

# Encounters with Jesus

## The Pharisees

(Matthew 23:1-39)

- Introduction:
1. On two separate occasions, Jesus told his disciples to “beware the leaven of the Pharisees” (Matthew 16:6; Luke 12:1).
  2. The disciples didn’t immediately understand what he meant so he explained it in two separate ways.
    - a. The leaven was the “teaching” of the Pharisees (Matthew 16:12).
    - b. The leaven was the “hypocrisy” of the Pharisees (Luke 12:1).
  3. Tonight, I would like to examine why Jesus had such stern words for the Pharisees, and then ask ourselves to take inventory.

### I. The Pharisees Were Enemies of Jesus

- A. I don’t know that Jesus had any greater enemies than the Scribes and Pharisees.
  1. They assailed him vehemently and cross-examined him (Luke 11:53-54).
  2. They tested him (Matthew 19:3).
  3. They plotted against him how they might destroy him (Matthew 12:14).
  4. They sought to kill him (John 5:18).
  5. They plotted to put him to death (John 11:53).
- B. Jesus never spoke harsher words to any group of people than what is recorded in Matthew 23.

### II. Reasons for the Condemnation of the Pharisees

- A. Money -vs- Mercy (Matthew 23:14; Exodus 22:22-24).
- B. Conquests -vs- Converts (Matthew 23:15).
- C. Craftiness -vs- Commitment (Matthew 23:16-22).
- D. Minors -vs- Majors (Matthew 23:23-24).
- E. Show -vs- Spirit (Matthew 23:25-28).
- F. Talk -vs- Truth (Matthew 23:29-36).

- Conclusion:
1. Friends, the Pharisees serve as an ancient reminder that God can see through our hypocrisy.
  2. We’re not going to “bluff” our way into heaven.
  3. We must genuinely love the Lord and his church if we want eternal life.
  4. Let me call you to a renewed zeal with which you serve the Lord.