

# Matthew 23:16-28. Christ Denounces Four More Woes Against the Pharisees.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

---

*Favell Lee Mortimer's sermon denounces the hypocrisy of the Pharisees while urging believers to seek genuine faith and a clean heart before God.*

**Scripture:** Malachi 3:2, Romans 2:16, 1 Corinthians 4:7, 2 Corinthians 12:14, Colossians 1:27

**Topics:** "Hypocrisy", "True Devotion"

---

## Description

Favell Lee Mortimer delivers a sermon exposing the Pharisees' love of money, leading them to teach lies and act hypocritically. He contrasts the Pharisees' outward religious performance with their lack of true devotion to God, warning against similar hypocrisy in modern times where people prioritize appearances over genuine faith. Mortimer highlights the importance of having a sincere heart before God, drawing a parallel between the saints who hold Christ as a treasure in earthen vessels and the wicked who are compared to dross, facing God's judgment and refining.

---

## Transcript

Our God is the God of truth. There was no truth in the Pharisees. They taught lies, and they acted lies. In the passage we have just read a woe is denounced against them for teaching lies. They taught the people that the gold of the temple was more holy than the temple itself; and that the gift on the altar was more holy than the altar--whereas it was clear that it was the temple that sanctified the gold, and the altar that sanctified the gift.

What could be their motive for teaching these errors? No doubt it was the love of money. They hoped to induce the people to bestow much gold, and to offer many gifts as sacrifices, that by these means they themselves might grow rich. The love of money has in all ages led men to teach falsehood. Roman Catholic priests gain money by the masses they repeat for the dead. They tell the people that the souls of their relations are in torment, and that they can release them by repeating prayers or masses on their behalf; but they will not repeat these masses, unless money is given to them. One mark of a faithful minister is his indifference to worldly gain, or to filthy lucre, as the Scriptures call it. Like Paul he can say, "I seek not yours, but you." (2 Cor. 12:14.)

The Pharisees not only spoke lies, they acted them. They pretended to be so very pious, that they would not omit paying tithes to the priests of the smallest herbs; while at the same time they omitted paying to

God the greatest duties they owed to him, such as judgment, mercy, and faith. And why? Because men could see them when they gave their tithes, but God alone knew the state of their hearts.

Are there not some like the Pharisees in these days? They are careful to perform religious services when the eye of man is upon them; but they are indifferent when the eye of God alone observes. They attend church regularly because men see them there. But do they pray in secret regularly? They are very careful of their words, because men hear them; but they are very careless about their thoughts, because God alone sees them. What can better represent such characters than cups clean outside and filthy within, than sepulchers beautifully ornamented containing dead men's bones?

How different is the description that the Holy Spirit has given of the saints! Paul says, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels." (1 Cor. 4:7.) The saints are despised by the world, and valued no more than an earthen vessel; but in their hearts a treasure is hid--it is Christ, the hope of glory. (Col. 1:27.) In the sight of God, who sees the heart, they are precious as gold and silver. It is true that they are not without sin; but God has promised to refine them, as gold and silver are purified from their dross. (Mal. 3:2.) But the wicked are compared to the dross of silver, and to the baser metals. God said to Ezekiel, "Son of man, the house of Israel has to me become dross; all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are even the dross of silver." And what would God do to these impenitent, unbelieving, unconverted people? "Because you have all become dross, behold therefore, I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver, (that is, the dross of silver,) and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it to melt it; so will I gather you in my anger and in my fury; and I will leave you there, and melt you." (Ezek. 22:18-20.) Afflictions do not refine hypocrites; but destroy them. God leaves them in their troubles, and permits them to perish. But if our hearts are right in the sight of God, he will never leave us. His promise to everyone who sincerely loves him is, "I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him." Are there any here who never cry earnestly to God for a clean heart, and a right spirit? What will you do in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ? (Rom. 2:16.)

---

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/favell-lee-mortimer/matthew-2316-28-christ-denounces-four-more-woes-against-the-pharisees/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**