Vatican



Pope Francis speaks during a visit to the Rome headquarters of the U.N. Food and Agricultural Organization Oct. 16.(CNS/Paul Haring)

Junno Arocho Esteves

View Author Profile

Catholic News Service

View Author Profile

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

Vatican City — October 17, 2017

Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

Christians who do not really listen to the word of God and are only concerned with outward appearances are corrupt and idolatrous, Pope Francis said.

Foolish men and women believe they listen but instead do their "own thing always" and they transform the word of God with their own "concept of reality," the pope said Oct. 17 during his morning Mass at Domus Sanctae Marthae.

"Fools do not know how to listen," he said. "And this deafness will bring them to corruption. The word of God doesn't enter, there is no place for love and, in the end, there is no place for freedom."

The pope reflected on the day's Gospel from St. Luke (11:37-41) in which Jesus rebukes a Pharisee who "was amazed to see that (Jesus) did not observe the prescribed washing before the meal."

"Oh you Pharisees! Although you cleanse the outside of the cup and the dish, inside you are filled with plunder and evil," Jesus said.

Those who criticized Jesus, like the Pharisee in the Gospel, were "corrupted by vanity, appearance, by exterior beauty and justice," the pope said.

Christians today also are at risk of thinking this way, which leads them to become "ideologues of Christianity" rather than true followers of Jesus, he said.

Advertisement

Ideology, the pope added, can become a form of idolatry that enslaves Christians "because they exchanged the truth of God with a lie."

"This is the foolishness of Christians," the pope said. "There are foolish Christians and foolish pastors. St. Augustine would give them a good clobbering because the foolishness of pastors hurts the flock."

Pope Francis said that despite the foolishness of his children, Jesus "is always at the door," knocking and waiting because "he longs for us."

"Jesus weeps with this longing, he wept over Jerusalem: it was his longing for a people whom he chose, whom he loved, but they went away because of foolishness, they preferred appearances, idols or ideologies," Pope Francis said.