

Sermon Outline

May 10 Matthew 22:15-46
“The Big Question”

- † The unasked question

- † Straight answers to twisted questions

- † The Big question

- † What if he really is the Christ?

† Points to Ponder to Prepare

May 10 Matthew 23
“Softening a Stiff Neck”

For years, behind the scenes the Jewish leaders have been viciously slandering Jesus. See for example John 8:48. Jesus has always responded with patience and restraint. He isn't concerned with his personal reputation, but only the honor of God the Father.

That is the best lens for understanding Matthew 23. This is not an example of Jesus losing his cool and finally giving the Pharisees what they deserve. Strange as it sounds, this chapter is a display of compassion, not indignation.

† Take a few minutes to read through these seven warnings of Matthew 23. Take note of the tone of the conclusion in vv. 37-39

He warns the Pharisees (and the crowds) of sin that leads to death. The goal is for them to repent and find mercy, but they will not.

- † What are the sins that Jesus points out to them?
- † Are these sins present in our broader culture?
- † Some of these sins are especially tempting for religious people. Where are they present in churches in our nation and in our own hearts?

Scripture readings for the week

Sunday May 10	Deuteronomy 5
Monday May 11	Deuteronomy 6
Tuesday May 12	Deuteronomy 7
Wed May 13	Deuteronomy 8
Thursday May 14	Deuteronomy 9
Friday May 15	Deuteronomy 10
Saturday May 16	Deuteronomy 11-12
Sunday May 17	Deuteronomy 13-14

Prayer Focus

Last Thursday was the National Day of Prayer. This coming Thursday is Ascension Day. Our prayer focus is the intersection of these two dates. We pray for our nation and the world with a clear understanding that the risen Lord Jesus Christ is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

- † Pray for the peace and prosperity of our land. (Jeremiah 29:7)
- † Pray for our leaders, for wisdom and courage, for the discerning and doing of what is right. (I Timothy 2:1-2)
- † Pray for justice and mercy to mark all our ways. (Amos 5:24)
- † Pray that the Church will always seek first the Kingdom of Heaven, (Matthew 6:33), remembering that is where our true citizenship lies. (Philippians 3:20)