

INTRODUCTION

- * Last week, we saw Jesus rebuke the Pharisees and Lawyers for being concerned about their outward appearance and living differently on the inside.
- * We would call this activity "hypocrisy." Hypocrisy is actually the transliteration of a Greek Word and it is actually what Jesus summarizes their activity as and about which He warns His disciples.
- * In today's passage, we see Jesus present four warnings to His followers and those pressing in about Him: beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, beware of fearing men, beware of denying the Messiah, and beware of blaspheming the Holy Spirit.

INSTRUCTION**I. THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES (v. 1-3)**

A. The I _____ of the Leaven

B. The I _____ of the Leaven

II. THE FEAR OF GOD (v. 4-7)

- * Proverbs 1:7; Psalm 112:1-2; Jeremiah 5:21-25; Isaiah 50:9-11

III. THE CONFESSION OF THE MESSIAH (v. 8-9)

A. The D _____ of the Messiah

B. The D _____ of the Scriptures

1. THE M _____ OF CONFESSION (cf. John 1:20; 1 John 1:9)

2. THE E _____ OF CONFESSION

- * John 9:22; 12:42; Romans 10:9-10; 1 John 4:2-3, 15; Titus 1:16; Matt 7:21-23

- * Hebrews 3:1; 4:14; 10:23 ... Hebrews 3:14

IV. THE MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (v. 10-12)

A. The C _____ of the L _____ (v. 10; John 6:44; 16:7-11; 1 Corinthians 12:3; Ephesians 1:13-14)

B. The E _____ of the S _____ (v. 11-12; cf. John 14:26; Acts 4:8; 6:8-10; 1 Cor 2:11-14)

INTROSPECTION

- * What does your life and your words reveal about what is inside you?
- * Are you living as a "hypocrite" - pretending to be what you are not on the inside?
- * Do you fear God, confess Christ, and submit to the ministry of the Holy Spirit?
- * Is there a need to change the way you think and therefore the way you act?

INTERACTION ... Thoughts & Questions to ponder for later discussion

- * How important is our individual "walk" with Christ to the growth of the body of Christ?
- * To what extent, or level, should the body of Christ condone, or look over, the sin of hypocrisy? (cf. Prov 10:12; 17:9; 28:13; 1 Corinthians 5:6-8)