



“Peace in our time” – Neville
Chamberlain in 1933

Will appeasement work in
religion?

Acts 5:34 But a certain Pharisee named Gamaliel , a teacher of the Law, respected by all the people, stood up in the Council and gave orders to put the men outside for a short time. 35 And he said to them, "Men of Israel, take care what you propose to do with these men. 36 "For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody; and a group of about four hundred men joined up with him. And he was slain; and all who followed him were dispersed and came to nothing.

37 "After this man Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census, and drew away some people after him, he too perished, and all those who followed him were scattered. 38

"And so in the present case, I say to you, stay away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or action should be of men, it will be overthrown;

39 but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; or else you may even be found fighting against God. " 40 And they took his advice; and after calling the apostles in, they flogged them and ordered them to speak no more in the name of Jesus, and then released them.

Did appeasement work then?

"And so in the present case, I say to you, stay away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or action should be of men, it will be overthrown; 39 but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; or else you may even be found fighting against God."

Does God want us to simply go our own way or does He want us to join in the fight against evil?

Notice first of all that although these words are in the Scriptures, they are not Scripture as they are not God's words, but the words of men!

Matt 4:4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"

Matt 15:7 "You hypocrites,
rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you,
saying, 8 'This people honors Me
with their lips, But their heart is
far away from Me. 9 But in vain
do they worship Me, Teaching as
doctrines the precepts of men.' "

Clearly the words of Gamaliel are
not to be followed as if from God.

What do we find Jesus doing
when confronted with religious
error?

Does He stop because others will
not like what He says?

Matt 15:12 Then the disciples came and said to Him, "Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this statement?" 13 But He answered and said, "Every plant which My heavenly Father did not plant shall be rooted up. 14 "Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit."

Jesus is rather blunt in speaking of the religious teachers – those who believed in the same God he knew.

Matt 23:1 Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, 2 saying, "The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses; 3 therefore all that they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds; for they say things, and do not do them.

Jesus then proceeds to denounce¹²
religious errors made by the
Pharisees in Mt 23.

Each time Jesus denounces the
religious errors of the Pharisees, He
refers to them in a derogatory manner
– hypocrites (12 times in Matthew),
blind guides (3 times).

Jesus began his ministry, calling
the people to repentance.

Matt 4:17 From that time Jesus
began to preach and say,
"Repent, for the kingdom of
heaven is at hand."

They had been taught error instead of truth in many areas. Jesus did not tell them how much they had in common – they knew that. He corrected them in what they were doing wrong.

Jesus first recorded sermon - he had been teaching earlier - was the “Sermon on the Mount” Mt 5-7

Mat 4:23 Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.

Jesus begins the lesson with a
call to the faithful – the
beatitudes Mt 5.3-16.

Jesus transitions to the rebuke of
the unfaithful by telling them He
was not changing the law but
fulfilling it. Mt 5. 17-19

Jesus then points out specifically those in error whom he is talking about – the scribes and the Pharisees!

Mat 5:20 "For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

This group of men were the staunchest advocates of the Law.

Paul said that he “lived as a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our religion.” (Acts 26:5)

Jesus condemns their practice of religion in regard to relationships with others.

Their false practice of the Law of
Moses is illustrated by Jesus'
accusing them of reversing God's
law of love (Lev 19.18) for others
Mt 5.42-48

Matt 5:43 "You have heard that it
was said, 'You shall love your
neighbor, and hate your enemy.' 44
"But I say to you, love your enemies,
and pray for those who persecute you
45 in order that you may be sons of
your Father who is in heaven; for He
causes His sun to rise on the evil and
the good, and sends rain on the
righteous and the unrighteous.

46 "For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax-gatherers do the same?

47 "And if you greet your brothers only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? 48 "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Lev 19:18 'You shall not take
vengeance, nor bear any grudge
against the sons of your people, but
you shall love your neighbor as
yourself; I am the LORD.

The Law of Moses did not tell them
to “hate their enemy.”

The scribes and Pharisees had
literally changed the word of God
and Jesus called them on it!
Robertson says the Talmud says
nothing about love for enemies.

Jesus condemns their practice of
religion in regard to their
relationship with God.

In 10 areas, Jesus tells them they have been taught error and they must reverse their practice in regard to their relationship with God. (Mt 6.1-7.14)

Righteousness before men rather than
God

In giving

In Prayer

In asking forgiveness

In their attitude toward sin

In worldly vs heavenly treasure

In the standard of Judgment

In treatment of God's way

In Failing to trust God

In Failing to follow God

Our example — Jesus — says they fail
to follow God

Matt 7:13 "Enter by the narrow gate; for
the gate is wide, and the way is broad
that leads to destruction, and many are
those who enter by it. 14 "For the gate is
small, and the way is narrow that leads to
life, and few are those who find it.

Jesus warns them to be careful of
false teachers. Mt 7.15-23

Matt 7:21 "Not everyone who
says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will
enter the kingdom of heaven; but
he who does the will of My Father
who is in heaven.

Jesus warns them to listen and
carefully consider the warning.

Mt 7.24-27

Matt 7:24 "Therefore everyone
who hears these words of Mine,
and acts upon them, may be
compared to a wise man

When we go into the world or to those who are unrepentant in the church, we cannot go with words of appeasement.

2 Tim 4:2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove , rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; 4 and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths.