

Condemnation or Commendation

I. Slide#1 Announce:

- A. Slide#2 Baby Dedication 2nd - Elizabeth Turnage (Serenity Nicole) single mom
- B. Slide#3 Ann Graham Lotz Simulcast - Tonight 6-8pm. Live simulcast. Her message & new book, *"Wounded By God's People"* (story of Hagar). Childcare nursery-4th grade.
- C. Slide#4 Amercian Red Cross - Sept is National Preparedness Month - Dave Van Hulzen & his Preparedness Team are putting an Emergency plan together for our church.
 - 1. Sept is National Preparedness Month so we have a few things for you:
 - 2. Slide#5 1min.Video - Kit you Don't Want to Have
 - 3. Importance of personal preparedness - Trust in God + be prepared.
 - 4. Slide#6 - www.calvarymurrieta.com web site great info & links.
 - 5. Dave & his team will be outside by info booth answering questions & have handouts
 - 6. Also, American Red Cross will be giving a Preparedness Presentation in the new room @ 2:00pm today.

II. Intro:

- A. Slide#7 Title: *Condemnation*(rich Scribes); *or Commendation*(a poor widow).
- B. In *superior Literature*, or in the *laws of Screenplay physics*, introducing a **villain** is often to show you how good your **hero** is.
 - 1. Slide#8 It heightens the **contrast** of the *positive* & *negative* like an Xray.
 - 2. Slide#9 Jesus is going to do just that. He'll introduce us to 2 characters where he asks, *"Which one do you want to emulate?"*
 - 3. Do you want to be **a Religious official**, just looking the part. Enjoying the benefits of your job. Making a show of your holiness, **but** behind the scene **victimizing defenseless women**. Or...
 - 4. Do you want to be like **the widow**, worth almost nothing in that society. Being taken advantage of from those religious officials, **but faithful, admirable, & sacrificial**.

III. Slide#10 CONDEMNATION (35-40)

- A. Jesus criticizes these religious leaders regarding 2 things: *[their Shallowness & Showmanship]*
- B. Slide#11 THEIR SHALLOWNESS (35-37)
- C. Here we have **Logic on Fire** – You don't hear Jesus give a **"just believe"** teaching here. **Instead**, it is **come let us reason together**.
- D. Jesus challenges them to think again...
 - 1. He quotes from Ps.110 (the Psalm most frequently quoted in the NT).

2. He steps on their *self-proclaimed superiority* of the Scriptures.
3. How can Messiah be both David's **son** (& therefore inferior) & also David's **Lord** (& therefore superior)?
4. In Jesus' day a **descendant** was always *inferior* to an *ancestor*.
5. How can **Christ** be both David's **Lord** & his **descendant**?
 - a) **A:** Only a Christ who is both *fully human* & *fully Divine* can be both Lord & descendant.
 - b) Paul said it plainly, *concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was **born of the seed of David** according to the flesh, and declared to be **the Son of God with power**.* Rom.1:3
 - c) If Christ is not **divine**, Go seal again the tomb;
Take down the cross, Redemption's **sign**,
Quench all the stars of hope that **shine**,
And let us turn & travel **on**
Across the night that knows no **dawn**. Walter A. Maier
- E. (37) The theologians had no answer for Christ's question, *but* the common people sure heard Him gladly.
- F. *Slide#12 THEIR SHOWMANSHIP* (38-40)
- G. *Beware of the Scribes...Why? Because they are Proud lovers of...*
 1. *Slide#13a Power-Suits – go around in long robes*
 - a) Long white linen robes (everyone else wore bright colors) w/fringes that almost touched the ground
 - b) Of course it was almost impossible to **work** in such clothing.
 - c) It made them stand out in a crowd. They were men of wealth & leisure.
 - d) *Slide#13b* These were the 1st century *Armani Power Suits*.
 2. *Slide#13c Praise – love greetings in the marketplaces*
 - a) Didn't love greeting others, or being a greeter, *but* loved when *everybody else knows their name*.
 - b) *Slide#13d* The character **Norm** on Cheers in the 80's embodied this.
 - (1) *Sometimes you want to go Where everybody knows your name, And they're always glad you came; You want to be where you can see, Our troubles are all the same; You want to be where everybody knows your name.*
 - c) A basic fact of Christianity is that it ought to make a man wish to obliterate-self *rather than* to exalt it.
 3. *Slide#13e Prestige – best seats in the synagogues*
 - a) Seats at the front of the synagogue, facing the congregation, their backs against the chest holding the Torah, where they could see & more importantly...be seen.
 4. *Slide#13f Position – best places at feasts*

a) When the wealthy gave feasts, **Scribes** were considered *necessary ornaments to adorn the meal*.

b) They were given a place of honor *to the right or left of the host*. (even above the parents)

5. **Slide#13g Power** – **who devour widows' houses**

a) They **did not** receive a **regular salary** & **therefore** were dependent upon the generosity of rich benefactors.

b) It was a system open to abuse, as needy widows depended upon the scribes to write their papers for them & spiritual help...*they could easily be exploited*. (1st cent *indulgences*)

6. **Slide#13h Pomp** – **for a pretense/show make long prayers**

a) Not so much to be heard by God **but** to be seen by others.

b) **Slide#14** So there they were: *Prancing, Preening, Primping, Pompous, Proud, Powerful, Prestigious Peacocks...Prancing amongst the Poor Pigeons of society*.

c) This portrays **the minister** that **Woodrow Wilson** described as *the only man he knew who could strut while sitting down*.

d) If a person is important only because of the **uniform** he wears, the **title** he bears, or the **office** he holds, **then** his importance is **artificial**.

(1) **It is character that makes a person valuable**.

(2) No one can give you character, you must develop it yourself as you walk w/ God.

H. For 20 centuries **the church** has been telling **the world** to *admit their sins, repent, & believe the gospel*. **Today**, **the world** is telling **the church** to *face up to her sins, repent, & start being the true church of that gospel*. Warren Wiersbe, The Integrity Crisis pg.17.

1. **Do you ever turn your religion into a matter of outward show & pride?**

2. **Do you ever tell your right hand what your left hand is doing?**

3. **Do you ever tell your friends what you are doing?**

IV. **Slide#15 COMMENDATION (41-44)**

A. **Slide#16** Now the beautiful & clear **contrast**.

1. **The religious leaders** were interested in all they could **get** out of life; **She** was interested in what she could **give** in life. Phillips, pg.246

B. **Slide#17** Jesus **is** interested in what people do with **their money**.

1. In the Bible **prayer** is mentioned **371** times; **love** **714** times, **and giving**...**2162** times.

2. **He knows that money can do more to you then it can do for you**.

3. Money is a **good servant** **but** a **poor master**.

4. When you learn to give, you learn to control your money & not let it control you.

C. **Slide#18** **The layout** of *the court of the women*.

1. There were 13 trumpet shape brass receptacles into which offerings were put, towards temple expenses & to meet the needs of the poor.
 - a) The Mishnah said each bore inscriptions designating what the offerings were for: *New Shekel dues; Old Shekel dues; Bird Offerings; Young birds for the whole offering; Wood; Frankincense; Gold for the Mercy-seat; & on 6 of them Freewill-Offerings.*
(Shekalim XI.5 [Mishnah, the oral traditions. 2nd only to the Tanak])
 2. Imagine many coins hitting the brass. It probably sounded like those coin counting machines in the super markets. *Hand full of penny's.*
 3. Slide#18b Mite/Lepton: smallest Jewish copper coin (lit. a thin one) [Worth ¼ of a cent]
 4. Quadrons - smallest Roman coin [Worth ½ of a cent]
 - a) The mite was *the smallest offering permissible* under the law.
- D. Slide#19a Here we have the most famous giver ever.
- E. Slide#19b He watches our giving.
1. Don't ever think that what you have is too little for Him to notice.
 2. Should those who have very little, still be expected to give? [actually they're the best givers]
 3. Jesus was a people watcher. But not only watching their **actions** but watching their **motives**.
- F. Slide#19c He watches our motives why we give. Mt.6:1-4
1. Notice in (41) it says he noticed *how* they gave, *not what*.
 2. Did you know, *the IRS* really doesn't care what your **motive** is in giving to them? *But* God cares what your motives are.
 3. Hannah said in her prayer in 1 Sam.2:3, *For the LORD is the God of knowledge; And by Him actions are weighed.*
 4. Why do **you** give? Does your wife make you? Or wives, are you a little resentful how much he gives? Do you give to get a tax-write off? *Or*, Is your motive that you love the Lord Jesus & want to get His work done on earth? How will this mornings teaching/reminder change your attitude/outlook on giving?
 - a) They say the best way to find out what **means the most to you**...show me 2 things:
Show me what you spend your money on & show me your calendar.
- G. Slide#19d He watches our proportion *not* the portion. 1 Cor.16:2
1. This widow now drops in her offering...*Ping, ping.*
 2. He noticed & appreciated her gift. *Not because* of the **size** *but because* of her **generosity**.
 3. Jesus said she *put in more* (43) *How?* - *Because God weighs things on a different set of scales.*
 4. *For the rich* their gifts were *a small contribution*; *but for the widow*, her gift was **true consecration** of her whole life. Warren Weirsbe, pg.120

5. (old epitaph) “**What** I gave, I **have**. **What** I spent, I **had**. **What** I kept, I **lost**.”

H. **Slide#20** It seems like she was *1 mite away* from never being heard of.

1. She could have kept 1 back, but gave both. *all that she had...her whole livelihood.*
2. *Wait...she just showed us how to love the LORD your God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength.* vs.30
3. She was like that *rare desert flower*...just sitting out there.

I. **Slide#21** blank If I give all I possess to the poor & surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing. *But if I give a penny w/the widow's heart, it is great gain to me & to God.*

J. **Pride of living & pride of giving** are sins we must avoid at all cost.

1. **Do either of these describe you at this place in your life?**

K. **End:** (Kent Hughes) There is a disease which is particular virulent in this part of the 20th century. It is called ***cirrhosis of the giver***. It was actually discovered about 34 ad & ran a terminal course in a couple named Ananias & Sapphira. It is an acute condition which renders the patient's hand immobile when it attempts to move from the billfold to the offering plate. The remedy is to remove the afflicted from the House of God, since it is clinically observable that this condition disappears in alternative environments such as golf courses or clubs or restaurants.

1. **Actually**, the disease is really not a **motor problem**, **but** a **heart problem**.
2. **The best remedy is to fall in love w/God w/all your heart; for where your heart is, there will your treasure be.** Mt.6:21 *reversed*