

Matthew 23:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

This text illustrates key Reformed principles: sola Scriptura, sola gratia, and sola fide. The passage demonstrates how God's Word speaks authoritatively to human need, revealing both our depravity and God's merciful provision through Christ.

Historical Context

The historical setting involved complex religious and political dynamics. Jewish leaders maintained authority through Roman tolerance while common people sought deliverance. Jesus' teaching addressed both immediate concerns and eternal truths.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does this passage challenge your understanding of God's character?
2. What practical application does this truth have in your daily walk?
3. How should this verse shape your priorities and decisions?

Interlinear Text

Οὐαὶ ὑμῖν γραμματεῖς καὶ Φαρισαῖοι ὑποκριταί ὅτι
Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees hypocrites ! for
G3759 G5213 G1122 G2532 G5330 G5273 G3754

περιάγετε τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ τὴν ξηρὰν ποιεῖτε ἓνα
ye compass sea and land to make one
G4013 G3588 G2281 G2532 G3588 G3584 G4160 G1520

προσήλυτον καὶ ὅταν γένηται ποιεῖτε αὐτὸν υἱὸν
proselyte and when he is made to make him the child
G4339 G2532 G3752 G1096 G4160 G846 G5207

γεέννης διπλότερον ὑμῶν
of hell twofold more than yourselves
G1067 G1362 G5216

Additional Cross-References

Acts 13:10 (Parallel theme): And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

Acts 13:43 (Parallel theme): Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.

Ephesians 2:3 (Parallel theme): Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Acts 14:2 (Creation): But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren.

John 8:44 (Parallel theme): Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

Matthew 5:22 (Parallel theme): But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

Galatians 6:12 (Parallel theme): As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

Galatians 4:17 (Parallel theme): They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them.