



# The Way of Confrontation

Brent Moody · Matthew 23:1–36 · Series: **The Way of Jesus**

## INTRODUCTION

- Jesus is condemning the temple. He's going into the heart of Jewish thought and religion, and he's saying, What you're doing here is wrong.
- A division between people who are trying to protect their systems, who are interested in self-preservation rather than serving God.
- The idea of fruitfulness or fruitlessness is sort of the hinge on which everything turns and hangs in this passage.

## 1 Jesus Measures Greatness by Fruitfulness

Matthew 23:5–12

- Jesus measures greatness by fruitfulness, not status, not position, not appearances.
- You have one teacher, one instructor of which you are a disciple. We are disciples of Christ. We're not disciples of other men.
- What actually matters is whether we are bearing fruit for the Lord and his kingdom. That is the true sign of health.

## 2 They Preach but Don't Practice

Matthew 23:3–4; Matthew 11:28–30

- They preach. They sure do preach a lot. But they don't practice. They focus on the outward things and getting attention rather than truly producing fruit for God.
- Does my religion offer Jesus' easy yoke and light burden, as he mentions in Matthew 11, 28 through 30?
- Or does my religion lay heavy burdens on people's shoulders that are hard to bear? That's Phariseism.

## 3 They Shut People Out of the Kingdom

Matthew 23:13–15; Matthew 23:11–12

- Am I converting people to my system or to God's kingdom? Have I become an obstacle to people finding Jesus in an effort to convert them to my ideology?
- You're out promoting yourself and evangelizing for self.
- We're out preaching our ideology and our ideas and our opinions and our kingdom instead of Jesus'. We are a hindrance.
- The greatest among you shall be your servant. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled. Whoever humbles himself will be exalted. Greatness comes through fruitfulness.

## 4 Prioritize the Weightier Matters

Matthew 23:16–24

- Don't lose sight of what matters most. Prioritize the weightier matters.
- Religious systems are dangerous when they elevate technicalities and especially in man-made traditions, to the neglect of what actually matters to the Lord, and that is justice, mercy, and faithfulness.
- Maybe you're right about everything, but if you have an attitude that's not like Jesus, if you have an attitude like the Pharisees, then you are completely wrong.
- It is the intent, it's the heart that matters.

## 5 The Willingness to Listen to the Voice of Truth

Psalm 8

- Jesus is condemning them because they're unwilling to listen to truth.
- Jesus' way, if we're going to follow him, is the willingness to listen to the voice of truth, wherever that truth comes from.
- Not who said it, not how long they've said it, not how long we've done it, or how long we've thought it. What matters is whether or not it's actually right or actually true.
- Jesus' kingdom is marked by a willingness to continually seek truth for the glory of God, a desire to truly understand scripture on its own terms.

## 6 Have You Not Read?

Matthew 19:4–6; John 3

- He is exposing how the supposed leaders of the people are wrong. And they're wrong because they don't know Scripture.
- Have you not read from the beginning it was not so? He made the male and female. What God has joined together, do not separate.
- You are wrong because you know neither the scripture nor the power of God.
- That is the determining factor of truth. It's what the scriptures say.

### THE CHALLENGE

Do we come to them with open hearts, willing to accept whatever the truth is?

### MY NOTES