

Rev. Thomas Emery
“Saints and Sinners” Matthew 23:1-12
Salem Presbyterian Church
Sunday, October 2, 2014

The Ten Commandments were simply two principles: reverence and respect. Reverence was the first three commandments and included reverence for God, for his day, and for the parents that he gave us. Respect marks the last seven commandments; respect for life, possessions, personality, good name, and one's self. The principles were correct - reverence for God and respect for people. But, the scribes and Pharisees took these simple principles and made them a burden by making religion a thing of rules and regulations. They extended those Ten Commandments to include 613 rules!

TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Point One: Jesus warned us of the gulf between what we say and what we do..

Teaching Point Two: Jesus desired servant leadership.

Teaching Point Three: True “saints” slip under the radar.

THIS WEEK’S MEMORY VERSE

¹¹ The greatest among you will be your servant. ¹² For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted (Matthew 23:11-12 NLT).

ACTION POINT

Does our Christianity lift up or drag down? Are people helped by our faith, or troubled by it? Is the gospel we tell and live a threat, or a promise? Does it make Christianity a joy, or a drain? Does it threaten, or forgive? Does it have a sour face, or a smile? If our Christianity depresses us, scares us, worries us, haunts us, it probably is not true Christianity. The religion that Jesus presented to the disciples was one of support and comfort, peace and love, forgiveness and joy. If we want to practice genuine Christianity, we will serve our fellow humans, not show off our religion. We need to present the faith as a joy and not a burden!