

Scripture

Matthew 23:1-15 (NLT)

Jesus Criticizes the Religious Leaders

- 1 Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, 2 “The teachers of religious law and the Pharisees are the official interpreters of the law of Moses. 3 So practice and obey whatever they tell you, but don’t follow their example. For they don’t practice what they teach. 4 They crush people with unbearable religious demands and never lift a finger to ease the burden.

- 5** “Everything they do is for show. On their arms they wear extra wide prayer boxes with Scripture verses inside, and they wear robes with extra long tassels. **6** And they love to sit at the head table at banquets and in the seats of honor in the synagogues. **7** They love to receive respectful greetings as they walk in the marketplaces, and to be called ‘Rabbi.’
- 8** “Don’t let anyone call you ‘Rabbi,’ for you have only one teacher, and all of you are equal as brothers and sisters.”

- 9** “And don’t address anyone here on earth as ‘Father,’ for only God in heaven is your Father. **10** And don’t let anyone call you ‘Teacher,’ for you have only one teacher, the Messiah.
- 11** “The greatest among you must be a servant. **12** But those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

13 “What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you shut the door of the Kingdom of Heaven in people’s faces. You won’t go in yourselves, and you don’t let others enter either.

15 “What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you cross land and sea to make one convert, and then you turn that person into twice the child of hell you yourselves are!”