

Pride and Envy
Matthew 23:34-24:2

Review:

1. True worship requires abandoning our pride and humbling ourselves before God's sovereign authority
2. There is no room in true worship for envy, but we should instead be focused on the expansion of God's kingdom, regardless of whether we benefit as individuals or as a congregation.
3. Clinging to pride and envy instead of repenting and submitting ourselves to God's will and Word leads only to destruction, while Christ offers forgiveness and cleansing to those who come to Him.

Reflect:

1. What sorts of spiritual traits do you tend to envy in other people? In what ways do you wish your congregation could be like others? How can gratitude for the gifts you and your congregation have help you deal with this kind of envy?
2. In what parts of your life do you find repentance most difficult? What steps can you take to bring these areas more into line with God's revealed will?

Go further: Read Zechariah 1:1-6; 7:8-14

1. In 1:2, how does the Lord describe His feelings towards His people?
2. In 1:3, what does the Lord call His people to do? What does the Lord promise to do for His people?
3. In 1:4, who does the Lord warn His people not to emulate?
4. What did the former prophets tell God's people to do?
5. How did God's people respond to the former prophets?
6. What do the two questions in 1:5 imply has happened to the "fathers" and the former prophets?
7. What does 1:6 say overtook the fathers of the people in Zechariah's generation?
8. How do the people describe the way the Lord has dealt with them?
9. What question do the people ask the priests in 7:3?
10. In 7:5, what question does the Lord tell Zechariah to ask in response?
11. According to the Lord in 7:6, where is the people's focus during their ceremonial meals?
12. In 7:7, what does the Lord say the people should have done? When should they have done this?
13. In 7:9, what two things did the Lord tell His people to do?
14. In 7:10 what two things did the Lord tell His people not to do?
15. How does 7:11 describe the people's response to the Lord's commands in the previous two verses?
16. How does 7:12 describe the people's hearts? What did the people refuse to hear? Whose Word did the people reject?
17. How does 7:12 say God responded to His people's disobedience?
18. In 7:13, how does God say He responded to His people's prayers? Why does He say He did this?
19. Where does 7:14 say the Lord scattered His people? What happened to the land as a result?

Summary and Application:

1. Compare your own life to the description of God's people in 7:6, 9-10. Are you tempted to sin in any of these ways? If a prophet were to write these verses to you, of what sins would he try to convict you?
2. In contrast to the attitude of God's people in 7:12, how can you cultivate an attitude of humility and repentance?
3. God left the land of His people "desolate" during the Babylonian exile and also in the days after the Temple was destroyed in A.D. 70. How does this fact motivate you to repentance?