

**TITLE AND NUMBER:** 157: Practice what you preach



**REFERENCE AND KEY VERSE(S):** Matthew 23:1-4, 11-12

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: 'The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practise what they preach. They tie up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them. (v.1-4)

'The greatest among you will be your servant. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.' (v.11-12)

**LOOKING FURTHER:** Mark 10:35-45; Luke 14:7-11; John 13:1-17

### What does this Bible passage tell us?

The saying 'practise what you preach,' which is still in use today, comes from this passage in the Bible. Jesus was telling His disciples that they should do as the teachers of the law and the Pharisees said because it was Moses who passed God's law on to them. However, they should not copy what those leaders did because their actions did not match their words.

I am sure many of us have fallen into the trap of telling people what they should be doing but not doing it ourselves. However, Jesus tells us that if we are not prepared to do something ourselves, we should not be burdening other people with it.

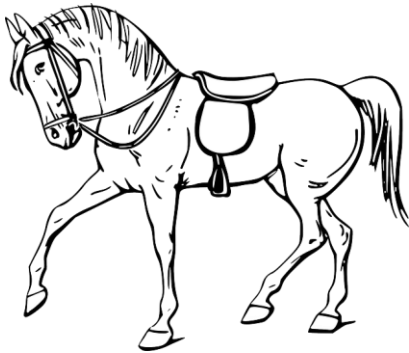
In the 7th century, there lived a much-loved and respected monk named Aidan who was later to become a saint. He led a mission to Northumbria to teach the people about Jesus. He only taught what he himself practised. The King gave Aidan a horse so that he could spread the Gospel to more people. However, Aidan gave the horse away to the first beggar he met and continued to walk alongside the people, telling them about Jesus as they walked. Aidan would not ride while the people walked.

Jesus always identified Himself with marginalised and poor people - those not considered important. And He taught His disciples to do the same. We too should be like Aidan and do as Jesus said and did. Or rather, do as Jesus did and said - for Jesus only preached what He practised.

### Reflections:

- If you have ever expected someone to do what you have not been prepared to do yourself, imagine how you would feel if the situation were reversed.
- Think of the stories you know about Jesus. List the people He spends most of His time with. Are they wealthy and privileged or poor and marginalised? Does it encourage you to know that Jesus was a man of humility and kindness?
- Is there someone you know who needs a friend to give them help and encouragement? Could you be that friend?

Write or draw something you read in this Bible Study that stood out to you.



Do you have any questions about this week's Bible Study?



How does this week's message apply to your life?



What can we learn about God from this week's passage?



What would you like to ask God this week?



Has God responded to your prayers this week in the way you had hoped for? It's okay to talk to God about this.

