

CONDEMNATION OF COUNTERFEIT SPIRITUAL LEADERS:
PRONOUNCING WOES
(Matthew 23:13-32)

- I. Condemned for EXCLUSION from the KINGDOM (Matt. 23:13)
 - A. They REFUSE to ENTER the kingdom of heaven
 - B. They PREVENT OTHERS from entering the kingdom
- [II. Condemned for EXPLOITATION of WIDOWS (Matt. 23:14)]
 - A. They DEVOUR widows' HOUSES
 - B. They use LONG PRAYERS to pretend PIETY
- III. Condemned for SUBVERSION of CONVERTS (Matt. 23:15)
 - A. They are ZELOUS to make converts to THEMSELVES
 - B. The converts become more FANATICAL than their MENTORS
- IV. Condemned for PERVERSION of TRUTH (Matt. 23:16-22)
 - A. They are "BLIND GUIDES" (cf. Matt. 15:14)
 - B. They encourage LYING by using EVASIVE OATHS
 - 1. DENYING that God is WITNESS to ALL oaths
 - 2. PRETENDING that DISHONESTY is generally ACCEPTABLE

- V. Condemned for INVERSION of God's PRIORITIES (Matt. 23:23-24)
 - A. They are METICULOUS in their TITHING
 - 1. Jesus COMMENDS their OBEDIENCE to the LAW
 - 2. Jesus COMMENDS their ATTENTION to DETAIL
 - B. They make "LIGHT" of principles more CENTRAL to the Law (cf. Mic. 6:8)
 - 1. Assuring that JUSTICE is done
 - 2. Assuring that MERCY is extended
 - 3. Assuring that FAITHFULNESS is practiced
- VI. Condemned for EXTORTION for SELF-INDULGENCE (Matt. 23:25-26)
 - A. They emphasize APPEARANCE over SUBSTANCE
 - B. But an UPRIGHT CHARACTER needs no DISGUISE
- VII. Condemned for CONTAMINATION of the PEOPLE (Matt. 23:27-28)
 - A. They seek to prevent CONTACT with the ceremonially UNCLEAN
 - B. They carry within themselves SPIRITUAL CONTAMINATION
- VII. Condemned for PRETENSION of PIETY (Matt. 23:29-32)
 - A. They HONOR the PROPHETS and the RIGHTEOUS dead
 - B. They PRESUME they would not have PERSECUTED the prophets
 - C. Yet they will EXCEED the GUILT of their fathers as they PLOT to MURDER their MESSIAH