

**Scripture Passages:**

**Matthew 23:1-3 New International Version (NIV)**

23 Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: <sup>2</sup>“The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. <sup>3</sup>So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach.

**Matthew 23:13-22 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>13</sup>“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the door of the kingdom of heaven in people’s faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to. <sup>[14]</sup> <sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>15</sup>“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when you have succeeded, you make them twice as much a child of hell as you are.

<sup>16</sup>“Woe to you, blind guides! You say, ‘If anyone swears by the temple, it means nothing; but anyone who swears by the gold of the temple is bound by that oath.’ <sup>17</sup> You blind fools! Which is greater: the gold, or the temple that makes the gold sacred? <sup>18</sup> You also say, ‘If anyone swears by the altar, it means nothing; but anyone who swears by the gift on the altar is bound by that oath.’ <sup>19</sup> You blind men! Which is greater: the gift, or the altar that makes the gift sacred? <sup>20</sup> Therefore, anyone who swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it. <sup>21</sup> And anyone who swears by the temple swears by it and by the one who dwells in it. <sup>22</sup> And anyone who swears by heaven swears by God’s throne and by the one who sits on it.

**Matthew 7:21 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>21</sup>“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

**Matthew 7:24-27 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>24</sup> “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. <sup>25</sup> The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. <sup>26</sup> But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. <sup>27</sup> The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

### **Romans 12:1-2 New International Version (NIV)**

**12** Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.<sup>2</sup> Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

### **Matthew 5:33-37 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>33</sup> “Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not break your oath, but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made.’ <sup>34</sup> But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all: either by heaven, for it is God’s throne; <sup>35</sup> or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. <sup>36</sup> And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. <sup>37</sup> All you need to say is simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.<sup>[a]</sup>

### **Discussion Questions:**

- Discuss areas of putting God’s word into practice or practicing what you preach that you would like to improve.
- Discuss ways that you are tempted to “put on a mask” in your interactions to God or with others.
- Pray for one another about what you’ve discussed.