

What’s the Problem?

Outward religiosity with no inward reality

Jesus and the Pharisees

Matthew 23 – The seven “woes”

“Hypocrites”

“Shutting the kingdom of God in people’s faces” (23:13) and being “blind guides” (23:16).

A test case for true faith – caring for the “least of these”

Who are the least of these? (25:35-36)

What do these people have in common?

They aren’t very useful to you

Their problems could very well be caused by their own choices

What’s the Answer?

An answer that won’t work

Isn’t Jesus telling us to go care for the least of these? If so... how much do I have to care? What does God require?

Leviticus 19:18 “but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.”

Space for notes about the final judgment...

A Gospel answer

Why love the foreigner? Because I was a foreigner. (Deuteronomy 10:19)

Why love the least of these? Because I am the least of these.

1 Cor. 15:9 “For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle...”

Ephesians 3:8 “To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ...”

Jesus made himself the least!

⁵Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death— even death on a cross! -

Action: Give of yourself to someone who isn't much use to you.

Questions for Personal Study

1. What attitude of the heart is Jesus confronting in this passage?
2. Why is that attitude (referencing question 1) a sign of a person not truly knowing God? Why is it evidence that the person is destined for judgment (v. 46)?
3. Take a moment to reflect: what is your attitude towards the least of these?
4. How could you practically give of yourself to someone who isn't much use to you?