

Luke 11:37-54 – “Misery Loves Company”, May 15, 2022

I. Welcome & Review

A. Good morning, Ohayo gozaimasu! Welcome to Calvary Chapel Iwakuni! It is great to be here with you all today.

1. *Welcome any new people and those who may be streaming content.*

B. Before we dismiss the kids we are going to take just a few minutes to pray for a very special family that is going to be leaving us here in Iwakuni and heading back to Beaufort, SC.

1. The Conner family has faithfully served the Lord here at Calvary and have been a blessing to many of us throughout their time here.

2. Anson & Rachel are usually two of the first faces you see when coming as they are often downstairs greeting everyone making us all feel welcome in this place.

3. The kids have been involved in service as well. Hannah has helped out with Children’s ministry and Si has helped in our sound booth. Heath and Garret are always good for a helping hand as well when preparing for potlucks and other activities around the church.

4. The entire family is going to be missed. And while they don’t head out officially for another couple weeks, this is their last Sunday with us as a family as Anson is more than likely going to be working next weekend.

5. Because I didn’t want to miss the opportunity to pray for the whole family, I figured we’d just pray for them today. But you should see them around here for another week and half or so.

6. Conner family, I’d like to ask you to rise to your feet so that we may acknowledge you and pray for you. And if you should feel so inclined, church family, and you’d

like to go lay hands on our brothers and sisters that would be welcome. No pressure and no funny business. Just laying on our hands upon them in agreement as we lift them to the Lord.

*7. Pray for new season, new community, new friends, old friends, a church community, and blessing on travel and final preparations.*

C. As we make our way back to our seats, let's go ahead and dismiss our little ones to their Sunday School classrooms at this time.

D. Now, I know that PCS season is here. So if you are headed out sometime soon, please let me know so that we may be able to pray for you and yours as well. Just come see me after service to let me know.

E. Well, let's go ahead and turn our attention to the Word of God and all that the Lord has in store for us this week.

1. This morning we are going to continue our march through the gospel of Luke, and so will you all please open up your Bibles and head to Luke chapter 11?

2. This morning the plan is to finish off chapter 11 by looking at a portion of Scripture where Jesus is invited to share in a meal with a group of people that we would least expect.

3. Jesus is going to be invited to the house of a Pharisee to share in a meal along with some acquaintances of the Pharisee. It is something that we would not expect to see, knowing the disdain the Pharisees have towards Jesus.

4. And yet Jesus welcomes the invitation and will end up going to the house. Along with this unexpected invitation to fellowship are going to come some unexpected words Jesus would have for his host and his company.

5. The title of our message this morning is going to be “**Misery Loves Company**”. We’re going to pick up where we last left off in chapter 11 at verse 37 and we’re going to make our way all the way down to the completion of the chapter in verse 54.
6. Is everyone there in Luke chapter 11? I’d like to invite you all to rise to your feet in honor of the Lord and His Word. I’m going to read our text in its entirety from my Bible, do your best to follow along in your own.
7. Luke writes the following in chapter 11 verse 37... (*R & P*)

## II. Intro

- A. The old English idiom “Misery loves company” can be traced back to 19<sup>th</sup> century, but a form of the saying can actually be traced back some 2,500 years to the days of the ancient Greeks.
  1. Sophocles, the ancient Greek playwright, is credited with a form of this phrase in some of his famous works of tragedy dating back to the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC.
- B. Now the exact meaning of this phrase can take on a couple different shades of a similar truth.
  1. One way to look at it is in somewhat of a comforting way. People who are struggling or going through tough times and difficulties like to surround themselves with other fellow sufferers because it makes the pain easier to bear.
    - a. From this perspective this phrase could be used in support of coming alongside someone who is hurting and helping them cope with something that you too have experienced or are experiencing.
    - b. But I don’t think that this is the most common way to use this phrase.
  2. Another way to look at it takes on a more negative feel.

- a. The idea could be that unhappy miserable people find solace in the fact that that other people are experiencing the same sort of difficulties and unhappiness as them. Knowing that others are perhaps suffering worse than they are, brings a sense of satisfaction to their own situation.
3. A third way to look at this takes upon itself a very nefarious and sinful approach.
  - a. When we say “misery loves company” it can mean that miserable people actually find joy and pleasure in making other people miserable and unhappy. Unhappy people do and say things to those who are otherwise happy and doing well, with the intent of dragging them down and making them feel worse than them.
- C. In our text this morning we are going to see Jesus interacting with some miserable people. People who were caught up in legalism and ritualism that wanted nothing more than to make people fall into their same sense of legalism and ritualism.
  1. We know that they were miserable people because Jesus is going to share multiple woes with them. The term “woe” as Jesus uses six times in our text this morning carries with it the idea of denouncing misery and actually pitying it.
  2. Jesus shares multiple woes with these people who are in misery and are wanting to bring others into their misery. He denounces it as evil, but at the same time there is a sense of pity towards them. .
  3. Even though these people had it out for Jesus and were trying everything they could to come against Him, Jesus actually pities them and their situation.
  4. Despite their harsh feelings and actions towards them, Jesus would love to see them actually turn from their

sinful ways and receive the grace and forgiveness that He offers. He pities them knowing how lost they are and how bad their situation has become.

D. Well, let's dive into our text and see what the Lord would have for us today. Read with me again the opening of our text in verses 37 & 38.

### III. Luke 11:37-38;

A. Jesus had just finished addressing the naysayers and doubters who claimed that Jesus was able to cast out demons by the power of Satan and who tested Him by demanding He show them a sign from heaven.

1. Now, we aren't told specifically who those people were in Luke's gospel.
2. Matthew records a similar incident involving both Pharisees and scribes that took place in the region of Galilee in Matthew chapter 12.
3. Here in Luke, Jesus is believed to be in the region of Judea and it is about a year after the incident recorded in Matthew's account.
4. In Matthew's account it was the Pharisees that accused him of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub and it was both the Pharisees and the scribes who demanded of Jesus a sign from heaven.
5. Though we can't be certain of who the group is here, because Luke is silent on the matter, it isn't too hard to believe that those who spoke up were either Pharisees or scribes, or people sent by and influenced by these religious leaders who had it in for Jesus.

B. The fact that we know these religious leaders had it in for Jesus makes this invitation to break bread all the more suspicious, but Jesus accepts the invitation and goes to the house of a certain Pharisee to dine with him.

1. Though not mentioned off the bat, we can tell from the rest of the account that this was not a private fellowship between the Pharisee and Jesus, for the Pharisee also had invited other Pharisees and scribes to join with Jesus at this meal.
  2. This meal, was not a big fancy dinner or feast. More than likely a small breakfast or lunch of some sorts.
    - a. We know this to be true based upon the Greek wording used here. The Greek word translated “dine” speaks of a meal that takes place prior to the principal meal of supper.
    - b. Even the Greek word that is translated as “dinner” at the end of verse 38 is actually defined as a meal taken at no particular time; it could correlate with breakfast or lunch.
    - c. It is distinctly different from the Greek word used for supper; the principal meal taken usually in the early part of the evening.
- C. Well, as Jesus entered and sat down to eat, the Pharisee marveled that Jesus did not first wash before sitting down.
1. Now, I need to make sure that you all understand what is meant here by the term wash. This is not referring to hygiene. They didn't marvel at Jesus' apparent lack of hygiene and not washing His hands before eating His meal.
  2. The Greek word used here for “wash” is “baptizo”, it's where we get our English word “baptize” from. This term was used to speak of a washing that was done for religious purposes; a ceremonial cleansing.
  3. The Pharisees held to a certain tradition that demanded one ceremonially wash their hands prior to eating. **Mark 7:3** tells us this, “For the Pharisees and

all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands in a special way, holding the tradition of the elders.”

4. Typically the washing would consist of taking water and pouring it over your hands so that you can wash your hands rubbing them together.
5. You'd need to be careful as to not let the water run down your arm for this would spread any impurities that were on you to your body.
6. Then there would be a secondary pouring of water over the hands in order to rinse the hands of impurity.
7. Now the interesting thing about this tradition is that it is actually rooted in what was prescribed for the priests.
  - a. The priests who performed the temple sacrifices were required to wash their hands and their feet before entering into the tabernacle of meeting, or before coming before the altar to minister to the Lord.
  - b. The priests were required to partake of the offerings that were allotted to them in a holy place; within the tabernacle of meeting at first, and later within the temple.
  - c. This is where this ritual comes from. It was a very serious offense not to wash. In fact, the Bible commands in Exodus that they shall wash, lest they die. This was a big deal. (**Ex. 30:20**)
8. And while this was a very serious offense for a priest not to ceremonially wash before partaking of a meal in the holy place, this wasn't something that was given to the rest of the Jewish community.
  - a. The Pharisees, who prided themselves on following not just the Law, but also the traditions of the elders, took what the Lord gave to a specific group of

people in a specific situation and applied it to everyone in every situation.

- b. Instead of it being just for the priests when they are eating at the tabernacle or in the temple, it was expected of all the people every time they sat down to any sort of meal that involved bread.

D. This was not part of the law, but man's traditions. The elders and rabbis had taken something that God gave for the priests serving in the holy place and applied it to everyone in everyplace.

1. When we take something that God gave to someone specifically and start to apply it to everyone, we run the danger of becoming just like these Pharisees.
2. Be careful church family that you don't fall into this trap.
  - a. You know, there may be times, or seasons, or situations where the Lord speaks to you about a certain thing you are to do, or a certain thing you are not to do. Be careful that you don't take what God gave you and start expecting everyone else to be doing the same.
3. That can be our tendency; the temptation is often to take what God speaks to us and to apply it to not only our own lives, but to the lives of everyone else around us. And we begin to expect people to live and act a certain way based upon something specific God gave us.
4. Listen up, **that is the basis for legalism**. And getting caught up in legalism will lead you to being just like these Pharisees; miserable unhappy people.
  - a. People that are constantly looking down upon others for the way they live their life, because they don't live

the way God has led them to live. Don't let yourself fall into this temptation.

- b. Listen for God's word, allow Him to speak to you and be obedient to what He gives you, but trust that the Lord is able to speak to and lead others just as He led you.
- c. And give the Lord the benefit of the doubt that He may just know what you need and that it is different from what someone else needs.
- d. We will all stand before the Lord and give an account for whether we were faithful with all that the Lord gave us. Let's not be overly concerned and judgmental towards our brothers and sisters in the Lord who may not do things the same as us.
- e. Let's trust that God is more than able to lead His own children and to direct them in the things they should or should not be doing. Let's keep our eyes on the Lord and stop looking down upon others.

E. Well, let's continue on and see how Jesus responds to this Pharisee that marveled at Jesus' lack of ceremonial washing. Read with me vs. 39-41.

#### IV. Luke 11:39-41;

A. Jesus, either responding to the look of shock and astonishment on the face of the Pharisee, or simply knowing the thoughts and intents of his heart, responds with a rebuke towards the Pharisee and his Pharisee friends.

1. Part of the tradition of the elders that the Pharisees followed not only involved elaborate and excessive ceremonial washing of their hands, it also involved cups, pitchers, copper vessels, and couches (long chairs used for reclining on at meals) according to Mark. (**Mk.7:4b**)

B. The Pharisees would spend so much time and energy on washing the outside of the cups and dishes they used, but did not bother to cleanse their inward parts that were full of greed and wickedness.

1. The wording here is pretty strong and quite accusatory. The word greed speaks of plundering and taking things by force. The word wickedness carries the sense of perverting virtue and moral principles from their purposes to evil ends.
2. In essence, what these Pharisees did was violently rob people, taking from them what was good and turning it into something that was evil.
3. Because they did this the people started to hate doing things that were actually good and beneficial for them. They turned good things like following God's Word into something that was evil. The people didn't want anything to do with following God's Word because the Pharisees had made it such a painful and burdensome thing to do.

C. Chooses calls them out as "fools". Because they failed to consider that the one who made the outside, is the same who made the inside.

1. The Lord sees and knows what is happening on the inside just as easily as He sees what is happening on the outside; nothing is hidden from His eyes. Yet these Pharisees acted like as long as the outside looked good, it didn't matter what the inside was like.

D. Jesus' recourse to them in verse 41 is not trying to suggest that if they simply give money to the poor that they would be cleansed from their inner wickedness.

1. Giving alms was not just speaking of giving money to the poor. The root word speaks of mercifulness and compassion. Giving alms meant giving mercy and compassion to those who were in need of it.

2. Instead of coming down upon the people in harshness and bitterness, Jesus is telling them to be merciful to people, to have compassion towards people who desperately need it.
    - a. The same Greek word is found in the Septuagint in the book of Proverbs where it reads, “He who follows righteousness and mercy Finds life, righteousness and honor.” (Pro. 21:21)
    - b. The word mercy is the same word that is here translated as alms.
  3. If these Pharisees would give alms, (that is, be merciful and compassionate towards those who need it), they would let go of their greed and wickedness that was inside of them and replace it with mercy and compassion and end up finding life, righteousness, and honor.
  4. These were the things they seem to be seeking after in the first place. They wanted to find life, righteousness, and honor, but they went about it in all the wrong ways.
- E. Again, such a great word and a warning for us to heed. Let’s be careful not to follow the example of the Pharisees where we focus so much attention on the outside and appearances that **we miss out on the real work God wants to do on the inside.**
1. If we will allow God to work on the inside, then we won’t have to focus so much energy on putting up a front and trying to make the outside look so good, because the natural work God does on the inside will reveal itself on the outside.
- F. Jesus is going to continue his rebuke towards the Pharisees with a series of woes, three in fact, that we will take a look at individually that we may understand what Jesus was saying and that we may avoid playing the part

of the Pharisee in our own walk with the Lord. Take a look at the first woe with me in verse 42.

V. Luke 11:42;

A. The first woe involved the Pharisees meticulous act of tithing.

1. The Pharisees were so exacting when it came to the tithe that they would actually tithe from the herbs of their garden.
2. Herbs will produce small flowers that you can harvest very small seeds from. Most people will cut away the flowers because the more flowers an herb produces the less potent the flavor of the herb.
3. But still you allow some flowers to grow flowers that you may plant new herbs after the season is finished. These Pharisees would actually count out the seeds of their herb garden and tithe off of them.

B. And yet, while they were so meticulous when it came to the tithe, they left other things that were significantly more important undone.

1. They tithed from the herbs of their garden, but did not bother to engage in justice and the love of God. Justice speaks of doing what was right, treating others in a fair and reasonable manner. It focuses upon our relationships with others. The love of God obviously focuses upon our relationship with the Lord.
2. It reminds me of what Jesus said in response to the question about what the greatest commandment was. Jesus replied, "You shall love the Lord your god with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all you mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." (**Mt. 22:37-40**)

3. The greatest commandment involves loving God and loving others, treating others the way you want to be treated, fairly and with justice.
- C. The problem that Jesus is focusing in on here was the Pharisees tendency to not only major on the minors, but to do so while completely neglecting the majors.
1. Yes, they tithed, they tithed the very seeds of their herb garden. But they failed to love God and love others.
  2. Jesus tells them that they should have tithed, He didn't tell them not to do so, but exhorts them to make sure they don't leave the other, more important things, undone.
  3. Tithing is great. Giving to the Lord is something I believe we should all practice. But we need to make sure that we are also doing the major things. In light of loving God and others, whether or not you tithe off every single little thing really isn't all that important.
  4. God wants us and our hearts far more than He wants our tithes and offerings; our sacrifices.
    - a. Proverbs 21:3 states, "To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice." **(Pro. 21:3)**
    - b. Psalm 51 affirms, "For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart—These, O God, You will not despise." **(Ps. 51:16-17)**
    - c. In Hosea, we here straight from the Lord when He declared through Hosea, "I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." **(Hos. 6:6)**

d. Micah 6:6-8 testifies, “With what shall I come before the Lord, And bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, With calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, Ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you But to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.” (**Mic. 6:6-8**)

5. God wants our hearts, He wants us to be merciful and compassionate, to know Him and to walk with Him far more than He wants our burnt offerings, our sacrifices, our gifts to Him.

6. May we be reminded to not focus so much attention on the minor things, but to **focus upon the major things God is looking for**. As we focus upon the majors, the minors will take care of themselves.

D. Let's continue. Take a look at verse 43.

VI. Luke 11:43;

A. Jesus shared another woe with the Pharisees.

Remember these woes were interjections of grief and denunciation. He was denouncing their evil practices, while at the same time feeling pity and grief towards them wanting them to turn from their ways.

B. Here he states how the Pharisees loved the best seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces.

1. Within the synagogues would often be built special seating for the religious leaders up in front right next to the table where the scrolls would be unrolled and read from.

2. These were places of prominence and the Pharisees loved to be put up in front of others as someone

special. They loved to be greeted in the marketplaces and recognized for their position.

3. They wanted to be revered, and respected, and honored by men. They wanted to be seen as people that were special.
4. The problem with the Pharisees was that they were more concerned with the praise of man than they were the praise of God. They cared more about what the people thought of them, then they did about what God thought about them.
5. The Pharisees loved the perks that came with their position as religious leaders, but forgot their basic responsibility of being religious leaders; helping people grow closer to the Lord.
  - a. They loved the praise of the people, but didn't do anything to actually serve the people.
6. The crazy thing to consider is that they would go through such elaborate efforts to seek the praise and approval of people they often showed contempt towards; people they looked down upon and viewed as lesser or lower than themselves. It makes absolutely no sense whatsoever.

C. May we be a people that are **more concerned with the Lord and His thoughts** towards us than we are with people and their thoughts.

1. May we live to serve and honor the Lord and not ourselves.

D. Let's take a look at Jesus' third and final woe towards the Pharisees, and note with me how he adds in an additional group here in the final woe.

VII. Luke 11:44;

- A. In this final woe directed towards the Pharisees, Jesus also lumps in the scribes as well saying how they are both hypocrites.
1. The word hypocrite speaks of one who acts pretentiously, a counterfeit, a man who assumes and speaks or acts under a feigned character.
    - a. It was a term used in the theatre to depict the actors as ones who wore a mask. Someone who pretended to be something or someone they weren't.
- B. Jesus referred to them as hypocrites because they were like graves which are not seen, and the men who walk over them are not aware of them.
1. Jews were very mindful of carefully marking grave sights because of what was written in the law about coming into contact with a grave.
  2. In the book of Numbers we are told how coming into contact with anything that was dead; whether it be one slain by a sword or one who had died, or the bones of a man or a grave, that it would defile you and make you ceremonially unclean for seven days. (**Num. 19:16**)
- C. The implication Jesus is giving here is that these Pharisees and scribes go around acting like they are holy, but in reality, they are defiled.
1. Not only are they themselves defiled, but on top of that, they defile everyone they come into contact with.
  2. Instead of leading others into holiness and godliness, they end up bringing defilement and desecration to all who are influenced by them.
- D. The application for us is quite simple. We need to make sure that we are not playing the part of the hypocrite.

1. It is a sad testament that there are so many outside the church who want little or nothing at all to do with the Lord and with church because from their perspective the church is filled with a bunch of hypocrites.
2. And the truth is, there are many who claim to be one thing with their words, but in their actions say something completely different.
3. We need to make sure that **our words and our actions are in agreement**. That we not only say we are Christians, but live and walk and love as Christ did as well.

E. Now, these words of Jesus here in verse 44 struck a nerve with some who were gathered there. Read verse 45 with me.

#### VIII. Luke 11:45;

A. Accusations were being brought forth, individual personal character was being questioned and people's reputations were being challenged and so in true form here, the lawyers from the group speak up (no offense Perry/Andrew). *"Hey, that's defamation of character! You can't say that!"*

1. Just kidding. Kind of.

B. The lawyers were brought into this exchange because Jesus had included the scribes in his final woe against the Pharisees. And the scribes of that day were the experts in the Law.

1. Not necessarily the civil law or criminal law like we think of today; but the Mosaic Law. They were seen as the experts on what the Law of Moses, the first five books of the Bible had to say and teach.

C. These lawyers didn't like Jesus lumping them together with the Pharisees. But as we'll see, they should have just remained silent. For now, Jesus turns His focus

upon them and shares with them a series of three woes that were for them alone.

D. Let's take a look at the first one in verse 46.

IX. Luke 11:46;

A. Jesus says "Woe to you too, lawyers!" Why? Because they load men with burdens hard to bear, and yet they themselves don't bother to even touch the same burdens with one of their fingers.

1. The lawyers played a special part in laying the foundation for what would become the ways of the Pharisees. It was the lawyers' vast interpretation and commentary upon the Law that led the Pharisees into their extreme positions and keeping to the traditions of the elders.

2. The entire oppressive religious system was due in large part to the lawyers' interpretation and opinion upon God's word.

B. So, Jesus draw His attention towards them and their heavy burdens.

1. The lawyers took the Law and made it into heavy burdens that were near impossible to bear.

2. For instance, they took the commandment regarding the Sabbath and how the people were to remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, and added to it all sorts of extra commands. (**Ex. 20:8**)

a. They took a day of rest and remembrance and turned it into a day of heavy burdens and rituals and work. The Law prescribed that no work should be done on the Sabbath, it was to be a day of rest.

b. But the lawyers came along and had to define what constituted work. They took this one simple command to rest and cease from work and turned it into 39 different categories of what constituted work.

And amongst those 39 categories were hundreds of subcategories.

- c. They took something meant to be a day of rest and laid all sorts of heavy burdens upon the people.

C. Contrary to the practice of these lawyers, Jesus invited people “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” (Mt. 11:28-30)

1. Jesus was the exact opposite of these lawyers.
  - a. Where they bound *heavy* burdens, Jesus’ burden was *light*.
  - b. Where their burdens were *hard* to bear, Jesus’ yoke was *easy*.
  - c. As they laid them on *men’s* shoulders, Jesus invites us to place things on *His* shoulders as He invites us to yoke with Him.
  - d. Where they would not *lift a finger* to help, Jesus offers to yoke *with us* and *teach us* with gentleness and a humble heart.
2. Jesus would never ask us to do something that He Himself would not be willing to do as well. Everything He asks of us, He also offers to partner with us and to help us complete.
3. May we follow in the example Jesus left for us. May we be those who come alongside our brothers and sisters and do our best to lighten their loads, **to help bear their burdens**.
  - a. Paul teaches us in the book of Galatians that by coming alongside one another and bearing one another’s burdens we fulfill the law of Christ. (Gal. 6:2)

b. And the law of Christ is rooted in love. Loving God and loving others. We show our love for the Lord and our love for one another by coming alongside one another and helping in times of need.

D. Continuing on, let's take a look at verses 47-51. As we note the second woe Jesus had for the scribes.

X. Luke 11:47-51;

A. This woe Jesus shared against the lawyers had to do with their and their fathers' treatment of God's prophets.

1. The lawyers of the day tried to distance themselves from the acts of their fathers by building elaborate monument and tombs in honor of the prophets of old who had died at the hands of the previous generations' religious elite.

B. But Jesus calls them out. Saying that their own words and actions testify against them.

1. In the book of Matthew we find out that it was a common saying amongst the religious leaders to claim that "if they had lived in the days of their fathers, they would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets." (**Mt. 23:30**)

2. But Jesus shows their own words are going to come against them. Jesus prophesies of speaking of how the wisdom of God says "I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill and persecute."

a. It would seem like Jesus is perhaps quoting something from the OT here, but such is not the case. You will not find this exact quote in the OT. So where does the wisdom of God say this?

b. Well, I believe it could be right then and there. 1 Corinthians describes Jesus as both the power of God and the wisdom of God. (**1 Co. 1:24**)

- c. When Jesus says, “the wisdom of God says” he is basically making the statement “I say”. Jesus knew how He and His apostles would be treated by these lawyers, these scribes and religious leaders.
  - d. Jesus knew that this generation of lawyers would be part of the group of people that would kill and persecute the prophets of their day, the ones sent by the Lord.
3. In doing so, these lawyers are going to be lumped together with all the previous generations that were responsible for the shed blood of innocent servants of the Lord.
- a. From the very first innocent blood that was shed in the life of Abel, all the way to the blood of Zechariah who perished between the altar and the temple. This generation was going to be held just as responsible as the previous ones for their actions against the Lord’s anointed.
- C. What can we learn from this particular woe? I think this woe **teaches us to be careful where we stand** less, we fall.
- 1. Paul states, “let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.” (1 Co. 10:12)
  - 2. May we not be ones who put much confidence in our own flesh. We need to be careful not to think that we are beyond certain sins, certain struggles, especially the sins and struggles of others we may turn our nose towards.
  - 3. We are capable of falling at any time. Our hearts are deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. (Jer. 17:9)
  - 4. Do not put your trust in yourself or in your own heart or in your own religious works. Trust and rely upon the

Lord to lead you and guide you and to keep you from sin.

D. We're running out of time, so let's continue on looking at this final woe against this group of lawyers in verse 52.

XI. Luke 11:52;

A. This final woe may have been the worst of them all; for in it we see that these lawyers were guilty of keeping people from coming to the Lord.

1. As experts in the Law of Moses, these scribes were seen as the keepers of God's Word.
2. They were entrusted with the responsibility of properly instructing people in the Word of God.
3. They were seen as the god ordained authorities of the Word of God.
4. They served as mediators between God and God's people like the priests of the Old Testament of which Malachi wrote, "the lips of the priest should keep knowledge, and people should seek the law from his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts." (**Mal. 2:7**)
5. They held the key of knowledge, the Word of God.

B. But what did they do with it? They took it away from the people!

1. Mark 7:13 describes how the religious leaders of the day made the Word of God of no effect through their traditions which they handed down. (**Mk. 7:13**)
2. Through there many man-made traditions based upon their own interpretations of the law, they had taken away the key of knowledge, the word of God, and they had replaced it with a man-made system of rules and regulations, traditions and rituals.

3. Because they emphasized their own individual interpretations over the Word of God Jesus accurately declared they neither enter in themselves nor allow others to enter in though they try.
4. Their traditions, rules, and regulations were like roadblocks and detours that led people away from the kingdom of heaven rather than leading them into the kingdom of heaven.

C. From this woe we learn and understand that our words and actions have the potential to derail some from coming to the Lord and entering into a right relationship with the Lord.

1. Our words and deeds can either push people away from God and His Kingdom or they can encourage people to come to the Lord and enter into His kingdom.
2. People will either be drawn to the Lord or pushed away from the Lord based upon our representation of the Lord.
3. My hope, my prayer, is that we would be the kind of people that live their lives in such a way **that we draw people towards the Lord**. That people see our lives and want what we have in the Lord.
4. That God would use us as conduits for bringing people to Him.

D. Let's look at these final verses and we'll wrap this all up.

XII. Luke 11:53-54;

A. Here we see the reaction of the scribes and Pharisees to these strong accusations.

1. Instead of repenting and turning from their misery, they turned upon Jesus and started cross-examining him with all sorts of questions in an attempt to get Him to say something that would be self-incriminating.

B. The religious leaders responded the way many do when they are faced with correction and the truth of God. Instead of humbly receiving the correction, they responded with outraged accusations.

1. Proverbs tells us much about those who refuse to receive correction and how they will respond.

a. First of all, they will respond in hate towards those who correct them.

i. “Do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate you;” (**Pro. 9:8a**)

b. Second, they will not listen to the one who corrects them.

i. “A scoffer does not listen to rebuke.” (**Pro. 13:1b**)

c. Third, they will end up despising their own soul.

i. “He who disdains instruction despises his own soul,” (**Pro. 15:32a**)

2. Proverbs also tells us much about the character of those who refuse to receive correction.

a. Proverbs 12:1 puts it bluntly and teaches us that “he who hates correction is stupid”. (**Pro. 12:1**)

b. And Proverbs 15:5 speaks of such as playing the part of the fool. “A fool despises his father’s instruction” (**Pro. 15:5a**)

3. If we want to avoid being stupid and playing the part of the fool, we need to be those who **are willing to receive correction and learn from it.**

4. As we consider the accusations and the practices of the religious elite and Jesus’ woes against them, may we search our own hearts and make sure we allow the Lord to work on any of these areas that we may be struggling with ourselves.

5. We don't want to play the part of the Pharisee or the lawyers. May we be open to all that the Lord is wanting to teach us and show us. May we be yielded to the work He desires to do in us and through us.
6. Let's pray.