

February 11, 2024 – Pastor Kevin Olivier
Luke 11:45-54 — “Those Who Hinder Faith”

- A. It is noble for a religious person to pursue education and an ordained calling because he or she seeks to promote the Christian faith. For some, it is a terrible reality that they are hindering the saving faith of many!
- B. After Jesus finished giving a series of “**woes**” to the Pharisees (**vv39-44**), the one of the lawyers present at the lunch felt offended by what Jesus said. →**v45**

Avoid the ways the lawyers hindered the faith.	I. WEIGHING MEN DOWN WITH BURDENS II. APPROVING THE MURDER OF THE PROPHETS III. REMOVING THE KEY OF KNOWLEDGE
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I. **WEIGHING MEN DOWN WITH BURDENS** → **v46**

- A. The term scribe and lawyer should be used interchangeably.
- B. Alfred Edersheim (1825-1889), a Jewish convert to Christianity, wrote about the identity of the scribe or lawyer during the life of Christ in his book, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*.¹
- Beyond the laws that the OT laid down, in the Mishnah, Rabbis gave 39 major categories (with hundreds of subcategories) of labor that were forbidden based on the types of work that were related to the construction of the Tabernacle in the wilderness.
 - Myjewishlearning.com gives an explanation of activities that by extension are prohibited on the Sabbath.
 - Modern day Jewish lawyers or scribes still “**weigh men down with burdens hard to bear.**” It is doubtful they even keep such restrictions themselves.
- C. We should love having the rich, balanced and wise words of our Westminster Confession of Faith!
- This document is opposed to false doctrine regarding what we should believe about things such as the nature of the Triune God and the plan of salvation.
 - The authors of the Confession were also concerned to prevent legalism or the practice of laying unscriptural burdens upon a man, woman, or child.
 - WCF 20, section 2 says, “God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are, in anything, contrary to His Word; or beside it, if matters of faith, or worship.”
 - The WLC has extensive writing concerning how we ought to keep the ten commandments; however, this is wise and reasonable.

¹ <https://ccel.org/ccel/e/edersheim/lifetimes/cache/lifetimes.pdf>

II. APPROVING THE MURDER OF THE PROPHETS →vv47-48

A. According to the divine interpretation of Jesus, these men approved of their fathers who murdered the prophets. This proved to be true by their unrighteous, murderous actions later on.

1. They later were plotting to put Him to death!
2. The Jewish leadership also sought to kill the apostles after the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension on of the Lord Jesus Christ.

B. Because of their sin, Jesus said that vengeance would come upon their generation. →vv49-51

1. Here their guilt will be that they will kill and persecute the apostles in the same fashion as their forefathers did to the prophets long ago.

2. The period from the blood of Abel to Zechariah covers thousands of years of history.

3. The mention of Zechariah deserves a look at the history of his murder. → 2 Chron 24

a. Just before Zechariah died, he called upon the Lord to **“see and avenge!”**

b. Jesus said this vengeance of God would be **“charged against this generation”** – His current audience.

1) Speaking of the destruction of the temple wherein not one stone would be left upon another, Jesus said in Mat 24:34 **“Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place”**

2) Also foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, John wrote in Rev 1: **“Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near” (v3).**

III. REMOVING THE KEY OF KNOWLEDGE →vv52-54

A. Ps 119 is an excellent place to look for how we ought to delight in God’s Holy Word. → vv9-18

1. God’s Word is to be treasured with all your heart— you are to hide the Word in your heart so that you can learn how to grow in your fight against sin.
2. You are to rejoice in His testimonies as in all riches, meditating on God’s Word.
3. You should read it with great expectation, praying to God, **“Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your law” (Ps 119:18).**

B. These legal experts on God’s law knew Ps 119 and many other such passages very well. What did they do wrong to have the key of knowledge taken away from them?

1. Dr. William Hendrickson wrote, “The very men who are supposed to unlock the Scripture... They are burying the law of God under a load of man-made ‘traditions.’” Instead of trusting Jesus Christ the Messiah whom the Father sent, “... they have substituted salvation by obedience to countless man-made regulations and hairsplitting stipulations.”²
2. If they were searching the Scriptures carefully and prayerfully for eternal life, they would have discovered that the Word of God testifies about Jesus Christ³ as the Messiah who the Father revealed to Isaiah, **“the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities” (Isa 53:11).**

C. It is inevitable that there will be tradition in our churches; however, we must ensure that those practices are based entirely upon the Word of God.

Review, conclusion, and further application:

² Hendrickson, Wm. New Testament Commentary: Luke, p. 643

³ see John 5:39-40