First Clean

Tony Mauck · Matthew 23:1–37

INTRODUCTION

- If you want to look at some place throughout the ministry of Jesus where he really lets them have it, the first text that would come to mind is Matthew 23.
- At the conclusion of this scathing denunciation is a tremendous affirmation of the Savior's love for these very same people.

1 They Say Things and Do Not Do Them

Matthew 23:3–12

- Right things are emanating from their lips, but don't follow their behavior.
- Do not do according to their deeds, for they say things, and they do not do them.
- They tie up heavy loads and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are unwilling to move them with so much as a finger.
- But the greatest among you shall be your servant. Not the leader, not the self-exalted spiritual elite.
- Don't preach what you will not practice. Don't put your piety on parade.

2 Disadvantaging Others

Matthew 23:13–15

- Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees. You shut off the kingdom of heaven from men.
- For you do not enter in yourselves, and you prevent other people from entering in.
- You devour widows' houses, even while for a pretense you make long prayers.

3 You Blind Guides

Matthew 23:23–24; Matthew 23:27–28

- You who want to show other people God's way, but suffer from spiritual blindness.
- You blind guides who strain out a gnat.
- You are like whitewashed tombs, hypocrites, which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.
- Even so you too outwardly appear to be righteous, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy.

4 First, Clean the Inside of the Cup

Matthew 23:26; Matthew 7:21–23; Luke 18

- First, clean, the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may become clean also.
- Spiritually they must first clean within before any outward expression of religion is going to be of any value to them and to God.

- But what if this authentic person that you are is not the person God calls you to be.
- I have to mold myself after his will, after the Father's will, not attempting to mold his will after my desires.

5 Molding Ourselves After the Father's Will

Romans 12:9–11

- Let love be without hypocrisy. Let love be consistent toward all in our behavior and our thinking.
- There must be within a tenacious battle against lust.
- We must sincerely and regularly bring homage to the throne of our deserving God who has given us so much.
- Genuinely care about others. They held others with contempt.

6 Cleansing First Begins Within

- He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness.
- By the Spirit's instruction, we are being changed from the inside out.
- This is an initial step. But it is not the only step with first clean that you'll ever have to make.
- Create in me a clean heart, O God. Renew a steadfast spirit within me.

THE CHALLENGE

Let those little hurricanes running around your house remind you of one important truth. Spiritual cleansing and cleaning is an ongoing work in our lives.

MY NOTES