# Condemning Counterfeit Worship MATTHEW 23:13-36

Without the heart it is not worship; it is a stage play; an acting a part without being that person really a hypocrite. We may truly be said to worship God-though we lack perfection; but we cannot be said to worship Him if we lack sincerity.

-Stephen Charnock

## Counterfeit Worship...

I. Excludes from the Kingdom

II. Excuses Sin

III. Exalts the Unimportant

IV. Is Externally Driven

V. Expels the Truth

VI. Brings Eternal Judgment

### Into the Bible

1. Jesus reserves his harshest criticism for the scribes and Pharisees because of their consistent willingness to reject, abuse, and finally kill God's messengers to them. He knows what they are planning and how his week will end. How much more direct is Jesus here than in his earlier parable of the master of the vineyard in Mathew 21:33-41?

 In verses 23-28, Jesus pronounces woe on the hypocrisy of the Pharisees for focusing on the external keeping of the Law and their own traditions, thereby missing the real point of obedience. For more examples of this read Mark 7:1-9, Mark 3:1-6, Matthew 12:1-7. What is God's true desire that they missed? (Hosea 6:6, Proverbs 21:3, I Samuel 15:22)

#### Application

3. Jesus challenged the hypocrisy of the Pharisees for swearing oaths and making promises only to break them with excuses and technical loopholes. What does the Bible tell us about making and keeping our promises? (Psalm 15:1-4, Matthew 5:33-37, James 5:12)

#### For your Families

4. Talk with your children about the importance of keeping our word when we promise something.