

How Should I Respond?



Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, “The teachers of religious law and the Pharisees are the official interpreters of the law of Moses. So practice and obey whatever they tell you, but don’t follow their example. For they don’t practice what they teach. They crush people with unbearable religious demands and never lift a finger to ease the burden.

“Everything they do is for show. On their arms they wear extra wide prayer boxes with Scripture verses inside, and they wear robes with extra long tassels. And they love to sit at the head table at banquets and in the seats of honor in the synagogues. They love to receive respectful greetings as they walk in the marketplaces, and to be called ‘Rabbi.’”

~ Matthew 23:1-7

“Don’t let anyone call you ‘Rabbi,’ for you have only one teacher, and all of you are equal as brothers and sisters. And don’t address anyone here on earth as ‘Father,’ for only God in heaven is your spiritual Father. And don’t let anyone call you ‘Teacher,’ for you have only one teacher, the Messiah. The greatest among you must be a servant. But those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

~ Matthew 23:8-12

“What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you shut the door of the Kingdom of Heaven in people’s faces. You won’t go in yourselves, and you don’t let others enter either.

“What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you cross land and sea to make one convert, and then you turn that person into twice the child of hell you yourselves are!”

~ Matthew 23:13-15

Four Things Jesus Recognized

- I. They weren't spiritually IGNORANT.
- II. Only a BOLD RESPONSE would stand a chance of making a difference in these hypocrites.

How can you think of saying to your friend, “Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,” when you can’t see past the log in your own eye? Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend’s eye.

~ Matthew 7:4-5

Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me
and know my anxious thoughts. Point out
anything in me that offends you, and lead me
along the path of everlasting life.

~ Psalm 139:23-24

If another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should *gently and humbly* help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself.

~ Galatians 6:1

Four Things Jesus Recognized

- I. They weren't spiritually IGNORANT.
- II. Only a BOLD RESPONSE would stand a chance of making a difference in these hypocrites.
- III. The people who were in a position to be INFLUENCED by the hypocrites needed to be addressed too.
- IV. Change often comes SLOWLY to people's lives.

So God's message continued to spread. The number of believers greatly increased in Jerusalem, *and many of the Jewish priests were converted, too.*

~ Acts 6:7

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