

Matthew 23:23-24

23a- what is a Pharisee?

- from Hebrew word "parush" meaning separated
- formed during the Hellenistic Period of history (ca. 300-100 BC)
- how to remain separate and pure and different in a hostile culture?

WARNING #1: I can become a Pharisee out of a legitimate desire to be true to God and different from the world.

-by the time of Christ, the Pharisees were more a religious/political movement seeking to use power to keep Jews "separate"

- they exerted power to keep people pure by claiming 2 sources of authority
  - 1) the written Torah (5 books of Moses)
  - 2) the oral Torah (Pharisees' interpretation of Moses)

WARNING #2: I can become a Pharisee when I make myself the standard for spiritual maturity.

Christ attacks 2 aspects of Pharisaism

- 1) hypocrisy
- 2) religiosity

vv. 23-24 TEXT

- 1) Hypocrite= actor/mask wearer.

-they were acting as the standard for holiness, even above God's standard  
\*Lev. 23 and Deut 14

-they saw themselves as righteous; others saw them as religious; Christ saw them as repellant

- 2) Religiosity- "teachers of the law"

v. 24- "strained a gnat"- unclean, but small

"swallowed a camel"- unclean, but very large

What was a gnat?

Tithing

What was a camel?

- 1) Justice
  - \*be careful about being arrogant about social justice
- 2) Mercy
  - \*be careful about loving the unloving
- 3) Faithfulness
  - \*be careful about loving God and not spiritual growth

Pharisaism= Legalism and Gracism

What is gracism?

\*despises law authority and authority figures      \*loses moral guidance      \*soft on Scripture      \*despises

WARNING #3: I can become a Pharisee in my zeal to be free from legalism.

"How has a church that was once the happy possession of common fishermen and prostitutes and tax collectors become the home of the spiritually elite?" - John Fischer

Have I slipped into the extremes of Pharisaism (legalism or gracism), judging others and myself by the wrong standard?

\*the Gospel isn't about judging and critiquing others

\*the Gospel is all about the right judgement and critique of me