

“Religious Affections”

Matthew 23: 1 - 39

March 30, 2014

**Religion Is A Poison That Blinds Its Followers To Their True Condition Before Christ, (vs. 1 - 39)**

**Christ Calls Us To See Where The True Church Is Found & Where The Work Of God Resides, (vs. 16 - 22)**

**Message Emphasis:** Many today are like the Pharisees of Jesus day; they claim the divine work of the Holy Spirit when in fact what they are espousing is the logistical work of men. We must see where God’s true work resides and honor the One who has accomplished this wondrous work of grace.

*The world was ready to wonder, what strange principle it was, that influenced believers to expose themselves to so great sufferings, to forsake the things that were seen, and renounce all that was dear and pleasant, which was the object of sense. They seemed to the men of the world as if they were beside themselves, and to act as though they hated themselves; there was nothing in their view, that could induce them thus to suffer, or to support them under and carry them through such trials. But although there was nothing that the world saw, or that the Christians themselves ever saw with their bodily eyes, that thus influenced and supported them, yet they had a supernatural principle of love to something unseen; they loved Jesus Christ, for they saw him spiritually, whom the world saw not, and whom they themselves have never seen with bodily eyes. ~ Jonathan Edwards*

**1) It Is Easy To Mistake The Church As Being The Place & Not The People God Has Redeemed, (vs. 16 - 17)**

- Most religious affections substitute human reasoning for divine activity - *Be careful insisting that God see it your way!*  
<sup>16</sup> **“Woe to you, blind guides, who say** (Pres.Act.Part),
- Most religious affections do not value holiness they value effectiveness - *Be careful with efficiency; God is not concerned with how fast something goes*  
**‘If anyone swears** (Aor.Act.Subj) **by the temple, it is** (Pres.Act.Ind) **nothing, but if anyone swears** (Aor.Act.Subj) **by the gold of the temple, he is bound** (Pres.Act.Ind) **by his oath.’**
- Most religious affections deny the work of God for the work of men - *Be careful not to find yourself standing in God’s place*  
<sup>17</sup> **You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that has made the gold sacred** (Aor.Act.Part)?

**2) It Is Easy To Mistake Worship As Being About Me & Not About The Christ Who Has Bestowed Grace, (vs. 18 - 19)**

- Our worship cannot be dependent on our contribution -
  - The necessity of our contribution shows a distrust of God -  
<sup>18</sup> **‘If anyone swears** (Aor.Act.Subj) **by the altar, it is** (Pres.Act.Ind) **nothing,**
  - The necessity of our contribution shows a self righteousness -  
**but if anyone swears** (Aor.Act.Subj) **by the gift that is on the altar, he is bound** (Pres.Act.Ind) **by his oath.’**
- Our worship must cling for dear life to Christ who saved us -  
<sup>19</sup> **You blind men! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred** (Pres.Act.Part)?

**3) It Is Easy To Mistake My Religion For Genuine Faith, (vs. 20 - 22)**

- True saving faith is an all consuming thing because God is either everything or He is nothing - <sup>20</sup> **So whoever swears** (Aor.Act.Part) **by the altar swears by it and by everything on it.** <sup>21</sup> **And whoever [swears] by the temple swears by it and by him who dwells in it.** <sup>22</sup> **And whoever [swears] by heaven swears by the throne of God and by him who sits upon it.**

**\*\*\*What Must I Do To Be Saved? \*\***

**Message Directive:** Look to Christ for the salvation of your soul ONLY in Christ will your religious affections be truly affectionate.

4. Christ Calls Us To See Where True Piety Is Found, (vs. 23 - 24)
5. Christ Calls Us To See Where True Holiness Is Found, (vs. 25 - 26)
6. Christ Calls Us To See Where True Righteousness Is Found, (vs. 27 - 28)
7. Christ Calls Us To See Where True Love Is Found, (vs. 29 - 36)
8. Christ Calls Us To See Where True Belief Is Found, (vs. 37 - 39)