

Luke 20:45

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then in the audience of all the people he said unto his disciples,

Analysis

Then in the audience of all the people he said unto his disciples (Ἄκούοντος δὲ παντὸς τοῦ λαοῦ εἰπεν τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ, Akouontos de pantos tou laou eipen tois mathētais autou)—The genitive absolute akouontos pantos tou laou (with all the people listening) sets the scene: this isn't private instruction but public denunciation. Jesus addresses disciples but intends the crowd—and the scribes themselves—to hear. Pas (all) emphasizes widespread audience; the warning is communal, not merely individual.

After demonstrating superior wisdom (vv. 20-44), Jesus shifts from theological debate to moral warning. Having exposed scribes' theological inadequacy (they couldn't answer His Christological question), He now exposes their ethical hypocrisy. This public rebuke continues prophetic tradition—Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Malachi denounced corrupt religious leaders. Teaching disciples 'in the audience of all' serves dual purpose: warning learners against false models while shaming those who should exemplify godliness.

Historical Context

Public honor and shame were central to Mediterranean culture. By denouncing scribes before crowds, Jesus stripped their honor—the very thing they craved (v. 46). This sealed their murderous intent; within days, they would conspire to kill Him. Yet Jesus prioritizes truth and protection of the vulnerable over self-preservation.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. Why does Jesus make His critique of religious leaders public rather than private, and when is such public rebuke appropriate today?
2. How does warning disciples against false spiritual models protect them from hypocrisy's seduction?
3. What responsibility do spiritual leaders bear when their lives contradict their teaching, and how should that accountability be exercised?

Interlinear Text

Ἄκούοντος δὲ παντὸς τοῦ λαοῦ εἶπεν τοῖς μαθηταῖς
in the audience Then of all the people he said disciples
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