



## SERMON STUDY GUIDE

### “Matthew 23:25-39” on August 5 & 8, 2021

#### CONNECT

How did last week's passage we read/discussed from Matthew 23:13-24 affect your week?

#### DISCOVER: MATTHEW 23:25-39

1. What did the passage say (in your own words) or did you take away from the sermon this week?
2. How does this passage or did the sermon point you to Jesus (teach us about Jesus)?
3. Did you find anything challenging about this passage (words you didn't understand, phrases that didn't make sense, etc.)?

**MATTHEW 23:25-39** Jesus continues His confrontation with the religious elite, delivering more “Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees” statements that carry with them future judgment. These leaders did their best not only to pull people away from what God wanted for them, but to seek to destroy the Son of God as well – they stood in the way of His grace! Their hypocrisy convicts us to examine our own motives in what choices we make in our walk with Jesus.

**INSIDES AND OUTSIDES:** Jesus uses examples of being consumed with physical cleanliness on the outside while ignoring the lack of spiritual cleanliness on the inside, emphasizing how much greater spiritual health is than physical cleanliness. While He is angry about their actions and choices, He confronts them out of a love for them as God's children who have been deceived and are confused, headed for judgment.

- Look at Luke's presentation of woes to the religious leaders in Luke 11:37-12:12; what are the differences and similarities between Matthew's and Luke's examples and perspectives?
- Jesus uses the words 'full of greed, self-indulgence, dead men's bones, unclean, hypocrisy, lawlessness and wickedness' to describe the insides/spiritual health of the religious leaders; what words would you use to describe your 'insides' right now – what are you 'full of'?
- How much time do we as individuals, a culture, and church bodies spend in our lives perfecting the outside of our vessel versus taking care of the inside?
- What are the motives behind how we spend most of our time, and what are the outcomes of those choices?
- How important is being in control of your life and the lives of those around you to you? How does that affect your ability to recognize the weaknesses in your spiritual health and give the Holy Spirit access to your insides?
- Has this last year in dealing with Covid and having so much taken away from you revealed to you where your hope comes from? How much did you find culture influenced your feelings and choices? What did you find was really your centerpiece in life?
- Does this passage bring to mind someone you love dearly but needs a point of intersection to address an unhealthy physical and/or spiritual condition? How can this passage help you reach out to that person?

**FUTURE JUDGMENT:** After chastising the religious elite as they spoke of not being like their forefathers in their treatment of prophets even as they sought to kill the Son of Man, Jesus grieved over Jerusalem in verses 37-39. He expressed His longing to gather all Jerusalem's children together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings. He wanted to protect them and provide for them, but the religious leaders were unwilling to respond.

- Jesus wants to protect each of us today; He grieves when we don't turn to Him for help. Where do you first turn to for help when hurt has invaded your life?
- The religious leaders had become comfortable in the way they led the people, ignoring the suffering they imposed on others; when life becomes really comfortable it can be hard to find repentance. What comforts in your life or the life of someone around you stand in the way of living and walking with Jesus?
- Jesus spoke about the next time people would see Him – His Second Coming – how important will the comforts of this life be to you when that day comes? If you had a spiritual health monitor, what would it show about how you are allowing God to clean and heal your insides in preparation for that day?
- Jesus closed this teaching about judgment with the same words people cried out to Him as He entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday – “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.” Compare and contrast the settings and situations for these words at the beginning and ending of Jesus' ministry, and how they impact your perspective on your spiritual status at this moment!



CHURCH

LOVE GOD, LOVE PEOPLE

## SERMON STUDY GUIDE CONT.

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### RESPOND

- How does this passage encourage you, challenge you, or change you in your efforts to become more like Jesus?
- What is one thing you learned about yourself from God’s Word? How will you respond in obedience this week?
- Who is someone you can have a conversation with about what Jesus is doing in your life or invite to join you at a CU Church gathering.

### PRAY

PRAY for each other and spend time praising God. Pray that he will show you how to better love God and love people.