

# MIXED-UP PRIORITIES

WHO DO YOU SAY I AM? THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, PART 6 · MATTHEW 16:1-12 · NOVEMBER 14, 2021 · FRED PIERCE

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*"Why is it you don't understand that when I told you, Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees, it wasn't about bread? Then they understood that he had not told them to beware of the leaven in bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees." (Matthew 16:11-12)*

## Jesus tested by Pharisees and Sadducees (Matthew 16:1)

- They were Jewish religious groups who did not have much in common
- They disagreed about significant theological matters
- The only thing that they agreed on was not liking Jesus

## Jesus responds to their questions (Matthew 16:2-4)

- Jesus uses a simple parable about the sky
- Jesus calls them out as evil and adulterous
- They missed the Kingdom of God through Jesus
- Jesus speaks of the greatest sign that would be given
- Reflect on Matthew 12:39-40
- Jesus left

## Jesus warns the disciples about the Pharisees/Sadducees (Matthew 16:5-12)

- The disciples were worried about their bread
- Jesus warns the disciples of the leaven
- The disciples were seeing the natural/not the spiritual
- The disciples were missing what was right before them
- The disciples were falling into a similar trap (vs. 8-10)
- Watch out for self-righteous religion that pulls away from relationship with Jesus

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Answer one of these two questions:
  - Have you ever been tempted to just check the religious boxes and not spend time building relationship with Jesus?
  - Have you ever been hurt by self righteous religious structure that pushed you away from God?
2. This week we continue the new series, "Who Do You Say I Am?", by looking at Matthew 16:1-12. Begin your study in prayer by asking God to speak to you through the Scripture.

Then, whether you're on your own or with others, read that passage aloud.

3. Background: The Pharisees and Sadducees were Jewish religious leaders who were using self-righteous talk during this time which was causing division amongst the Jewish people. This was where the relationship of Jesus was needed to transform the hearts and minds of the people during this time. Jesus was walking amongst the people, but some were so distracted by these teachings that they did not even realize.
4. Let's trace the story. In verse 4, why did Jesus call the Pharisees and Sadducees and evil and adulterous generation?
5. What was Jesus trying to get the disciples to understand when He made reference to leaven (vs 6)?
6. What did the disciples take Jesus' statement in verse 6 to mean?
7. What was the spiritual connection between leaven and the Pharisees/Sadducees that Jesus was making to the disciples?
8. What did Jesus remind the disciples of in verses 9-10?
9. What was getting in the disciples way of understanding what Jesus meant regarding the leaven (v. 11)?
10. What similarities do leaven (yeast) and the Pharisees have?
11. Proverbs 30:5-6 says, "Every word of God is flawless he is a shield to those who take refuge in Him. Do not add to his words, or He will rebuke you and prove you a liar." What does this passage in Proverbs speak to you in reference to what Jesus was striving to get the disciples to understand?
12. What is one thing God is speaking to you through this study? If you're on your own, write that down, pray over it, and share it with someone this week. If you are with a small group, share your answers with one another before closing in prayer.

## DIG DEEPER:

This week dig deeper in one or more of the following ways:

- Meditate on the message of Jesus in Matthew 16:11-12
- Journal or reflect about times when you have allowed the systems and norms of this world to distract you from what the Word of God says.
- How can you grow deeper in relationship with Jesus this week?
- Read more about this weeks message in the following passages: Matthew 12:39-40, Matthew 28:11-15, Acts 23:7-8, Romans 10:8, Hebrews 12:18, 1 Corinthians 10:9, Proverbs 26:5, Isaiah 1:3, Jeremiah 8:7.