

“Faces in the Crowd: When Religion Rules” **(John 19:7-16)**

Today we continue our series of sermons “Faces in the Crowd.” We will spend time with a variety of biblical characters who encountered Jesus in the hours surrounding the cross. Today we look at one of the most religious men Jesus would ever encounter. His name was Caiaphas and he was the high priest. He reminds us that religious people can be living far from God.

“Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others. By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may experience true life” (1 Timothy 6:17-19, NLT).

“Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, “You know nothing at all! You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish” (John 11:49-50, NIV).

“What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you shut the door of the Kingdom of Heaven in people’s faces. You won’t go in yourselves, and you don’t let others enter either... Hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs—beautiful on the outside but filled on the inside with dead people’s bones and all sorts of impurity. Outwardly you look like righteous people, but inwardly your hearts are filled with hypocrisy and lawlessness” (Matthew 23:13; 25-28, NLT).

“The high priest said to him, ‘I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.’ ‘Yes, it is as you say,’ Jesus replied. ‘But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven’” (Matthew 26:63-64, NIV).