

For the Love of an Imperative Verb Matthew 23:1-12

The Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost, Year A

¹Then Jesus said to the crowds and his disciples, ²"The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; ³therefore **do** [ποιήσατε, **poiēsate**] whatever they teach you and **follow** [τηρεῖτε, **tēreíte**] it; but **do** not **do** [ποιεῖτε, **poieíte**] as they do, for they do not practice what they teach. ⁴They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on the shoulders of others; but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them. ⁵They do all their deeds to be seen by others, for they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long. ⁶They love to have the places of honor at banquets and the best seats in the synagogues, ⁷and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, and to have people call them rabbi. ⁸But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all students. ⁹And call no one your father on earth, for you have one Father—the one in heaven. ¹⁰Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Messiah. ¹¹The greatest among you will be your servant. ¹²All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted. [NRSV89]

23:3

ποιήσατε, **poiēsate**; *vb: aor act imperative 2nd pers pl* from ποιέω:

translations: **do** [NRSV89, ESV, NAB, NGEINT, NIV11, NJB, NRSVue; Filson], also **obey**

[Albright & Mann], **observe** [NKJV], **haced** [IAdNT]

τηρεῖτε, **tēreíte**; *vb: pres act imperative 2nd pers pl* from τηρέω:

translations: **follow** [NRSV89, NRSVue, Albright & Mann], also **do** [NKJV], **keep**

[NGEINT], **observe** [ESV, NAB, NJB; Filson], **guardad** [IAdNT]; not translated in NIV11

ποιεῖτε, **poieíte**; *vb: pres act imperative 2nd pers pl* from ποιέω:

translations: **do** [not] **do** [NRSV89, NGEINT, NIV11, NKJV, NRSVue; Filson], **do** [ESV, NAB, NJB], also **do** [not] **imitate** [Albright & Mann], **hagáis** [IAdNT]

Albright & Mann: "The minutiae were observed, but God's love, of which the Law was an expression, was easily forgotten. [p. 278.]

Filson: "'They say' what the will of God is, but they 'do not do' it. Though usually outwardly correct and formally obedient, they lacked the personal dedication and unselfish integrity of good living." [p. 243.]

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