

TELL IT LIKE IT IS TUESDAY

Part 1b

MATTHEW 23



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- Prior to chapter 23, Jesus has been addressing questions from the religious leaders and telling parables directed at the scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees.
- But, when we get to chapter 23, Jesus takes direct aim and unloads on his opponents.
- Their hypocrisy is exposed!!!

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- Articulation, Avoidance and Arrogance
 - Matt. 23:1-12 is Jesus warning the crowds and the disciples about the scribes and Pharisees, unveiling their hypocrisy.
 - Matt. 23:13-36 is a section explicitly directed to these abusers of God's religious expectations. Jesus pronounces 7 Woes on these spiritually corrupt religious figures.

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- Identifying the woes:
 - Woe #1- Shutting the kingdom to the people.
 - These teachers of the law are false leaders. They have lead the people away from God rather than towards Him!
 - They were doing everything in their power to dissuade any belief in Jesus as the Messiah.
 - If you don't have Jesus, you not in the kingdom.

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- Identifying the woes:
 - Woe #2- Mislead Converts.
 - Jesus is not here condemning the practice of evangelizing or making disciples.
 - But you better be careful about what you use to make disciples.
 - They would elevate their traditions to level commandments from God.

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- Identifying the woes:
 - Woe #3- Swearing and dishonesty.
 - Apparently, there were promises that could be broken!
 - How much trust could you really have in these people?
 - Jesus tells us to simply say “yes” or “no” according to Matt. 5:37.

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- Identifying the woes:
 - Woe #4- Omitting weightier matters.
 - Jesus doesn't care about your doctrine or your worship practices if you focus only on these and forget to love.
 - Paul confirms as much in I Cor. 13:1ff.
 - Do we think that we can appease God by honoring the things that he is least concerned about?

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- Identifying the woes:
 - Woes #5, #6- Outward perceptions versus internal realities.
 - They looked good outwardly but they were rotten to the core.
 - Woe #7- Oblivious to repetitive behaviors.
 - They were doing the same things that their fathers had been guilty of.
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