

Cheltenham
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Message Notes

Text: Matthew 23:1-12

Now Jesus turned to address his disciples, along with the crowd that had gathered with them. “The religion scholars and Pharisees are competent teachers in God’s Law. You won’t go wrong in following their teachings on Moses. But be careful about following them. They talk a good line, but they don’t live it. They don’t take it into their hearts and live it out in their behavior. It’s all spit-and-polish veneer.

“Instead of giving you God’s Law as food and drink by which you can banquet on God, they package it in bundles of rules, loading you down like pack animals. They seem to take pleasure in watching you stagger under these loads, and wouldn’t think of lifting a finger to help. Their lives are perpetual fashion shows, embroidered prayer shawls one day and flowery prayers the next. They love to sit at the head table at church dinners, basking in the most prominent positions, preening in the radiance of public flattery, receiving honorary degrees, and getting called ‘Doctor’ and ‘Reverend.’

“Don’t let people do that to you, put you on a pedestal like that. You all have a single Teacher, and you are all classmates. Don’t set people up as experts over your life, letting them tell you what to do. Save that authority for God; let him tell you what to do. No one else should carry the title of ‘Father’; you have only one Father, and he’s in heaven. And don’t let people maneuver you into taking charge of them. There is only one Life-Leader for you and them—Christ.

“Do you want to stand out? Then step down. Be a servant. If you puff yourself up, you’ll get the wind knocked out of you. But if you’re content to simply be yourself, your life will count for plenty.

Text: Matthew 23:12 (NIV)

“For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”

Humility is strong!

CS Lewis quote: “Humility isn’t thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less.”

John 3:26-30 (NIV)

They came to John and said to him, “Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan—the one you testified about—look, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him.”

To this John replied, “A person can receive only what is given them from heaven. You yourselves can testify that I said, ‘I am not the Messiah but am sent ahead of him.’ The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom’s voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. He must become greater; I must become less.

Humility stems from an understanding of who God is and who we are.

Discussion Questions

1. Read Mt 23:1-12 from the Message translation. What stands out to you in these scriptures?
2. There is a strength associated with humility. Can you think of a time in your life where strength was displayed through humility?
3. CS Lewis says “Humility isn’t thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less.” How can you apply this practically to your life?
4. Jacob talked about the verse in Jn 3:30 “He must increase, I must decrease.” What does this verse speak to you?
5. Read over your Connect Group the scriptures Phil 2:3-11 and allow the humility of Christ to sink in.