

Week of November 1, 2020

Matthew 23:1-12

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples,

² "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat;

³ therefore, do whatever they teach you and follow it; but do not do as they do, for they do not practice what they teach.

⁴ They 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.

⁵ They do all their deeds to be seen by others; for they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long.

⁶ They love to have the place of honor at banquets and the best seats in the synagogues,

⁷ and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, and to have people call them rabbi.

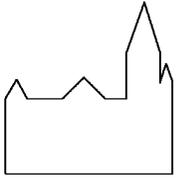
⁸ But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all students.

⁹ And call no one your father on earth, for you have one Father-- the one in heaven.

¹⁰ Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Messiah.

¹¹ The greatest among you will be your servant.

¹² All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted.



Group Leader

Remember: you don't need to use all of the questions. Go with what works. Give people a chance to think before answering, but if a question falls flat, move on. Let the discussion go where it needs to go, as long as it remains centered around the lesson. Give the participants page 1. Use this page for yourself.

Gathering questions:

- A. What occupations do you respect? Disrespect?
- B. Excluding family and close relationships, discuss a situation where someone revealed themselves to be a hypocrite?

Bible Study Questions:

- 1. In verse 2, what do you think is "Moses' seat"?
- 2. In verse 3, what do you think Jesus means by telling the people to do "whatever" the Pharisees teach them?
- 3. How literally should we take the instructions in verses 8-10?
- 4. Do you think being a Christian in society today is seen favorably or unfavorably? Why?
- 5. What religious rules lay an unfair burden on people?
- 6. To what extent do you try to have people know about your faith? Phylacteries and fringes were public symbols of Jewish faith. What are Christian equivalents? Do you say "grace" before meals in restaurants? Why or why not?
- 7. In what ways do you want your faith to challenge you?
- 8. If someone asked you how your faith has made you a better person, what you would answer? Would someone who knows you well say that faith has made a visible difference in you? How?

Closing prayer: particularly invite prayers about how we get better at some aspect of what Jesus taught us to do.