



SERMON STUDY GUIDE

“Matthew 23:13-24” on July 29 & August 1, 2021

CONNECT

How did last week's passage we read/discussed from Matthew 23:1-12 affect your week?

DISCOVER: MATTHEW 23:13-24

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 23:13-24 - WOES! As He teaches the crowds and disciples about the kingdom of heaven, Jesus continues His warnings against the hypocrisy of the religious leaders, calling out a series of woes to them. Their hunger for power, money and status caused them to lose sight of the things that really matter in life – the justice, mercy, faithfulness and love of God!

WOES vs. BEATITUDES: In His Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, verses 1-12 Jesus describes what walking in wholeness, walking like Jesus in this life would look like. Walking like Jesus is upside-down from walking like the world!

- Review Matthew 5, one of Jesus's first teachings in His ministry. Compare and contrast the beatitudes in those first 12 verses with the opposing woes listed in Matthew 23:13-24.
- As a church and as individuals, how do you suppose we are seen by the world? Do we look more upside-down or right-side-up?
- Jason spoke of walking in wholeness and walking in blessing, in light of the Beatitudes and the example of Christ given in Philippians 2, what does walking in wholeness and blessing mean to you?
- Jesus constantly was willing to diminish His status in order to love and reach people; what stands in the way of your being willing to do the same to show others who Jesus is? Give examples of challenges this presents in your world.

THE WOES: Jesus pointed out that the Teachers' and Pharisees' lives revealed they were not bringing people to the Kingdom of God as should have been their purpose, but that they were seeking self-benefit in their roles as religious leaders. He called them blind fools and hypocrites!

- For each woe listed in verses 13-24, give an opposite positive application for your own life in today's culture.
- Where do you see examples of hypocrisy in the world around you, especially among Christ-followers? How do you respond to that?
- Have you ever been in a position of leadership and made a decision or judgment which showed hypocrisy on your part? How can we prepare ourselves for walking in humility and loving people more?
- Jesus specifically referred to 'things that matter' – justice, mercy and faithfulness. What significance does each of those qualities have for you in the way you live your life – how much do they matter to you compared to the world's standards for success?
- Jason shared that only 17% of church-goers knew the Great Commission. How can we respond to that?
- How do you live out BOTH your purpose

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.