

Peace be with you. We greet you in the name of God, the Lord of peace, who wants everyone to understand and submit to the way of righteousness that He has established, and have true peace with Him forever. We are happy to be able to return today to present your program *The Way of Righteousness*.

In our previous study, we heard about how the Messiah, **Jesus, entered Jerusalem, fully aware** that Jerusalem was the city of the priests and the teachers of the law—the very ones who were conspiring together to murder Him! Jesus knew everything that would happen to Him, but that did not keep Him from going to Jerusalem. He knew that He had been born in order to die as a sacrifice for the sins of the world. Only a few days were left before the priests would arrest Him and have Him nailed to a cross.

Therefore, wherever you may be today, we ask you to pay careful attention as the Lord Jesus warns the religious rulers of the Jews, and admonishes them for their hypocrisy and their wickedness. The **words** we will hear today are **hard**--and **true**. Sometimes it hurts to hear the truth. Today's lesson is full of such painful words. As the old African saying goes: "Truth is a hot pepper!"

As we saw in our last lesson, after Jesus entered Jerusalem, each day He went into the temple and taught the people. Every day the religious leaders and the teachers of the law sought an opportunity to catch Jesus in something He said so that they might have an excuse to put Him to death. However, they feared the people who were listening to Jesus attentively, not missing a word.

In the Gospel of Luke, chapter twenty, the Scripture says:

*Keeping a close watch on him, [the chief priests] sent **spies, who pretended to be honest. They hoped to catch Jesus in something he said so that they might hand him over to the power and authority of the governor. So the spies questioned him: "Teacher,***

*we know that you speak and teach what is right, and that you do not show partiality but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" He saw through their duplicity [and their hypocrisy. "Why are you trying to trap me?" he asked. "Bring me a denarius and let me look at it." They brought the coin, and he asked them, "Whose portrait and inscription are on it?" "Caesar's," they replied. He said to them, "**Then give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's.**" They were unable to trap him in what he had said there in public. And astonished by his answer, they became silent.*

*That same day the **Sadducees**, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question. "Teacher," they said, "Moses told us that if a man dies without having children, his brother must marry the widow and have children for him. Now there were seven brothers among us. The first one married and died, and since he had no children, he left his wife to his brother. The same thing happened to the second and third brother, right on down to the seventh. Finally, the woman died. Now then, at the resurrection, whose wife will she be of the seven, since all of them were married to her?" Jesus replied, "**You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God.** The people of this age marry and are given in marriage. But those who are considered worthy of taking part in that age and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage, and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God's children, since they are children of the resurrection. But in the account of the bush, even Moses showed that the dead rise, for he calls the Lord 'the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'. He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive."*

*When the crowds heard this, they were astonished at his teaching. Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the **Pharisees** got together. One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the*

Law?" Jesus replied: "**Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.**' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: **'Love your neighbor as yourself.'** All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, "**What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?**" "The son of David," they replied. He said to them, "How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him 'Lord'? For he says, "'The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.'" If then David calls him 'Lord', how can he be his son?" No one could say a word in reply, and **from that day on no one dared to ask him any more questions.**

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: "The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. ...But do not do what they do, for **they do not practice what they preach.** They tie up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them. "Everything they do is done for men to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; they love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them 'Rabbi'. But you are not to be called 'Rabbi', for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth 'father', for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. Nor are you to be called 'teacher', for you have one Teacher, the Christ. The greatest among you will be your servant. **For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.**

"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the kingdom of heaven in men's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to.

"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you are.

"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices-mint, dill and cummin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law-justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel.

"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean.

"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men's bones and everything unclean. In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.

*"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You build tombs for the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous. And you say, 'If we had lived in the days of our forefathers, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.' So you testify against yourselves that you are the descendants of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of the sin of your forefathers! "You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?... "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, **but you were not willing!***

*Jesus left the temple and was walking away when his disciples came up to him to call his attention to its buildings. "Do you see all these things?" he asked. "I tell you the truth, **not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down.**" As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. "Tell us," they said, "when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?"*

*Jesus answered: "**Watch out that no one deceives you.** For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth-pains. Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and **many false prophets will appear and deceive many people...** At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'There he is!' do not believe it. For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect-if that were possible. **See, I have told you ahead of time.** So if anyone tells you, 'There he is, out in the desert,' do not go out; or, 'Here he is, in the inner rooms,' do not believe it. For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man."*

*"Immediately after the distress of those days 'the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.' At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. **They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory.** And he will send his angels with a loud*

trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other."

*"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world... "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.' **Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life!**"*

We must stop here today. We heard the Lord Jesus **scold** the religious rulers for their hypocrisy and hardness of heart. We also heard Him **warn** His disciples concerning those who would come after Him, pretending to be prophets, but deceiving many people. Finally, we heard the Lord Jesus **announce** that He will one day return to earth, coming out of heaven with His mighty angels, to judge those who refuse to obey God's Good News about the Messiah, the Savior of sinners.

Yes, we have heard some **hard words** today, but they are also **good words** because they are **true words**. And they are **wonderful words** for all those who believe them, because the Lord Jesus said, *"You will know the truth, and **the truth will set you free!**"*

Thank you for listening. Please join us next time to learn about one of Jesus' disciples who went to the High Priest in order to betray Jesus into the hands of those who wanted to kill Him...

God bless you as you consider what the Lord Jesus declared, saying,

*"You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God!" But
"the truth will set you free!"*

If you would like more information about *The Way of Righteousness*, please visit the website: TWOR.com. That website again is TWOR.com