

November 2 Answers

- 1) Concerning the scribes (the **teachers** of the Law) and the Pharisees, Jesus said, ‘They talk the talk, and what they say is true, for they teach and preach the **Scriptures**. You should, therefore, observe and **do** what they say (cf. Matt 5:19). But don’t imitate their lives, for they do not walk the walk.’ Amazing! Jesus calls us to recognize and obey the truth, even if it comes from a **hypocrite**! Jesus then gave an example of what it means to “judge with **righteous** judgment,” for He had said, “Judge not,” and yet He publicly denounced the scribes and Pharisees as hypocrites and fools. This teaches us that there’s a big difference between the harsh, fault-finding criticism of others and the careful, discerning **inspection** of the fruit of their lives. The former will be measured back to us, while the latter will guard us from **false** prophets. Jesus rebuked the scribes and Pharisees for several things: (1) they multiplied the number of ways that people could **offend** God, but they never showed the people how to truly please Him, (2) they eagerly sought the praise and approval of **men**, but they refused to humble themselves before God, (3) they made intricate rules about how to phrase an **oath**, but they ignored God’s desire for truth and integrity, (4) they scrupulously observed the minute **details** of the Law, but they neglected the weightier matters of justice, mercy and faithfulness, (5) they took great care to clean the **outside** of their cups and utensils, but they refused to come to God for cleansing from greed and self-indulgence, and (6) they denied any complicity in the **killing** of the prophets by their ancestors, but their determination to destroy Jesus showed that they too had **murder** in their hearts. In fact, their decision to crucify Him meant that their hands would soon be stained with the blood of all the prophets that came before, for those men had been the **messengers** of the supreme Prophet of God!