

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

JESUS CONDEMNS FALSE LEADERSHIP

International Sunday School Lesson For March 1, 1953.

Memory Selection: "And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted."—Matt. 23: 12.

Lesson Text: Matthew 23: 1-12; 37-39.

This lesson should be one of great interest to all Christians—particularly those who have accepted places of leadership in the church. A sincere heart-searching should follow as a result of this particular study.

On Tuesday, of the last week of Jesus' life, he returned to the Temple at Jerusalem. There he again had three groups gathered around him—the twelve disciples, the crowds that usually followed him wherever he went, and, on the outskirts, the scribes and Pharisees, always present to question or criticize. Jesus took this occasion to address his remarks directly at these elders of the Jews. He was not denouncing them to embarrass them before the crowd, but that those who heard might know of the insincerity of their leadership. He charged these leaders with hypocrisy—claiming to be what they knew in their hearts they were not.

The scribes and the Pharisees claimed the right to lead as an inherited right from Moses—they sat in "Moses' seat" and claimed that their interpretations of God's laws were as sacred as those of Moses. Jesus did not advise his hearers to reject these leaders altogether. He told them to do what they were bidden to do—to obey God's laws—but not to imitate them in the way they practiced God's laws. Many people carelessly say today, "Do as I say, not as I do." We are reminded of another saying, equally true, "Actions speak louder than words."

Thus, Jesus' first criticism of the scribes and Pharisees was, "they say and do not." Certainly, today, one of the most common criticisms of our churches by those on the outside is that the lives of the members so often contradict the faith they profess. Professing Christians should remember that their every word and deed is being watched and weighed by those with whom they come in contact. How do they measure up in the eyes of those we influence?

The second criticism was that they had made of religion a burdensome, rather than a joyous, thing by their man-made interpretations and additions to God's laws. These minute interpretations took all the joy out of serving the Lord and Jesus would have none of it. Then, Jesus warned against ostentation—doing things "just to be seen of men." The scribes and Pharisees wore phylacteries on their foreheads and tassels on their capes in order that they might impress the people with their piety. They made it convenient to be on the street corners at the hours of prayers, in order that all might see and hear them! They were particularly careful to wash the dishes from which they ate, but not so careful that the food they ate was bought with honest money.

They required that the people scrupulously keep the law of the tithe, even to tithing such small items as plants which they used to flavor their food, but then allowed them to ignore more important commandments which required fairness and kindness to others. These same men, who wouldn't dare touch a grave because it would make them ceremoniously unclean, were just then plotting the murder of Jesus himself. In all these things, Jesus said they were "straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel." They were so concerned about the little things, they ignored the larger and more important matters altogether.

Such hypocrisy was more than Jesus could stand. To them he used some of the strongest language recorded as used by him: "You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to Hell?" The only way for them to escape was to accept Jesus as their Saviour. The same is true today—the only way to have eternal life is to accept and sincerely try to follow Jesus Christ. Then, and then only, can we be acceptable leaders in His kingdom.

(These commentaries are based on the International Uniform Sunday School Lesson outlines, copyrighted by the International Council of Religious Education and used by permission.)

BE A BETTER CITIZEN!
GO TO SOME CHURCH NEXT SUNDAY

For Prevention or Healing... CALL THE DOCTOR

"Johnny's sick!" The words strike fear in your heart, although your child's name may be Mary, Jane, or Bob. You put him to bed and call the doctor. You give him medicine and nurse him tenderly. It is easy to tell when your child is not well—physically, that is. And it is comparatively easy to provide whatever is necessary to heal him. But do you feel as much concern for his soul?

Perhaps you have not noticed symptoms of spiritual indisposition. Perhaps you have thoughtlessly disregarded his spiritual needs. Yet his body is only temporal. His soul will live on—and on—and on! Your Church is like a doctor—ready to heal illnesses of the spirit, but even more eager to prevent them.

Attend Church regularly with all your family for spiritual check-ups, just as you call on your family physician for physical care.

THE CHURCH FOR ALL . . . ALL FOR THE CHURCH

The Church is the greatest factor on earth for the building of character and good citizenship. It is a storehouse of spiritual values. Without a strong Church, neither democracy nor civilization can survive. There are four sound reasons why every person should attend services regularly and support the Church. They are: (1) For his own sake. (2) For his children's sake. (3) For the sake of his community and nation. (4) For the sake of the Church itself, which needs his moral and material support. Plan to go to church regularly and read your Bible daily.

Day	Book	Chapter	Verses
Sunday	Psalms	121	1-8
Monday	Ecclesiastes	3	1-12
Tuesday	Matthew	7	13-21
Wednesday	Matthew	9	10-13
Thursday	Matthew	23	14-30
Friday	Matthew	25	31-46
Saturday	James	5	15-19

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Perquimans Church Services

HERTFORD BAPTIST CHURCH
C. W. Duling, Pastor
Sunday School, 9:45 A. M.
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.
Evening Worship, 8 o'clock.
Mid-week Services, Wednesday at 8 P. M.

BETHLEHEM CHURCH OF CHRIST
Joe Brickhouse, Pastor
First Sunday
11 A. M. and 8 P. M.

BURGESS BAPTIST CHURCH
Colon Jackson, Jr., Pastor
Church services second and fourth Sundays at 11 A. M.
Sunday School at 10:00 A. M.
Church service 7:45 P. M. second and fourth Sundays.

PERQUIMANS CHARGE CHURCHES
H. M. Jamieson, Pastor

First Sunday:
New Hope Church, 11:00 A. M.
Oak Grove Church, 7:00 P. M.

Second Sunday
Winfall Church, 11:00 A. M.
Cedar Grove Church, 10 A. M.
Woodland Church, 7:00 P. M.

Third Sunday
Oak Grove Church, 11:00 A. M.
New Hope Church, 7:00 P. M.

Fourth Sunday
Cedar Grove Church, 11:00 A. M.
Woodland Church, 10 A. M.
Winfall Church, 7:00 P. M.

Fifth Sunday
Woodland Church, 11:00 A. M.
Prayer Meeting each Wednesday at Winfall Church, 7:00 P. M.

ANDERSON'S METHODIST CHURCH
C. H. Beale, Pastor
Church School, 10:00 A. M.
Morning Worship, 11:00 A. M., second and fourth Sundays.

WOODVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH
Harvey L. Coppidge, Pastor
Church Services on second and fourth Sundays at 11 A. M.
First and Third Sundays at 7:45 P. M.
Sunday School 9:45 A. M.

UP RIVER FRIENDS CHURCH
Elizabeth White, Pastor
Sunday School, 9:45 A. M.
Church Services, 11 A. M.
Christian Endeavor, 6:30 P. M.

BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH
Rev. Bennie Crawford, Pastor
Sunday School, 10 A. M.
Preaching first and third Sundays at 11 A. M.
Preaching second and fourth Sunday evening at 7:30.

PINEY WOODS FRIENDS CHURCH
D. Virginia Pike, Pastor
Church School 10 A. M.
Morning Worship 11 A. M.
Young People's Meeting 7 P. M.

WHITEVILLE GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH
Caleb Goodwin, Jr., Pastor
Sunday School, 11 A. M., every Sunday except third Sunday.
Church services every third Sunday at 3 P. M.

HERTFORD METHODIST CHURCH
A. L. Chaplin, Pastor
Church School, 9:45 A. M.
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.
Youth Fellowship, 6:45 P. M.
Evening Worship, 7:30 P. M.
Mid-week Fellowship, Wednesday at 7:30 P. M.

BAGLEY SWAMP PILGRIM
Coy S. Saunders, Pastor
Sunday School, 10:00 A. M.
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.
Young People's Meeting, 6:30 P. M.
Evening Worship, 7:30 o'clock.
Mid-week Services, Thursday at 7:30 P. M.

HOLY TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH
Rev. Charles F. Wulf, Rector.
9:45 A. M., Church School, every Sunday.
9:00 A. M., Holy Communion, 1st Sunday.
8:30 A. M., Holy Communion, 2nd, 4th, 5th Sundays.
11:00 A. M., Holy Communion, 3rd Sunday.
11:00 A. M., Morning Prayer, 2nd, 4th, 5th Sundays.
10:00 A. M., Holy Communion, Fridays and Saints' Days.

BEREA CHURCH OF CHRIST
Walker Perry, Pastor
2nd and 4th Sunday at 10:30 A. M.
Morning worship on first and third Sundays at 11 A. M.
Evening worship first and third Sundays at 7:30 P. M.

CHAPPELL HILL BAPTIST CHURCH
Rev. Ralph Knight, Pastor
Sunday School, 2 P. M. every first Sunday.
Church Service 3 P. M. every first Sunday.
Sunday School at 11 A. M. every second, third and fourth Sunday.

Go To Church Your Church Any Church But Go