



GateWay Church

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**Transformation, the single most important thing He does.  
Matthew 23:11-36 NASB**

### **Introduction**

**<sup>11</sup> But the greatest among you shall be your servant. <sup>12</sup> Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.**

### **Woe #1 & 2, An invitation in the wrong direction:**

**<sup>13</sup> “But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from people; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in. <sup>15</sup> “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you travel around on sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.**

### **Woe #3 & 4, A connection to the wrong priorities:**

16 “Woe to you, blind guides, who say, ‘Whoever swears by the temple, *that* is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple is obligated.’ 17 You fools and blind men! Which is more important, the gold or the temple that sanctified the gold? 18 And, ‘Whoever swears by the altar, *that* is nothing, but whoever swears by the offering on it, he is obligated.’ 19 You blind men, which is more important, the offering, or the altar that sanctifies the offering? 20 Therefore, whoever swears by the altar, swears *both* by the altar and by everything on it. 21 And whoever swears by the temple, swears *both* by the temple and by Him who dwells within it. 22 And whoever swears by heaven, swears *both* by the throne of God and by Him who sits upon it.

23 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others. 24 You blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!

#### Woe #5 & 6, leadership training to the wrong level:

25 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence. 26 You blind Pharisee, first clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may become clean also.

27 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness. 28 So you, too, outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

#### Woe #7, The fulfillment of wrong ancestry:

29 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, 30 and say, ‘If we had been *living* in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partners with them in *shedding* the blood of the prophets.’ 31 So you testify against yourselves, that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. 32 Fill up, then, the measure of the guilt of your

**fathers.** <sup>33</sup> You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?

<sup>34</sup> “Therefore, behold, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city, <sup>35</sup> so that upon you may fall *the guilt of* all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. <sup>36</sup> Truly I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

**So What?!**

**#1. Our invitations are to OPEN heaven.**

...you shut off the kingdom of heaven from people;

**#2. Our relationships are to be HEALTHY.**

...the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness;

**#3. Our training is to be learned INTERNALLY.**

...first clean the inside of the cup and of the dish,

#### **#4. Our ancestry is with GOD THE FATHER.**

**Fill up, then, the measure *of the guilt* of your fathers.**

**Questions for further discussion.**

**Transformation, the single most important thing He does.**

**Prayer Requests:**

**Group Discussion: Who is your most famous ancestor? Who from your family ancestors are you most like and why?**

**Read: Matthew 23:13-36, also, remember from Matthew 5:3-11 Jesus uses the word “blessed” to highlight a 9 point job description for all Christ followers. The passage in Matthew 23 is the antithesis of that, it is the 7 point job description for those who want to use religion to exercise power over and push others away from the truth of God’s grace. Jesus is also emphasizing God’s power being used for personal internal transformation that becomes a righteous lifestyle of walking with God which would be appealing to others.**

**Woe #1 & 2. The Pharisees were influencing people toward hell and not heaven. The Pharisees commanded righteous people (believers) to be separate from sinful people (not-yet-believers) instead of engaging people with the health and goodness of a life following Christ. What’s one healthy aspect of your life that Christ has built in you that could be engaging to not-yet-believers? Have you ever had the opportunity to invite someone into relationship with Christ or GateWay Church?**

**Woe #3 & 4. The Pharisees were influencing people to connect with the wrong priorities. Jesus says instead of separating yourself and being pure from gnats in your wine, purify yourself with “justice, mercy and faithfulness.” Think back on the past couple of weeks, when you’ve made decisions have you engaged internally with questions like: “Is this just and fair to all concerned?” “Does this decision reflect the mercy of Jesus?” “Am I remaining faithful to my commitments by deciding this?” Can you come up with a small example of justice, mercy or faithfulness?**

**Woe #5 & 6. The Pharisees majored on the exterior not the interior. Someone once suggested that we Christians are often more concerned with a Christian reputation than we are a true Christian lifestyle. What do you think they meant by that? How can we keep that from happening to us?**

**Woe #7. The Pharisees were proud of their heritage yet it was filled with persecution of Israel's religious leaders. Can you name a Christian leader from the past of whom you've had a sense of healthy pride? What was it that you appreciated about them?**

**Family Time: Plan a 5 course family meal (appetizer, salad, soup, entrée, dessert, obviously very small portions) Have the adults be servers (wear black pants/white shirt) and the kids be the dinner guests. The servers don't eat, they serve, fill water glasses etc. At the end of the dinner read Matthew 23:11 and talk about what it's like to be the guest and what it's like to be the server.**