

“Corneas, Camels, Cups, and Coffins”
Matthew 7:3-5, 23:24-28

Introduction: We are living in days of baby spirituality. Jesus was dealing with this same condition in His days. There are groups of people that are religious, but they are not spiritual enough to maintain their lists of standards. They condemn everyone else, but neglect to straighten out their own life. It is almost as if their measure of spirituality is based on them being better than others are. They compare themselves amongst themselves (II Corinthians 10:12). This method is very hypocritical. Notice what Jesus confronts as He deals with the hypocrites.

1. The Deception of the Hypocrites Matthew 23:13- “shut up the kingdom of heaven”
2. The Devouring of the Hypocrites Matthew 23:14- “devour widows’ houses”
3. The Discipleship of the Hypocrites Matthew 23:15- “make one proselyte”
4. The Dealings of the Hypocrites Matthew 23:16-24- “ye blind guides...Ye fools”
5. The Defilement of the Hypocrites Matthew 23:25-32- “hypocrites”

Body: Jesus is dealing with a people that are continuously judging others. The only problem is that they are guilty of the same sins, and even worse. They are guilty of the same things (Romans 2:1, 14:10). Most of the times, those that are very critical are the ones that have more sin in their lives. Notice the problems with such people as illustrated by Jesus in the Corneas, Camels, Cups, and Coffins.

- I. Corneas- A Problem With Ambitions Matthew 7:3-5, Luke 6:41-42
 - A. The Investigation Matt. 7:3- “And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye”
 1. The Meditation- “beholdest thou”
 - a. The Pharisees only saw the sin of others, and not theirs.
 - b. How many times do hypocrites inspect others life? Doing so changes the need to purify from self to others.
 2. The Mote- “the mote”
 - a. “mote” (Strong’s)- “a dry stalk or twig, a straw; chaff”
 - b. “mote” (Webster’s)- “A small particle; any thing proverbially small; a spot.”
 3. The Mischief- “in thy brother’s eye”
 - B. The Ignoring Matt. 7:3- “considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?”
 1. The Consideration of the Beam- “considerest not the beam”
 - a. “beam” (Strong’s)- “a thick plank”
 - b. “beam” (Webster’s)- “Any large piece of timber, long in proportion to its thickness, and squared, or hewed for use.”
 2. The Constant Battle- “in thine own eye”
 - C. The Intention Matt. 7:4- “Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye”
 1. The Promotion of Self Shown- “Let me”
 2. The Power of Self Sought- “pull out the mote”
 3. The Problem of Self Seen- “thine eye”

- D. The Ignorance Matt. 7:4- “a beam *is* in thine own eye”
 - 1. Notice the Hindered Sight- “a beam”
 - 2. Notice the Hypocrisy of Self- “in thine own eye”
 - E. The Instruction Matt. 7:5- “cast out the beam out of thine own eye”
 - 1. The Casting of Sin- “cast out the beam”
 - 2. The Consideration of Self- “out of thine own eye” James 1:22-24
 - a. Examine Our Salvation II Corinthians 13:5
 - b. Examine Our Sin I Corinthians 11:28
 - F. The Issue Matt. 7:5- “then shalt thou see clearly”
 - 1. Concerning Sinfulness of Self- “then shalt thou”
 - 2. Concerning Spiritual Sight- “see clearly”
 - G. The Involvement Matt. 7:5- “cast out the mote out of thy brother’s eye”
 - 1. A Humble Removal- “cast out the mote”
 - 2. A Helping Responsibility- “out of thy brother’s eye”
 - a. The eye is a very sensitive area.
 - b. When removing debris, we should be careful and have compassion. Being harsh could create more damage.
- II. Camels- A Problem With Acceptance Matthew 23:24
- A. The Sightlessness Matt. 23:24- “blind guides”
 - 1. Their Purpose- “guides”
 - 2. Their Problem- “blind”
 - B. The Straining Matt. 23:24- “strain at a gnat”
 - 1. The Straining of the Product- “strain”
 - a. This deals with the custom of straining out a gnat or dregs from wine.
 - b. Due to the hot climate of the Middle East, gnats were abundant. Therefore, they would get into foods and drinks. Before people would drink wine, they would strain it.
 - 2. The Smallness of the Pollution- “at a gnat”
 - a. Both the camel and the gnat were considered unclean. Jesus is describing the two extremes.
 - b. The Pharisees were careful about avoiding little defilements, but when it came to major ones, seemingly they swallowed them whole.
 - c. They were very inconsistent in their lifestyle and were disgusting in the sight of God.
 - C. The Swallowing Matt. 23:24- “swallow a camel”
 - 1. The Allowance of a Catastrophe- “swallow a camel”
 - 2. The Acceptance of a Camel- “swallow a camel”
- III. Cups- A Problem With Attitudes Matthew 23:25-26 (Mark 7:1-9, 14-23)
- A. The Inspection of the Cup Matt. 23:25- “ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter”
 - 1. The Personal Sanctification- “ye make clean”
 - 2. The Prioritized Sanitation- “the outside of the cup and of the platter”

- B. The Inside of the Cup Matt. 23:25- “within they are full of extortion and excess”
 - 1. The Enclosure of the Cup- “within” Romans 2:16
 - a. This presents a problem.
 - b. Anything you put in the cup will become defiled.
 - 2. The Evil of the Cup- “they are full of”
 - 3. The Extortion of the Cup- “extortion”
 - a. “extortion” (Strong’s)- “the act of plundering, robbery”
 - b. “extortion” (Webster’s)- “the act or practice of wresting any thing from a person by force, duress, menaces, authority, or by any undue exercise of power; illegal exaction; illegal compulsion to pay money”
 - 4. The Excess of the Cup- “and excess”
 - a. “excess” (Strong’s)- “want of self-control, incontinence, intemperance”
 - b. “excess” (Webster’s)- “In morals, any indulgence of appetite, passion or exertion, beyond the rules of God's word, or beyond any rule of propriety; intemperance in gratifications”
- C. The Intervention of the Cup Matt. 23:26- “cleanse first that *which is* within the cup and platter”
 - 1. The Cleaning Needed- “cleanse first that *which is* within”
 - 2. The Contamination Noticed- “and platter”
- D. The Improvement of the Cup Matt. 23:26- “the outside of them may be clean also”
 - 1. The Results of Washing- “the outside of them”
 - 2. The Revelation of Washing- “may be clean also”

IV. Coffins- A Problem With Appearance Matthew 23:27-28

- A. The Comeliness of the Sepulcher Matt. 23:27- “whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward”
 - 1. The Application to the Outside- “whited sepulchers”
 - a. Anyone that touched a dead body was considered unclean. Numbers 19:11, 16
 - b. This is why they would make the outside of the sepulcher “whited”. This process was done with lime.
 - 2. The Appearance of the Outside- “appear beautiful outward”
 - a. Due to the rain and soil, the lime would rinse off and become stained.
 - b. It became necessary to replenish the lime that rinsed off.
- B. The Contents of the Sepulcher Matt. 23:27- “within full of dead *men’s* bones, and of all uncleanness” I Samuel 16:7
 - 1. The Fullness of Bones- “full of dead *men’s* bones”
 - 2. The Foulness of Burial- “of all uncleanness” Ephesians 2:1
 - a. We must keep in mind that only the inside was unclean. They spent all their time cleaning the outside and did not regard the inside.

- b. The external beauty could not hide the internal corruption.
- C. The Countenance of the Sepulcher Matt. 23:28- “outwardly appear righteous unto men”
 - 1. Determined Method- “outwardly appear”
 - 2. Display to Men- “righteous unto men”
- D. The Compaction of the Sepulcher Matt. 23:28- “within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity”
 - 1. The Show- “hypocrisy”
 - a. “hypocrisy” (Strong’s)- “the acting of a stage player”
 - b. “hypocrisy” (Webster’s)- “Simulation; a feigning to be what one is not; or dissimulation, a concealment of one's real character or motives. More generally, hypocrisy is simulation, or the assuming of a false appearance of virtue or religion; a deceitful show of a good character, in morals or religion; a counterfeiting of religion.”
 - 2. The Sin- “iniquity”
 - a. “iniquity” (Strong’s)- “the condition of without law; because ignorant of it; because of violating it”
 - b. “iniquity” (Webster’s)- “Injustice; unrighteousness; a deviation from rectitude”

Conclusion: The sum of the message deals with people majoring on the minors (Matthew 23:23). Seemingly, hypocrites have guidelines and rules for everyone, but do not follow them personally. They forget the most important items of Christian living, which is law, judgment, mercy, and faith. We are quick to judge the small offences of others while allowing large offences in our lives to continue.