

(126)

I'm sure most of us are familiar with the passage in Mat. 16 starting at v. 13 in which Peter makes his great confession of the Lord and the Lord promises Peter and the Apostles the power that would come upon them. I'm going to look at a passage that immediately precedes that--Mat. 16:1-12

The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus. Now we read a great deal about the Pharisees. We don't read so much about the Sadducees, and so I think we're apt to not notice them particularly. This begins, "The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus and tested him by asking him to show them a sign from heaven. . . .(reading text) . . . "Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." Most of us are familiar with the leaven of the Pharisees than of the Sadducees but of course we don't use the word leaven so much today. He said "Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees . . .(reading text) . . .

We hear a good bit about the Pharisees. I don't think most of us hear so much about the Sadducees. It occupies a far less conspicuous place during the greater part of Jesus' earthly ministry. But it occupied a considerable part in that section and a much greater part later on. Actually the Pharisees were the pious Jews. They were the ones who were trying to follow the law. They were devoted to what they considered to be the truth. Among them there were hypocrites, but by no means were the majority of them hypocrites.

Jesus excoriated the hypocrisy and spiritual pride which was to be found among the Pharisees, but actually I believe that they ~~were~~ were the best of those Jews who did not follow Jesus. Even Paul did not hesitate to say, I am a Pharisee and the son of a Pharisee. There was much to criticize in the Pharisees and the Lord warned us, Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees.

But we also want to look at the leaven of the Sadducees. There are two aspects of this we find in the NT and that we find in recent times also. The first of these is a subtle unbelief. The Sadducee was one who would claim to be a believer, one who would claim to be a follower. He was not considered a pagan as a Sadducee. He was ~~wne~~ one who took the name of being a believer but who ~~wax~~ rejected much of the important teachings. He was one who left out much that was very vital. That is one aspect of the Sadducee.

A second is that many of them showed a violent opposition to God's truth. Let us look at these two aspects. Mat. 22:23-28 shows a dispute that Jesus had with the Sadducees. I will not take time to read the vv. to you. I think most of you have some familiarity with them. That same day the Sadducees who say there is no resurrection came to him with a question. You see they were claiming to be followers of the Bible, but they say there is no resurrection. I think most of you are familiar with the question they asked. If a man dies without children( and according to the