



(Matthew 23:1-13) ¹Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: ²"The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. ³So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. ⁴They tie up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them. ⁵"Everything they do is done for men to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; ⁶they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; ⁷they love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them 'Rabbi.' ⁸"But you are not to be called 'Rabbi,' for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. ⁹And do not call anyone on earth 'father,' for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. ¹⁰Nor are you to be called 'teacher,' for you have one Teacher, the Christ. ¹¹The greatest among you will be your servant. ¹²For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted. ¹³"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the kingdom of heaven in men's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to."

"No one, sir," she said. "Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin." (John 8:11)

1. To defuse the tension and conflict, don't make accusations; make observations.

Onomatopoeia - a word that's definition comes from its sound.

Religion - trying to please God by adhering to rules and regulations.

2. Following religious rules does not make you a Christian.

"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you are." (Matthew 23:15)

3. Rules are not more important than relationships.

¹⁶"Woe to you, blind guides! You say, 'If anyone swears by the temple, it means nothing; but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.' ¹⁷You blind fools! Which is greater: the gold, or the temple that makes the gold sacred?" (Matthew 23:16-17)

Want to Go Deeper?

- Memorize 1 John 2:2.
- Why do so many people fail to grasp the difference between religions and Jesus?
- Do you know someone who needs to better understand the core idea? How could you share with them?
- If you are ready to accept God's invitation to a new life, let us know and we will help you with next steps.
- Read *The Cross of Jesus* by Warren Wiersbe.

Please let us know the commitments you are making to God by using the Communication Card. We will pray for you.