

Sermon Reflections

It's a Trap (Part 2) Matthew 22:15-46

Summary: Learn from the Lord Jesus to avoid the factious traps that lead us away from the truth.

Factious Traps to Avoid

3. The Trap of Selfish Legalism (vv. 34-40)

- Jesus cuts through the legalistic motivation behind the question: “Which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” In response, Jesus quotes something that the Pharisees would have been familiar with – the Shema. Read Deuteronomy 6:4-6. From this passage, what does God want to resonate in the hearts and minds of His people?
- How does the command: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” expose the hypocrisy of the Pharisees? What are some reasons why the Pharisees probably did not anticipate this as a possible answer to their question?
- What connects the second commandment: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” – with the first commandment? Why does a love for God necessitate a genuine love for others?
- Are there ministries that you are involved with that are fueled by a sense of duty instead of a love for Christ and others? How can you genuinely reflect an increasing love for Christ as you serve in His church? (Read 1 Cor 13.)
- In verse 40, what did Jesus mean by: “On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets”? How would you restate this in your own words?

4. The Trap of Self-Assured Egotism (vv. 41-46)

- Define Egotism. The Pharisees, in their pride, were thinking that they knew so much about the Scriptures, yet their knowledge was very superficial. Why might they have been confident in their answer, “The son of David”, to Jesus’ question in verse 42? How does this answer uncover a limited understanding of who the Messiah actually is?
- Read Psalm 110:1. Why would the Pharisees have been bewildered at the idea that David refers to the Messiah as “Lord”? Would this challenge any preconceived ideas they might have had about the nature of the Messiah? Why or why not?
- Read John 5:39. It is ironic that the Scriptures point to Jesus and yet He points them to a Scripture that declares Himself to be more than a mere man. Why would the Pharisees have been offended at this? Is this the first time that Jesus makes a declaration that alludes to His Deity? List other references from Scripture.
- How did the Pharisees respond to Jesus’ final question in verse 45? What does their response reveal about their hearts?
- When confronted with the truths of Scripture, what are some practical ways to avoid indifference, apathy or even a hardness of heart?