

## The Problems Of The Pharisees And Scribes

### **Matthew 23:1-12**

Intro:

- A. **the Pharisees constantly criticized and questioned Jesus.**
  - 1. They tried to ensnare Him.
  - 2. "what thinkest thou"?
  
- B. **Until this point in His ministry he has done little more than answer their questions.**
  - 1. Is it lawful to give tribute money to Caesar?"
  - 2. "Which is the great commandment of the law?"

#### I. The Pharisees Have Legitimate Authority.

- A. **"The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses seat."**  
v.2
  - 1. seat = καθεδρα = chair, a soft seat with a back.
  - 2. This was a place where men sat to read the law or make decisions.
  
- B. **These Jewish disciples are to obey the Law.**
  - 1. bid = ειπον = "to command", "to order" v.3
  - 2. observe = τηρω = "to watch attentively," "keep"
  - 3. do = ποιω = "to make," "to produce," "to act," to form something."
  - 4. work = εργον = "deed" "the result of energy expended," "the thing wrought"
  - 5. "They say and they do, but they do not do what they say."
  - 6. The law is still fully in force.
  - 7. The disciples must not break the law.
  - 8. They must not be disrespectful.

#### II. The Specific Problems Of The Scribes And Pharisees.

- A. **They overloaded God's people. V.4**
  - 1. bind = δεσμεω = "to tie on"
  - 2. burdens = φορτιον = "a specific load."
  - 3. heavy = βαρυσ = "heavy," "hard to carry"



4. grievous = δυσβαστακτος = "oppressive"
5. They lay them on men's shoulders.
6. They will not move them.
7. move = σαλευω = "to make to shake," "rock."
8. They laid out extremely difficult paths.
9. Some pastors do this today.

**B. They work to be seen.**

1. This is their motive for service. **V.5a**
2. The motive and the reward become the same.

**C. The things they did.**

1. "They make broad their phylacteries." **V.5b**
  - a. phylacteries = φυλακτηριον = "a strip of parchment, on which were written various parts of the law, bound about the forehead or around the wrist"
  - b. broad = πλατυνω = "to make wider", "extend."
2. "...and enlarge the borders of their garments"
  - a. enlarge = μεγαλυνω = "to make great", "to magnify."
3. "And love the uppermost rooms at feasts..."
  - a. rooms = πρωτοκλισια = the first place of reclining at a table, the chief place at a banquet." Abraham's bosom.
4. "the chief seats in the synagogues."
  - a. Chief seats = πρωτοκαθεδρια = "the first seat" The seats usually occupied by the elders of a synagogue, near the pulpit."
5. "And greetings in the markets..." **v.7**
  - a. greetings = ασπασμος = "salvation," "to hail by name"
6. "...and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi."
  - a. Rabbi = ραββι = one great, a chief, a master.

**III. Special Instructions For His Disciples.**

**A. Do not be called Rabbi.**

1. "...for one is your Master, even Christ..." **v.8**

2. "...and all of ye are brethren..."

**B. Do not call men father.**

1. This refers to teachers, not a parent.
2. "...for one is your Father, which is in heaven."

**C. Do not be called Master.**

1. master = καθηγητης = "a leader or a guide in the way," "a director."
2. "...for one is your Master, even Christ."

**IV. The Essence Of Discipleship.**

**A. "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant." V.11**

1. "...shall be your minister" - Rhm
2. διακονος = "servant"
3. Greatness is achieved by serving not in doing what the Pharisees and scribes did.

**B. The eternal principle of God.**

1. True in the Old Testament.
2. Job 22:29
3. exalt = υψωω = "to raise high," "lift up".
4. abased = ταπεινωω = "to make or bring low"
5. humble = (Same as 4 above)
6. exalted = (Same as 3 above)

Phariseeism = The Pharisees constantly acted so as to improve their image before others. Jesus never tried to improve His. He sought to do the truth. The truth vindicated Him, not His actions. "By thy words shall thou be justified." Any attempt to make yourself look good to others is Phariseeism.