

False Spiritual Leaders, Part 5

John MacArthur

I. Introduction.

A. Text: Matthew 23.

B. Jesus calls out false spiritual leaders.

C. Even though these are condemned, there is still hope for those who did not follow them.

D. Jesus tells the leaders after condemning them to fill up the wrath of their fathers. Judgment, wrath and sin are like those things that fill up a cup. When the cup is filled up, God strikes in judgment.

1. Jesus does not desire evil to be done, but he tells the condemned to get it over with. (John 13:27)

2. The history of Israel has been a filling up of sins. There is only so much wickedness before judgment would come to Israel.

3. The Israelite leaders were exercising the same sins that their fathers were.

E. Jesus promises that the religious leaders would not escape hell.

1. The condemnation is severe.

2. It is tragic that the religious leaders perverted the truth and poisoned the people.

II. Immanent condemnation.

A. Jesus promises to send more prophets and scribes.

B. He is not sending them so that they will have more chances to believe but so that they will have more opportunities for guilt so that they will bear the full weight of their sin.

C. A preacher always finds success whether through conversion or judgment. (2 Corinthians 2:14, Revelation 22, Romans 9:21)

D. The Word of condemnation would come quickly to fulfillment by God through the Jewish holocaust of 70 AD. (Luke 21:22)

III. Intimate compassion.

IV. Inward conversion.

Application Questions:

1. Why do you think the condemnation of the religious leaders by Jesus is particularly harsh?

2. How can sharing the gospel be an act of condemnation?

3. How should believers respond to false religious leaders when it is clear what they are teaching is false? Explain.
