness (vv. 25-28).**
 - A. Like sugar coated pills, chocolate coated grasshoppers; "doctored" used car.
 - B. Many vices are hidden (even given respectability) under a coat of religion.
 - 1. Text: Extortion, self-indulgence, hypocrisy, lawlessness, and murder.
 - 2. Often hatred, malice, gossip, meddling and vengeance.
 - 3. Sometimes even laziness and snobbery.

Conclusion:

- A. Don't allow yourself to be turned off to the *acceptance* of the kingdom.
- B. Don't allow yourself to be turned off to the *responsibilities* of the kingdom.
- C. Don't allow yourself to be turned off to the *blessings* of the kingdom.
- D. Don't allow yourself to be turned off to the *hope* of the kingdom. (1 Cor. 15:24).