

The Condemnation—Part 2c
“The Judgments”
Matthew 23:13-33

- I. **They Are Spiritual Roadblocks** (v. 13)
- II. **They Are Spiritual Predators** (v. 14; cf. Mark 12:40; Luke 20:47)
- III. **They Are Spiritual Corrupters** (v. 15)
- IV. **They Are Spiritual Liars** (vs. 16-22)
- V. **They Are Spiritual Fools** (vs. 23-24)

VI. **They Are Spiritual C_____ (vs. 25-26)**

- a. “a person who tricks other people in order to get their money”
- b. Jesus dealt with this same issue in Matthew 15:1-20
 - i. The key is the human heart (cf. Isa. 29:13; 1 Sam. 16:7; Prov. 4:23; 10:11; 21:2; 24:12; Ps. 14:1; Ezek. 11:21; 16:30; Matt. 12:34; Mark 7:15; Luke 6:45; 16:14-15)
- c. Jesus’ imagery is meant to be disgusting because the scribes and Pharisees were spiritual revolting
- d. Also, Jesus’ condemnations are getting stronger and stronger
 - i. **robbery = harpagē (ἄρπαγή)** = “plunder, confiscation, robbery; something taken by force...violent greed, a state of strong desire for gain by any means; greediness”
 - ii. **self-indulgence = akrasia (ἀκρασία)** = “lack of self-control, implying then self-indulgence”

VII. **They Are Spiritual K_____ (vs. 27-28)**

- a. Old Testament Law taught that if you touched a tomb, you were ceremonially unclean (cf. Num. 6:6; 19:11-16; Lev. 21:11; Luke 10:5-37)
 - i. Therefore, they would **whitewash** tombs to make them visible to pilgrims

- b. **bones and all uncleanness** = imagery that again highlights the revulsion of these leaders (cf. John 11:39)
- c. **are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness = anomia (ἀνομία)** = “lawlessness, wickedness” (cf. Matt. 7:23; 13:41; 23:28; 24:12; Rom. 4:7; 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:14; 2 Thess. 2:3, 7; Titus 2:14; Heb. 1:9; 10:17; 1 John 3:4)
- d. They were spiritually the “walking-dead” unable to see, discern, or understand God’s Word or Law (cf. 1 Cor. 2:10-14)

VIII. **They Are Spiritual K_____ (vs. 29-33)**

- a. **you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous** = During Herod the Great’s reign Israel experienced an age of Grand Building Projects (Temple, Masada, Caesarea Maritima, etc.)
- b. **our fathers** = links the scribes and Pharisees with those who murdered the **prophets**
- c. **we would not have been partners with them** = highlights the level of their spiritual blindness & delusion
- d. **you testify against yourselves** = they incriminated themselves (Neh. 9:26; cf. 2 Chron. 36:15–16; cf. Jer. 26:20–23; 38:4; 1 Kings 18:4, 13; 19:10, 14; 2 Kings 6:31-32; John 11:47–53)
- e. **Fill up, then, the measure of the guilt of your fathers** = “finish what your spiritual fathers started!”
 - i. Although God is long-suffering and gracious, there is a **measure of guilt** that He will NOT tolerate (cf. Gen. 15:16; Lev. 18:24-25; Isa. 6:9; Jer. 44:25; Amos 4:4–5; Acts 5:1-11; Rom. 1:21-32; 1 Thess. 2:16)
- f. **you brood of vipers** (cf. Matt. 3:7; 12:34; John 8:44)