

Praying Through Matthew 23:1-4, 23-26
International Bible Lesson
L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

Lord Jesus, thank You for confronting where necessary the religious leaders of Your day, and by Your example showing us how we can rightly speak to those in authority. Please help us see what is happening around us with Your eyes, so we are at least able to avoid the poor or sinful examples of others — even those in authority over us. Help us respect authority, and at the same time discern when those in authority are misleading us by word or example so we are not misled. As we think about others who are being led by dangerous leaders who do not believe or know the truths You have taught, please help us find ways and do what we can to lead them to follow You as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Please give us the love and courage to say what is necessary so hypocrites might avoid the woes that will surely come their way if they do not repent and seek to rightly represent You.

Lord, many concerns beset us each day, and we pray that You will help us see things with Your perspective. Help us avoid focusing so much attention on the small things that we do not have the time and the thoughtfulness necessary to live with and promote justice, mercy and faithfulness regarding our daily relationships with You and others. We pray that You would help us be the kind of people You want us to be in the inside and the outside. As we read the Bible, please show us the behaviors we need to turn from and how best to seek forgiveness from others for our sins. Please give us the guidance and power we need to show forth Your gracious and loving ways to others by

every word we speak and everything we do. Please help us live clean inside and out so no one is turned from faith or obedience to You by a hypocritical example. In Your Name, we pray. Amen.

Please Note: I first learned about “Praying Through the Bible” from Edith Schaeffer, the wife of Francis Schaeffer. You might like to close your class with the above prayer as a way of beginning to teach your class how they too can pray through the Bible. First, you might like to teach your class how to pray through the *International Bible Lessons* each week. [Perhaps some of them would learn how to pray through portions of the Bible during their daily Bible reading and quiet time.] Second, a week in advance, perhaps some of your students would like to write their own “Prayer Through the Bible” using the *International Bible Lesson* scripture text and read their prayer at the close of class. Third, eventually, your students will be able to pray through the Bible without needing to write their prayer in advance before they pray at the end of class. If you would like to learn more about prayer from Edith Schaeffer, read [How God Teaches Us to Pray](#): Lessons from the Lives of Francis and Edith Schaeffer, Kindle Edition, by L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.