



Rice Memorial MBC

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Sincere Giving

Definitions in **bold** letters are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance
Other definitions are from **Webster's** Dictionary, 1828 /1913 Edition
or Roget's Thesaurus – **December 27, 2015**

Matthew 23:2-12; Mark 12:38-44

Introduction: The Oxford College Dictionary defines “sincere” as “free from pretense or deceit; proceeding from genuine feelings.” It is derived from the Latin word *sincerius*, which denotes something **clean, pure, uninjured, whole, or sound**. We have expressions to describe a sincere person, such as “the real thing,” “the genuine article,” and “the real McCoy.” We say a sincere person “does not have a dishonest bone in his body.”

Jesus, with his divine insight into human hearts, **unmasked hypocrisy** wherever He found it. And with the same **insight**, he **recognized sincerity**.

(Source: *The Bible Expositor and Illuminator, Union Press Publication-Christian Life Series*)

Matthew 23:1-3, Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees **SIT** in **Moses' seat**: All therefore whatsoever they **bid (say (by word or writing:- command))** you **observe**, that **observe** and **DO**; but do NOT ye after their works: for they say, and do not.

NOTE: Christ recognized that the scribes and Pharisees were successors to some of the dignity and **authority** of **Moses**, not in the sense of really possessing such authority, but in the sense of being responsible for teaching Moses' word and faithfully interpreting it to the people. They were the custodial heirs and terminal beneficiaries of the system which God gave through his servant Moses.

The Pharisees did not practice what they taught, but their failure was **no excuse** for **disobedience** by those who knew God's will. The **authority** of **God's word** does not derive from the righteous life of the teacher but from the prior authority of God himself; although, of course, the righteous life of the teacher is always a strong encouragement to obedience. The **evil** and **inconsistent life** of the scribes and Pharisees was a strong **deterrent** to the acceptance of God's will in that day; and similar evil on the part of Christian teachers in all ages has the same **hindering** results.

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=mt&ch=23#1>)

Thought 1. In his letter found in the book of Hebrews, Paul also instructed Christians to OBEY those who are over the congregation. And later, during his ministry, Peter shared this same truth in respect to servants who should OBEY their masters and wives who should OBEY their husbands.

Hebrews 13:17, **Obey them** that have the **rule** over you, and **submit** (yield, resign, or surrender to power, will, or authority) yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that **MUST give account**, that they may do it with **joy**, and not with **grief**: for that is unprofitable for you.

1 Peter 2:18-20, Servants, **be subject** to your masters with all FEAR (reverence respect, due regard; not only to the **good** and **gentle**, but also to the **forward (perverse** [wicked, discourteous, ill-tempered]:-- **crooked** [devious, dishonest]). For this is thankworthy, if a man for **conscience toward God** endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, **ye shall take it PATIENTLY?** but if, when ye DO WELL, and suffer for it, **ye take it PATIENTLY**, this is **acceptable (pleasure)** with God.

Take it patiently defined 5278, endure [bear without opposition or sinking under the pressure], (**take patiently** (with calmness or composure; without discontent or murmuring [uttering COMPLAINTS in a low voice or SULLEN manner]). Complaint, expression of grief, regret, pain, resentment; lamentation. Sullen, 1. gloomily angry and silent; CROSS (contrary, ill-mannered); SOUR (stinging, unsweet, repulsive, unpleasant); affected with ill (evil, wrong) humor 2. Obstinate (stubborn).

1 Peter 3:1-2, Likewise, ye **wives**, be in **subjection** to your own **husbands**; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the **conversation (behavior)** of the **WIVES**; While they behold your **chaste conversation coupled** with **FEAR**.

Fear defined 5401, fear (Reverence, fear mingled with respect and esteem (great regard [attention of the mind, affection, admiration])).

1 Peter 3:3-6, Whose **adorning** let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the **heart (the thoughts or feelings (MIND))**, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a **meek (humble)** and **QUIET** spirit, which is in the **sight** of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in **subjection** unto their own **husbands**: Even as **Sara OBEYED Abraham**, calling him lord...

Titus 2:3-5, The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may **teach** the **young women** to be sober, to **LOVE** their **husbands**, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, **OBEDIENT** to their **own husbands**, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

Matthew 23:4, For they **bind** heavy burdens and **grievous** to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

NOTE: The Pharisees always took the **strictest** and most **legalistic view** of every religious duty and always applied the law in such a way as to make it as onerous burdensome; oppressive) as possible - that is, FOR OTHERS! They themselves? Ah, that was something else again. They did not observe their own strict rules, and their personal laxity (slackness) was an open scandal. Why? Christ immediately gave the answer in the most vituperative (scolding) and scathing language ever to fall from his blessed lips.
(Source: <http://www.study-light.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=mt&ch=23#1>)

Matthew 23:5, But all their **works** they do for to be **SEEN** of **men**: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments...

NOTE: John A. Broadus, quoting Rabbinical writers, described the phylactery as follows: In Ex. 13:16; Deut. 6:8 and Deut. 11:18, it was said to Israel concerning the teachings of the **law**, that they should be bound, "for a **token** upon thy head, and for **frontlets** between thine eyes." In the inter-biblical period, we find the Jews converting this figure

into **outward fact**. They took **four** passages adjacent to the thrice repeated injunction, namely, Ex. 13:2-10; Ex. 13:11-17; Deut. 6:4-9; and Deut. 11:13-22, and writing them on strips of parchment, encased the folded strips in **minute leather boxes**. These **four boxes** were set on edge and fastened upon one leather base, which was placed in the middle of the forehead, and held there by a string tied round the head with peculiar knots which had a mystical (hid, secret) meaning.

Naturally, the **bigger** the **phylactery** the more **attention** the device would get for its wearer. If this seems strange to anyone today, it ought to be remembered that the making of a **figurative statement** to become a **literal statement** is an error that certainly was not confined to ancient Jews.

The doctrine of **transubstantiation** (the doctrine held by Roman Catholics, that the bread and wine in the Mass is converted into the body and blood of Christ) is a similar error, resulting from exactly the same kind of mistake, and just as illogical.

Borders of the garments were considered sacred by the Jews, and the enlargement of the border was another device for **ostentation** (unnecessary SHOW) and **gratification** of the **pride** of its **wearer**.

(Source: <http://www.studyilight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=mt&ch=23#1>)

Matthew 23:6-7, *And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, **Rabbi, Rabbi (master)**.*

NOTE: It is an eloquent **warning** against **PRIDE**, even of the variety held harmless by many, to observe that the rejection of Christ by the Pharisees was directly the fruit of their social and **religious pride**. When Christ finally denounced them and pronounced judgment upon them, as in this chapter, he made their **pride** to be their **principal SIN**. The vainglory of greetings extended to them in market places, the deference (regard; respect) shown them in social gatherings, and the **presumption** of piety which they received and invited by the **ostentatious** use of wide borders, phylacteries, etc. - these may appear to be small things, but they were the root of the Pharisees' trouble; and it is certain those same encouragements to **pride** have been in every age a **stumbling block** to **faith**.

(Source: <http://www.studyilight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=mt&ch=23#1>)

Matthew 23:8, *But be not ye called **Rabbi (master [teacher])**: for **one** is your **Master (teacher)**, even **Christ**; and all ye are **brethren**.*

NOTE: **But be not ye called Rabbi**,... Do not be ambitious of any such title, fond of it, or affect it, or be elated with it, should it be given you; nor look upon yourselves as men of power and authority over others; as **having** the **dominion** over **men's FAITH**, a power to make laws for others, impose them in a magisterial way, and bind and loose men's consciences at pleasure, as these men do:

for one is your master, even Christ; meaning himself, the **true Messiah**, the **HEAD** of the church, King of saints, and Lord of all; who had all power in heaven and in earth, to make laws, appoint ordinances, and oblige men to receive his doctrines, and obey his commands: the word "Christ", is left out in the Vulgate Latin, the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions; but is in the Arabic version, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel, and in all the ancient Greek copies Beza consulted, excepting two: no other indeed can be meant; he is the great Rabbi, and doctor, that is to be hearkened to, and the master we are all to obey...

Ephesians 4:20-21, *But ye have not so **learned** Christ; If so be that ye have **heard** HIM, and have been **taught BY him**, as the truth is in Jesus...*

John 16:13-14, *Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, **he will guide (TEACH, LEAD)** you into **all truth**: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.*

Hebrews 12:1-2, Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, **Looking** unto **Jesus** the **author** and **finisher** of **our faith**; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

and all ye are brethren; not merely as the descendants of Adam, but as being in a spiritual relation, the children of God, and disciples of Christ, and so have no superiority one over another: this may regard the disciples, both as **believers** and **Christians**, partakers of the same grace, and standing in the same relation to God, Christ, and one another, and **having an equal right** to the **same privileges**: and as apostles and ministers, one as such, no, not Peter, having no pre-eminence (pre-eminence) over the other, having the same commission, doctrine, and authority, one as the other.

(Source: <http://www.studyight.org/commentaries/geb/view.cgi?bk=mt&ch=23#1>)

Matthew 23:9, And call **no man your father** upon the earth: for **ONE** is **your Father**, which is in heaven.

NOTE: ...call no man your father upon the earth,.... Not but that **children** may, and should call their natural parents, fathers; and such who have been instrumental in the conversion of souls, may be rightly called by them their **spiritual fathers**; as servants and scholars also, may call those that are over them, and instruct them, their **masters**: our Lord does not mean, by any of these expressions, to set aside ALL names and titles, of natural and civil distinction among men, but only to reject all such names and titles, as are used to signify an **authoritative power** over **men's consciences**, in matters of **faith** and obedience; in which, God and Christ are **ONLY** to be attended to. Christ's sense is, that he would have his disciples not fond of any titles of honour at all; and much less assume an authority over men, as if they were to **depend on them**, as the **FOUNDERS** of the **Christian religion**, the **authors** of its doctrines and ordinances; and to take that honour to themselves, which did not belong to them; nor even choose to be called by such names, as would lead people to entertain TOO HIGH an opinion of them, and **take off** of their **dependence on God the Father**, and himself, as these titles the Scribes and Pharisees loved to be called by, did: and who were called not only by the name of Rabbi, but **Abba**, "**Father**", also: hence we read of **Abba Saul**, or "**Father**" Saul Pirke Abot, c. 2. sect. 8. ; Abba Jose ben Jochanan, a man of Jerusalem T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 53. 2.In this sense, and upon this score, our Lord **inveighs** (be outspoken) against them, and cautions his disciples against giving or taking all such titles, in such sense.

"For one is your Father, which is in heaven"; who is so, both by creation and adoption, and is possessed of ALL paternal (fatherly) authority; and is to be honoured and obeyed by all; from whom all wisdom and knowledge is derived, and who has the **CARE** and **government of ALL** in heaven and in earth.

(Source: <http://www.studyight.org/commentaries/geb/view.cgi?bk=mt&ch=23#1>)

Ephesians 4:4-6, There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism; **ONE God (Supreme [highest] Divinity)** and **Father** of **ALL**, who is **ABOVE all**, and through **ALL**, and IN you **ALL**.

NOTE: **Call no man your father on earth** ... At least the Jews are consistent who, rejecting Christ, reject also what he said about "**rabbi**"; but it appears unbelievable that so large a part of Christendom should be so **blind** to Christ's commandment as to flaunt the **title "father"** as the just **inheritance** of all their **priests** and to bestow upon their sovereign (leader) the near-blasphemous title, "Most Holy Father"! Such reminds one of the custom of Wilhelm II, emperor of Germany, the Kaiser of World War I, who allowed it to be printed in the court circular, on the occasion of Wilhelm's going to church, that "**This morning, The All-Highest paid His respects to the Highest!**"

(Source: <http://www.studyight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=mt&ch=23#1>)

Matthew 23:10, Neither be ye called **masters**: for ONE is your **Master (teacher, guide** [one who directs another in his conduct or course of life]), even Christ.

NOTE: ...called **masters**,.... Or **guides** and **leaders**; not but that, the **ministers** of the word are in a sense such; it is their business to lead and direct souls to Christ, to guide their feet in the way of peace, and to go before them, **as examples** to them, in word, in conversation, faith, and purity; but then they are to guide them according to the **WORD of God**, and **not their own dictates**; and teach them to observe the rules, and obey the ordinances of Christ, and not what are of their own inventing and prescribing; and to enforce the authority of their great Lord and Master, and not their own; and direct men to a dependence on Christ, as **head of the church**, who is the **one Lord**, as his faith is one, and his baptism one also: "for one is your master, even Christ"; which is said before, in Matthew 23:8 but being a matter of so much importance to the honour of Christ, and men being so apt to set up for masters themselves, in opposition to him, or in conjunction with him, or above him, it was necessary to **repeat it**; for in an authoritative sense he is the **ONE**, and **ONLY** master of the assemblies.

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/view.cgi?bk=mt&ch=23#1>)

Matthew 23:11, But he that is **greatest** among you shall be your **SERVANT**.

NOTE: ...is **greatest among you**,.... Either who really is so, having more grace, and greater gifts bestowed upon him, than others; which doubtless was the case of some of the disciples, or who desired to be the greatest, **was ambitious of**, and affected a **superiority** over others, and to be in the highest post and place, as it is certain some of them did. This was what they were often contending about among themselves, who should be greatest: and Christ here seems to have regard to that vain spirit, which appeared among them; and his view is, to **check** and **restrain it**: "shall be your **servant**"; or "let him be your servant". Service is the way to honour (GLORY); he that would be most esteemed ought to **DO** the **most work**; and the man that has the most grace, and the greatest gifts, ought to employ them for the use and benefit of others; See Gill on Matt. 20:27.

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/view.cgi?bk=mt&ch=23#1>)

Matthew 23:12, And whosoever shall **exalt (elevate) himself** shall be **abased (bring low)**; and he that shall **humble** himself shall be **exalted**.

NOTE: ...**exalt himself**,.... **Above** his fellow Christians, or fellow ministers, by entertaining too high an opinion of himself, by boasting of his gifts, as preferable to others, and as if he had not received them; by assuming, or eagerly **coveting titles of honour** among men, or by **affecting honour** (glory) that do not belong to him, or, abusing what he has: "shall be abased"; or humbled by God, or men, or both; such shall **lose the honour they have**, and come greatly short of what they are ambitious of; they shall fall into disgrace with men, and are abominable in the sight of God: "and he that shall humble himself"; by **entertaining low thoughts**, and a mean (humble) opinion of himself, behaving **modestly** among men; not being elated with his gifts, but acknowledging that they are owing to the grace and goodness of God; and **using them** in an **humble manner**, for the advantage of others; not coveting honour from men, nor lifted up with what is conferred on him: "**shall be exalted**"; **by God, or men, or both**; if not in this world, yet in the world to come: and indeed, generally speaking, such modest, humble, persons, are most esteemed (VALUED) among men; and **God gives more grace** unto them, and will at last **give them glory**. This is a saying, often used by our Lord on different accounts, both with respect to his disciples, for their instruction, and with regard to the scribes and Pharisees, for their mortification (abatement [putting an end to] of **pride**); see Luke 14:11.

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/view.cgi?bk=mt&ch=23#1>)

Matthew 23:13-15, But **woe** unto you, scribes and Pharisees, **hypocrites (actor under an assumed character (stage-player))!** for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye

neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. **Woe** unto you, scribes and Pharisees, **hypocrites!** for ye devour widows' houses, and for a **pretence (SHOW)** make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. **Woe** unto you, scribes and Pharisees, **hypocrites!** for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the **child of hell** than yourselves.

Mark 12:38-40, And he said unto them in his **doctrine**, Beware of the scribes, which **love** to go in long clothing, and **love** salutations in the marketplaces, And the **chief seats** in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts: Which **devour** widows' houses, and for a **pretence (SHOW)** make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation.

NOTE: The sentiments of these verses are found in Matthew's extensive account of the seven woes pronounced upon the Pharisees, most of the scribes belonging to that party (Matthew 23). In the same context as "the woes," **Mark** here **abbreviated** a **long sermon**, reducing it to this single small paragraph; and yet it quite accurately catches the sentiment (state of mind in view of some subject) of the longer passage in Matthew. On the other hand, it is sheer nonsense to suppose that Matthew expanded these few lines into the dramatic, well organized sermon he quoted Jesus as delivering in this same context. (Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=mr&ch=12#1>)

Mark 12:41, And Jesus **sat** over against the treasury, and beheld **HOW** the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were **RICH** **cast in much**.

NOTE: The treasury ... This was located in the court of women, in which collection boxes had been installed to receive offerings. The Sanhedrin met within earshot of the place; and it was here that they brought the woman taken in adultery. It was the scene of some of Jesus' most remarkable teachings (John 8:1-20).

...HOW the multitude cast money ... Significantly, Jesus made his evaluation of GIVING through regard to what men **POSSESSED**, and not merely in respect of the **amount given**. In a spiritual sense, Jesus always sits over against the treasury, knows not merely the amount given, but the amount retained, and makes his evaluation accordingly. (Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=mr&ch=12#1>)

Mark 12:42-44, And there came a certain **poor widow**, and she threw in **two mites (small coins)**, which make a farthing (the fourth part of a penny). And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this **poor widow** hath cast **MORE in**, than ALL THEY which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of (from) **their abundance**; but she of her want did cast in **ALL that she had**, even **ALL her living**.

NOTE: More than all they (1) This teaches that a **gift** to be valuable in the sight of God is not solely determined by the **face amount** of it. The **motive**, **attitude**, and **financial condition** of the **giver** are taken into consideration. (2) Christ did not condemn the widow for giving. His commendation of her gift dramatically underlines the Scriptural teaching that **the poor should give**, and that the exercise of this grace is not to be omitted by any person on the grounds of poverty. (Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=mr&ch=12#1>)

Thought 1. This also teaches that those in charge of receiving the offering should **NOT DESPISE** or **BE-LITTLE** the amount, **OR** the people who are giving, which is so often the case in many of our worship services. Paul spoke of shaming the poor in Corinth.

1 Corinthians 11:22, What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and **SHAME them** that **have not?** What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.