

PROPER 26: FOLLOWING GOD HUMBLY THE STORY: MATTHEW 23:1-12

We have heard lots of parables and teachings in the last few weeks addressed to the people who were testing Jesus, the religious leaders who were challenging him. Today, however, he outright addresses their behavior. He's letting all those around him (not just Jews, but anyone in authority) that it is not right to order others around and lay your heavy burdens on them while you sit by showing how wonderful you are. Matthew has already touched on this a bit in Chapter 6 when he talks about practicing your piety in front of others. For Matthew, it is our true, actions that speak of who we are and how we follow Christ. It is not about showing others what we do or how we follow, but the action and the following that are important. We also see this in Matthew 20:25-26, "But Jesus called them to him and said, 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant...'"

YOUNGER CHILDREN

Reflection Questions:

- I wonder what Jesus is trying to say to the crowds and disciples?
- I wonder what those around him thought of his message?
- I wonder if you have ever known someone who gives all the hard work to others while sitting by?



OLDER YOUTH

- What do you think Jesus is trying to say to the crowds and disciples?
- I wonder what those around him thought of his message?
- I wonder if you have ever known someone who gives all the hard work to others while sitting by?
- I wonder what Jesus would warn against if he was telling us this today? How would this scripture passage read differently if Jesus were talking to us today?
- What can you take away from this today? What does it mean to be a disciple today?



ACTIVITIES

1. "See" yourself as a disciple: Lay your body down on a large piece of blank paper and ask a parent or partner to trace your outline. Then, choose a color to represent your "humble" self and trace your body outline. Fill in your outline with pictures showing humility in action.

2. Humble Yourself: Recall the times when you have embarrassed someone or caused a person to feel shame. Choose one of the people and compose a letter of apology to God and Jesus for your actions. You may also write a letter of apology to that person.

