

Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March

Matthew 23: 13 – 36

“But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. For you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in.<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>15</sup> Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel across sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell<sup>[a]</sup> as yourselves.

<sup>16</sup> “Woe to you, blind guides, who say, ‘If anyone swears by the temple, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.’ <sup>17</sup> You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that has made the gold sacred? <sup>18</sup> And you say, ‘If anyone swears by the altar, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gift that is on the altar, he is bound by his oath.’ <sup>19</sup> You blind men! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred? <sup>20</sup> So whoever swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it. <sup>21</sup> And whoever swears by the temple swears by it and by him who dwells in it. <sup>22</sup> And whoever swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by him who sits upon it.

<sup>23</sup> “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. <sup>24</sup> You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!

<sup>25</sup> **“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. <sup>26</sup> You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean.**

<sup>27</sup> **“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness. <sup>28</sup> So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.**

<sup>29</sup> “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the monuments of the righteous, <sup>30</sup> saying, ‘If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.’ <sup>31</sup> Thus you witness against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. <sup>32</sup> Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers. <sup>33</sup> You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell? <sup>34</sup> Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some

you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from town to town, <sup>35</sup> so that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah,<sup>[4]</sup> whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. <sup>36</sup> Truly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

## Story

Today's Bible passage is about Jesus giving warnings to the Pharisees and scribes.

The Pharisees and scribes were Jewish leaders but they didn't love or agree with Jesus.

So let's think about warnings – Do you ever watch the weather forecast? Sometimes the presenter gives a 'weather warning' for a storm or wind or ice and snow. They give this warning so we can change our plans and be prepared.

Jesus was warning the Pharisees that if they did not change their ways and follow Him then they would not go to heaven.

What things were the Pharisees doing?

Verses 25-26

**‘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. <sup>26</sup> You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean. ‘**

Do you help to wash the dishes at home?

Well, wouldn't it be strange to clean the outside of the cup but not the inside?

You wouldn't want to use it again because the inside bit was still dirty !

Jesus said the Pharisees wanted to look clean, to look good on the outside, to look like they loved God but inside they were really dirty. They were filled with greed and self-indulgence.

They needed to first love God on the inside and then the outside would be right anyway.

Do we ever do that?

It's easy to go to church or GB or BB and pretend you love Jesus but really you don't spend any other time thinking about Him or following Him.

This is a warning not to be like that. The most important thing is to love Jesus on the inside first. To know your sins are forgiven and to love and follow Him.

You need to be clean on the inside and outside!

### Pray

Father God, we thank you for the gift of Jesus. We thank you that we can have our sins forgiven and love and follow you. We ask that you would help us to do this. Amen

### Questions

1. What book of the Bible is our passage found in?
2. Who was Jesus giving these woes or warnings to?
3. What did Jesus mean when he said their cup looked clean on the outside but was dirty on the inside?
4. What does that mean for us?

## What's in your Cup ?

From the words below write inside the cup what should be inside you and outside the cup things you don't think we should have and decorate!

Peace Meanness Love Joy Envy Pride  
Patience Sharing

