

AN APPEARANCE OF WISDOM

PART 2: THE EPITOME OF AN APPEARANCE OF WISDOM

EPITOME ... A PERFECT EXAMPLE OF SOMETHING; A TYPICAL OR IDEAL EXAMPLE; EMBODIMENT OF; PERSONIFICATION OF; A REPRESENTATIVE EXAMPLE.



... A PERSON WISE IN HIS/HER OWN EYES ...

... A PERSON WHO FEARS THE LORD ...

Do you see a man who is wise in his own eyes?

There is more hope for a fool than for him.

(Proverbs 26:12 ESV)

Be not wise in your own eyes;

fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.

(Proverbs 3:7 ESV)

The way of a fool is right in his own eyes,

but a wise man listens to advice.

(Proverbs 12:15 ESV)

Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes,

and shrewd in their own sight!

(Isaiah 5:21 ESV)

Live in harmony with one another.

Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly.

Never be wise in your own sight.

(Romans 12:16 ESV)

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;

all those who practice it have a good understanding.

His praise endures forever!

(Psalm 111:10 ESV)

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge;

fools despise wisdom and instruction.

(Proverbs 1:7 ESV)

The fear of the LORD is hatred of evil. Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate.

(Proverbs 8:13 ESV)

In the fear of the LORD one has strong confidence,

and his children will have a refuge.

(Proverbs 14:26 ESV)

The fear of the LORD is instruction in wisdom,

and humility comes before honor.

(Proverbs 15:33 ESV)

Profile of ... the person who professes belief in Christ but builds his spiritual house using the blueprints of a lost and dying world ...

1. This person is alive to what he should be dead to and is dead to what he should be alive to, 2:20.

- (Colossians 2:20 ESV) If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations.

2. This person builds her spiritual house based on principles of a dying, defeated world, 2:20-22.

- (Colossians 2:20-22 ESV) If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations—21 “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch” 22 (referring to things that all perish as they are used)—according to human precepts and teachings?

3. This person successfully builds a spiritual house that looks great, 2:23.

- (Colossians 2:23 ESV) These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.

OUR IMPORTANT LESSON: You can certainly build an impressive spiritual house based on self-made religion and false humility . **if** your goal is to appear wise to the people around you.

**THE
BIG
“IF”**

What does this spiritual house look like?

... a beautiful house with clean lines of respect and distinction complemented by appropriate shades of wisdom and righteousness ...

AN INSIDER'S INSIDE LOOK AT THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS WHO WERE THE EPITOME OF THOSE WHO BUILD SPIRITUAL HOUSES BASED ON APPEARANCES ...

1. They were lacking in integrity, 23:1-3.

- (Matthew 23:1–3 ESV) Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, 2 “The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses’ seat, 3 so do and observe whatever they tell you, but not the works they do. For they preach, but do not practice.

2. They were abusive of their authority, 23:4.

- (Matthew 23:4 ESV) They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on people’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to move them with their finger.

3. They were pretentious attention seekers, 23:5-7.

- (Matthew 23:5–12 ESV) They do all their deeds to be seen by others. For they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long, 6 and they love the place of honor at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues...

4. They were children of hell, 23:13-15.

- (Matthew 23:13–15 ESV) But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven in people’s faces. For you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in. 15 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel across sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves.

5. They were blind guides whose word could not be trusted, 23:16-22.

- (Matthew 23:16–22 ESV) Woe to you, blind guides, who say, ‘If anyone swears by the temple, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.’ 17 You blind fools! ... You blind men! ...

6. They were blind guides who were neglectful of

what was most important, 23:23-24.

- (Matthew 23:23–24 ESV) Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others. 24 You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!

7. They were blind religious professionals only concerned with outward morality, 23:25-26.

- (Matthew 23:25–26 ESV) Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. 26 You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean.

8. They were hypocrites who were very successful at appearing outwardly beautiful, 23:27.

- (Matthew 23:27 ESV) Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people’s bones and all uncleanness.

9. They were very skilled at appearing righteous, 23:28.

- (Matthew 23:28 ESV) So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

10. They were hypocrites, serpents, a brood of vipers who were sentenced to hell, 23:29-33.

- (Matthew 23:29–33 ESV) Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! ... 32 Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers. 33 You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell?

11. They shed the blood of the truly righteous, 23:34-35.

- (Matthew 23:34–35 ESV) Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify ...

12. They killed God’s prophets, refused to be gathered to God and as a result would be left

desolate, 23:36-39.

- (Matthew 23:36–39 ESV) Truly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation. 37 “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! 38 See, your house is left to you desolate. 39 For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’ ”

Λόγον [word] μὲν [indeed]
ἔχοντα [having] σοφίας [wisdom]

- (Colossians 2:23a ESV) **These have indeed an appearance of wisdom** in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body ...

“A word indeed having wisdom” ...

The question is not really, “Is this wisdom wisdom?” But of whose wisdom are we speaking? This wisdom is based on outward conformity to the wisdom standard of this world and appeals to a broader range of people than the word of wisdom that is based on the inward transformation that comes through the renewing of our minds by the word of God.

- (Romans 12:2 ESV) Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

So we choose our wisdom ... will be conformed to the wisdom of this world which is based on outward appearances? Or will we be transformed by the renewal of our minds through God’s word of wisdom—the Bible?

BATTLE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC

Julia Ward Howe (1819-1910)

1. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord; He is trampling out the vintage where grapes of wrath are stored; He hath loosed the fateful lightning of **His terrible swift sword**, His truth is marching on.

CHORUS: Glory, glory, hallelujah! Glory, glory, hallelujah! Glory, glory, hallelujah! His truth is marching on.

2. I have seen Him in the watchfires of a hundred circling camps; They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps; I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps, His day is marching on.
3. He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat; He is sifting out the hearts of men before His Judgement Seat. Oh! Be swift, my soul, to answer Him, be jubilant, my feet! Our God is marching on.
4. In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea, With a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me; As he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free, While God is marching on.

HIS TERRIBLE SWIFT SWORD ...

- (Revelation 19:15 ESV) **From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations**, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.
- (Ezekiel 33:1–3 ESV) The word of the LORD came to me: 2 “Son of man, speak to your people and say to them, **If I bring the sword upon a land**, and the people of the land take a man from among them, and make him their watchman, 3 **and if he sees the sword coming** upon the land and blows the trumpet and warns the people ... (Ezekiel 33:6a ESV) **But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet ...**