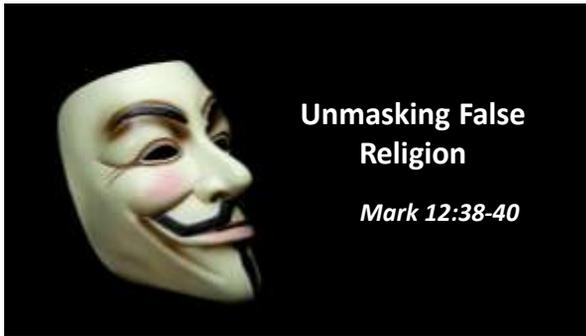


Unmasking False Religion

Mark 12:38-40



I. The Danger of False Religion (38a)

- Cf. Matt. 23:13, 15, 16, 23, 25, 27, 29 – “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees.”
- Cf. Matt. 23:13 - “But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from people; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.”

I. The Danger of False Religion (38a)

- Cf. Deut. 7:25 - “The graven images of their gods you are to burn with fire; you shall not covet the silver or the gold that is on them, nor take it for yourselves, or you will be snared by it, for it is an abomination to the LORD your God.”
- Cf. Deut. 16:22 - “You shall not set up for yourself a *sacred* pillar which the LORD your God hates.”

False Religion Originates with Demons!

- **1) Pagan religion**
 - Deut. 32:17 - “They sacrificed to demons who were not God, To gods whom they have not known, New *gods* who came lately, Whom your fathers did not dread.”
 - 1 Cor. 10:20 - *No*, but *I say* that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers in demons.
 - Rev. 9:20 - The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk;

False Religion Originates with Demons!

- **1) Pagan religion**
- **2) Perversions of the true faith**
 - 1 Tim. 4:1 - But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons,

II. The Character of False Religion (38b-40c)

- **A. It always panders to human pride (38b-39).**
- **B. It is always financially driven (40a).**
 - Cf. Is. 10:1-2 - Woe to those who enact evil statutes And to those who constantly record unjust decisions, so as to deprive the needy of justice And rob the poor of My people of *their* rights, So that widows may be their spoil And that they may plunder the orphans.
 - 1 Tim. 6:5; Tit. 1:11; 2 Pet. 2:3; Jude 11

Unmasking False Religion

Mark 12:38-40

II. The Character of False Religion (38b-40c)

- A. It always panders to human pride (38b-39).
- B. It is always financially driven (40a).
- C. Its spirituality is always a fraud (40b).
 - Cf. Matt. 6:5
 - Cf. Matt. 23:5 - "But they do all their deeds to be noticed by men;

BCC News: Fight in the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem



Matt. 23:1-39

- 1-12 – addressed to the disciples
- 13-39 – addressed directly to the scribes and Pharisees

Seven Woes...

- 1) a false gospel (13)
- 2) an aggressive proselytism (15)
- 3) an accepted dishonesty (16-22)
- 4) a misplaced emphasis (23-24)
- 5) an intentional externalism (25-26)
- 6) a false spirituality (27-28)
- 7) the true faith's enemy (29-36)

Mark 12:38-40

- I. The Danger of False Religion (38a)
- II. The Character of False Religion (38b-40c)
- III. The End of False Religion (40c)

Unmasking False Religion personally...

- **1)** Beware personally of false religion.
 - a) of embracing it
 - b) of being unwittingly influenced by its aberrations
- **2)** Think clearly and speak directly about false religion and its leaders.
 - Matt. 3:7-8 - But when [John] saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"⁸
 - "Therefore bear fruit in keeping with repentance;
 - Matt. 23:15, 33

Unmasking False Religion

Mark 12:38-40

Unmasking False Religion personally...

- **3)** Try to rescue those enslaved to false religion.
 - Jude 22-23 - And have mercy on some, who are doubting; ²³ save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.
- **4)** Remember that Jesus always knows our hearts and the true nature of our faith.