

WINTER QUARTER SUNDAY SCHOOL 2015-2016

THEME: SACRED GIFTS AND HOLY GATHERINGS

UNIT ONE – “What We Bring to God”

UNIT TWO – “Sharing Our Joys and Sorrows”

UNIT THREE – “Holy Days”

“JESUS DESCRIBES SINCERITY THROUGH ONE’S LIVING AND GIVING”



Sunday School Lesson No. IV - December 27, 2015

Rev. Frank A. Davis, III, Pastor-Teacher

Lesson Text: Matthew 23:1-12; Mark 12:38-44

Required Reading: Matthew 23:1-12; Mark 12:38-44

Memory Text: Matthew 23:12, “*And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.*”

Reliable Resources: Union Gospel Press Expositor and Illuminator; Standard Lesson Commentary; Bible Knowledge Commentary; Precepts for Living (UMI Publishing); Word Search 10 Electronic Library; Life Application Study Bible (Tyndale)

INTRODUCTION

I heard the late Dr. A. Louis Patterson say, “Giving is the Christian living and our giving will give us away.” Surely as we examine the lesson this week, Jesus exposes the sincere and insincere by their true giving. We have the great religious leaders of the Scribes and Pharisees giving the people a lot of advice and religious responsibility that they themselves didn’t fully live up to. Such people are better described as hypocrites.

Then later in the lesson Jesus observes as people of all walks of life, bring gifts of offerings to the Temple. He noticed that the poorest participant gave the greatest, most sincere gift and He uses her for an immediate life illustration.

Let us examine the text for study and discover sincerity through one’s living and giving! The setting of our lesson took place during Jesus’ last week in Jerusalem before His crucifixion, and we note that this would be His last visit among multitudes to render instructions. It is amazing how Jesus was so patient and concerned with the souls of men, even when they despised Him. Robert E. Wenger writes, “Jesus, with His divine insight into human hearts, unmasked hypocrisy wherever He found it. And with the same insight He recognized sincerity.” Colossians 3:17 tells us, “*And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.*”

Anticipated Power Points:

- **His Denunciation.** Matthew 23:2-7
- **His Directions.** Matthew 23:8-12; Mark 12:38-40
- **His Delight.** Mark 12:41-44

“JESUS DESCRIBES SINCERITY THROUGH ONE’S LIVING AND GIVING”

LESSON OUTLINE

I. His Denunciation. Matthew 23:2-7

As Jesus taught within the Temple during his final visit before the cross, He tells His listening audience that the Pharisees and Scribes sat in the “*seat of Moses.*” v. 2. Pharisees were a sect of the Jewish religious hierarchy that were most influential, calling themselves the “separated ones.” According to Precepts for Living, “The group was comprised of laymen who adhered to strict observance of the Sabbath, purity, rituals, tithing, and food restrictions based on the Hebrew Scriptures and Jewish traditions. They also believed in the resurrection of the dead... Scribes were trained in writing and were very influential as interpreters and teachers of the Law.” These, along with a group called the Sadducees held the positions of religious and political authority among the Jewish people.

A. Jesus speaks well of them in v. 3a.

He then warns His listeners to beware of their activities. They are hypocrites, Jesus declares, because they do not earnestly practice what they preach! They are denounced.

B. Jesus describes their hypocritical activities as God’s so-called representatives in verses 3b-7.

1. They over-emphasized phylacteries. Deuteronomy 6:8; 11:18; Exodus 13:9, 16
2. The tassels on their shawls were oversized. Numbers 15:38
3. They sought prestige and honor, being called by honorable titles and given seats of recognition.

Leadership was never to be sought for personal gain, but the honor of serving Him is the true objective.

Whatever is right, He would give! Jesus denounces the pride of position among men. (Read Mark 10:35-45).

II. His Directions. Matthew 23:8-12; Mark 12:38-40

The Lord gives sincere directives to those who would follow Him and these will keep a servant safe. According to the Union Gospel Press Expositor and Illuminator,

“A. Give Christ His deserved status (Matt. 23:8)

B. Shun personal recognition (Matt. 23:9-10)

C. Submit to God’s estimation (Matt. 23:11-12)

D. Avoid hypocritical pretense (Mark 12:38-40)”

III. His Delight. Mark 12:41-44

Jesus now demonstrates His delight in the humble who serve sincerely through their living and giving. As Jesus stood in the Court of the Women at the Temple, there were thirteen trumpet shaped chests that were receptacles for special gifts to the Lord. It was in that environment that a poor widow, one of abject poverty, would contribute to the Treasury of the Temple.

Now Jesus was delighted not in the poverty of this widow, but in the loving faith and trust this woman discreetly gave. She gave out of her poverty proportionately all she had, even for her living. It was a great gift to God with no thought of what was left. Others brought greater sums, but she brought a greater sacrifice. From this place Jesus describes sincerity through one’s living and giving!

CLOSING

“When we consider giving a certain percentage of our income a great accomplishment, we resemble those who gave ‘a tiny part of their surplus!’ Here, Jesus was admiring generous and sacrificial giving. As believers, we should consider increasing our giving – whether of money, time, or talents – to a point beyond convenience or calculation.” (Life Application Bible Notes). Please beloved, consider your sincerity in your living and giving. Jesus helps us as we allow Him to direct all of our living and giving.

NO ONE HAS EVER BECOME POOR BY GIVING!

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Looking Ahead: January 3, 2016 Genesis 29:15-30



The Sunday School Lesson is taught each Wednesday at noon at Bibleway. HAPPY NEW YEAR!