WOES TO THE PHARISEES

Matthew 23:1–39

Key Verses: 23:25,26

1. What did Jesus warn the crowds and his disciples about the teachers of the law and the Pharisees? (1–4) What basic problem in them did he point out (5a), and in what ways did they do this? (5b–7) How did he instruct his disciples and us to be different? (8–12)
2. What is a “woe”? A “hypocrite”? What was Jesus’ first “woe” to the Pharisees? (13) How did they do this? (cf. 21:31,32; Lk7:29–30) What was his second “woe”? (15) Why were their efforts to win converts so bad?
3. What was his third “woe”? (16) What is a “blind guide”? How did their oaths reveal their materialism and blindness? (16–22) What was Jesus’ fourth “woe”? (23) What did this show about them? (24) How can we stay focused on the more important matters of justice, mercy and faithfulness?
4. Read verses 25,26. What was Jesus fifth “woe”? Why is cleaning only the outside of a cup or dish so foolish? How can we keep greed, self-indulgence and other sins out of our hearts? (1Jn1:6–10) How does striving to be clean within make us a useful vessel to God? How did his sixth “woe” reinforce the fifth? (27,28)

1. What was Jesus’ seventh “woe,” and how did this reveal their delusion? (29–32) How did he severely rebuke them? (33) What did he predict, and how would this show they were just like their ancestors? (34–36) Why were they like this?
2. What was Jesus’ lament for Jerusalem? (37) What can we learn about him here? How did he predict the destruction of the temple and his second coming? (38,39) Review what we learn in this chapter about how to avoid becoming spiritually blind and hypocritical.