



SERMON REFLECTION QUESTIONS – March 16, 2025

Sermon Series:	'Future-Proof'
Sermon Title:	'Taming Your Inner Pharisee'
Scripture:	Matthew 23:1-12, 23-26
Preacher:	Rev. Dr. Bryan Eckelmann

Theme/Concept: 'Practice what you preach' In this chapter, Jesus scathingly rebukes the clergy for their false religion. And his words were recorded and written so that WE would hear them -- so Matthew no doubt intends those words for THE CHURCH. So, how do we tame the 'pharisee' that is inside each one of us?

Icebreaker: (if with a small group) Has anyone served as a role model for humility in your life? Who and how?

Reflections on the Sermon: What point(s) from the sermon will you remember most?

Scripture Passage: Matthew 23:1-12, 23-26 (English Standard Version)

23 Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, ²“The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat, ³so do and observe whatever they tell you, but not the works they do. For they preach, but do not practice. ⁴They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to move them with their finger. ⁵They do all their deeds to be seen by others. For they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long, ⁶and they love the place of honor at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues ⁷and greetings in the marketplaces and being called rabbi by others. ⁸But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all brothers. ⁹And call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven. ¹⁰Neither be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Christ. ¹¹The greatest among you shall be your servant. ¹²Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.....

²³ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others. ²⁴ You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!

²⁵ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. ²⁶ You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean.

Reviewing the Scripture:

1. What does it mean to sit on 'Moses' seat'? Why was it important for the people to do and observe whatever the scribes and Pharisees said but not their works? (Matthew 23:2-3)
2. What fault of the scribes and Pharisees did Jesus describe in verse 4? How does this relate to the great commandments Jesus had identified to the Pharisees in Matthew 22:37-39?
3. What motivation did Jesus say governed the behavior of the Pharisees? What examples did Jesus give in verses 5-7?
4. What did Jesus mean when he gave instructions against calling anyone 'rabbi,' 'father,' or 'instructor?' Did Jesus mean that no one should be addressed by those titles? What is Jesus saying about the desire for authority and superiority?
5. How does Jesus' admonition in verses 8-10 about titles relate to His statements in verses 11-12 regarding humility?
6. What point was Jesus trying to make in verses 23-24 when stating that the scribes and Pharisees tithed mint, dill and cumin and strained out a gnat?
7. In verses 25-26, what point was Jesus making regarding the importance of the heart condition over the external appearance?
8. How do you imagine the people responded to Jesus exposing their religious leaders as corrupt?

Going Deeper:

1. In what ways do people, including church members and attenders, sometimes fake the Christian life?
2. In what ways have you failed to practice what you preach?
3. Have you ever heard anyone say, as a reason for not attending church, that Christians are hypocrites? If someone said that to you, what response would you give?
4. How can you distinguish between a false teacher or spiritual leader and a genuine spiritual leader?
5. What are some practical ways we can value others above ourselves and practice humility in our daily lives?

Closing prayer:

Dear Father-

Thank you for teaching us the importance of humility and authentic faith. Let us not forget that you are the only one whose name should be exalted. Help us to let go of our pride and self-seeking desires and show our love for you and others by the way we live our lives.

In Jesus name, AMEN

Service Opportunities to Consider:

World Relief So Cal – Little Brushstrokes | March 22 @ 9AM – 12PM

If you love to sketch, draw, or paint, help children use various art mediums to express their feelings and emotions as they resettle with their families in the U.S. Contact Janet Hendry (gscotthendry@aol.com)

Short-Term Mission Trip Info Session | March 23 @10:40am | Room 502

Join us for a 12-day short-term mission trip in July to Central Asia, where we will serve alongside one of our mission partners working among an unreached people group.

Applications are due by April 6. For more details, contact Laura at laura@tupcsa.org

Friends for Dinner–Easter Register before April 11

Bridges International invites Trinity families to host an international student from UCI this Easter. Visit <https://friends-for-dinner.com/hosts/orange-county/> to register. Contact Laura (laura@tupcsa.org).

Ladies Night @ OCRM | April 21 @ 6:15pm | Village of Hope

Women of Trinity join the Ladies of OCRM – Village of Hope for an evening of fellowship, dessert and a fun craft! Register online. Contact Debbie Ewing (dewing@cox.net) for more info.