

7-23-2016, COTR Texarkana

Title: Jesus and the Last Days, Part 2

Purpose: Teach people what Jesus said about the last days and provoke them to live like He told us.

Spiritual Truth: Jesus predicted what will happen in the last days and told us how to live.

Text: Matthew chapter 24 & 25

Topic: Last Days, Judgment Day, Discipleship, Faithful, Preparedness

Series: The Final Chapter

Series Purpose: Teach people about the last days and show them how to live accordingly.

Jesus and the Last Days, Part 2

I. Introduction

A. Listen to live stream @ChurchOnTheRock.org or the COTR iPhone/ Android app

B. Review: last week we talked about how Christians can help the racial crisis in America.

Today we'll continue the series, "The Final Chapter" ...living in the last days.

1. In part 1 we talked about what Jesus said to His disciples about the last days in Matthew 24 and 25. He (1) predicted the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem, (2) the signs of the end of the world, (3) how His followers would be treated in the last days, (4) the antichrist and (5) the 2nd coming of Christ.
2. He concluded by saying nobody knows the day or hour of His return and Matthew 24:44 (NLT) **You also must be ready all the time**, for the Son of Man will come when least expected. Today we'll talk about 3 parables that tell us how to be ready.
3. How do we interpret these 2 chapters? In part 1 we saw that there are different interpretations about the sequence of end time events and whether Christians will be on earth. I chose to present the chapter as if we are experiencing the events Jesus described and then how we should respond. In part 2 interpretations differ whether people in the parables are believers, apostates or religious but not saved. Contextually, Ch. 23 was directed to Pharisees; ch. 24, 25 are directed to disciples. I will challenge you to do what Jesus said in each parable so we'll be ready.

C. Title: Jesus and the Last Days, pt-2

A. Purpose: Teach people what Jesus said about the last days and provoke them to live like He told us.

D. Sp. Truth: Jesus predicted what will happen in the last days and told us how to live.

II. #1, The parable of the faithful and wise servant: **We won't be ready for the 2nd**

Coming if we ignore God today and presume we can serve Him tomorrow.

A. Parables are stories of everyday events with a spiritual meaning.

B. Summary: This parable tells us about a master, Jesus, assigning His servant a task, i.e. be in charge of His household and be responsible to feed His servants. If he is faithful in the assigned task he will be rewarded but if he chooses to live in sin and ignore his responsibility, he'll be eternally punished. The wicked servant lives under the delusion that he could repent and serve God tomorrow. He was wrong.

- C. Matthew 24:45–51 (NIV) “Who then is the **faithful and wise servant**, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? 46 It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns...48 But **suppose that servant is wicked** and says to himself, ‘My master is staying away a long time,’ 49 and he then begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with drunkards. 50 The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him...51 He will cut him to pieces (*RSV punish him*) and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be **weeping and gnashing of teeth**.”
- D. Spiritual lessons: (context: in all 3 parables Jesus goes away and comes back later.)
1. We, like the servant have 2 choices: do what Jesus told us to do or turn away from God hoping we can repent before He comes back.
 - a It’s dangerous to flirt with evil and excuse it. Almost unconsciously we can become worldly, still believing in God but not serving Him (hypocrite), living with the illusion we can start serving the Lord tomorrow.
 - b Some believe the servant becomes an apostate; others believe he’s religious but not saved. It doesn’t matter. If you are living a sinful, worldly life all week and go to church on Sunday you’re not ready for the 2nd Coming.
 2. You’re gambling with your soul to presume you can get right with God before He comes back. Get right with God today and start serving Him. 2 Cor. 6:2 (NLT) For God says...Indeed, the “right time” is now. Today is the day of salvation.
 3. Those who faithfully serve the Lord will be rewarded in heaven while those who ignore what God requires will be punished for eternity in a place where there’s “weeping and gnashing of teeth”.

III. #2, The parable of the wise and foolish young girls/ virgins: **We won’t be ready for the 2nd Coming if we’re not truly saved/ born again.**

- A. Summary: The scene is a Jewish wedding. Jesus is the groom and the girls/ we are the bridesmaids. The bridesmaids are waiting at the bride’s home. When the groom arrived, lamps were lit so they could see the way to the groom’s house for the ceremony. In the parable the wise ones were prepared for a long wait. They had extra oil and the foolish ones didn’t. They all fell asleep waiting and when he came the foolish ones were out of oil. When they went to buy more the groom came and they were left outside.
- B. Mt 25 (NIV)...**the kingdom of heaven will be like** ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 Five of them were foolish and five were wise. 3 The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. 4 The wise ones, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. 5 The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all...fell asleep.6 At midnight the cry rang out: ‘Here’s the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!’ 7 “Then all the virgins woke up...10 “But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. **The virgins who were ready went in with him** to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut. 11 “Later the others also came. ‘Lord, Lord,’ they said, ‘open the door for us!’ 12 “But he replied...**I don’t know you.**’ 13 “Therefore **keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.**
- C. Spiritual lessons:

1. The key phrase is, ‘I don’t know you.’ We can be religious but lost. This isn’t a case of Christians losing their salvation. Jesus didn’t say, I no longer know you. The unwise had never been his. They may have said they were saved but they weren’t.
2. How do I know I’m truly saved? The evidence is a changed life after praying for forgiveness and committing to follow Christ. People who repent and believe become different because they’re born again. (I’m not trying to get you to doubt your salvation but I am trying to get you to face facts.)
 - a How do I know if I’m really saved? I’d be concerned if I rarely read the Bible or prayed, sin doesn’t bother me, live for myself instead of serving the Lord, give little or no money to God’s work or never told lost people about Jesus. People who are wise/ prepared do all these things.
 - b Doing religious things won’t get you to heaven, a spiritual rebirth is required. John 3:3 (ESV) Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.**”
3. How can I be saved? What must I do?
 - a Acts 2:37–38 (NLT) Brothers, what should we do? 38 Peter replied, “Each of you must **repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.
 - b Romans 10:9 (NLT) If you **openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart** that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

IV. #3, The parable of the talents: We won’t be ready for the 2nd Coming if we’re not a good steward of our time, talent and treasure.

- A. Summary: Jesus depicts Himself as a master going on a journey entrusting 3 followers with resources, each according to their ability, to build His Kingdom. 2 did and were rewarded; 1 did not because he was lazy/ hesitant and fearful. He was judged harshly.
- B. Key verses: Verse 14 “Again, it (*The Kingdom of Heaven*) will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and **entrusted his wealth** to them. 15 To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, **each according to his ability...**19 “**After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them.** 20... ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.’ 21 “His master replied, ‘**Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things...**’24 “Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. ‘Master...’25 So I was **afraid** and went out and hid your gold in the ground...’26 “His master replied, ‘You wicked, **lazy** servant...’30 And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be **weeping and gnashing of teeth.**’
- C. Spiritual lessons:
 1. God doesn’t compare me to other people. He expects me to use what I have and do what I can with what He has entrusted to me.
 2. I don’t own anything. I am a steward entrusted by God with all I have. He expects me to use my time, talent and treasure responsibly. E.g. \$ for safe house in Turkey

3. If I faithfully use my time, talent and treasure to build God's Kingdom I'll be rewarded. Mt 16:24–27 (NLT) Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must **turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross, and follow me.** 25 If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But **if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.** 26 And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? Is anything worth more than your soul? 27 (ESV) For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels...and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.
 - a If I spend all I have on myself, I'll have wasted my life.
4. I am accountable before God for my choices. One day I'll stand before God and He'll ask me what we did with what He gave me. Faithful people will be ready.

V. Conclusion: Are you ready for the 2nd Coming of Christ?

- A. Are you like the foolish servant who acted wickedly and thought he could serve the Lord tomorrow?
- B. RU100%SURE you're saved? Is there evidence of a change in your life after you believed?
- C. Are you using your time, treasure and talent to build God's Kingdom or are you spending all you have on yourself?

VI. Response

- A. Prayer: (Raise hand) Lord I want to be ready when You return. I repent from living a sinful life. I'm recommitting myself to serve You with my time, talent and treasure.
- B. Souls: (Raise hand) I'm not sure I'm saved but I want to be... I'm not ready for Jesus to come but I want to be...I ready to commit my life to follow Jesus.
- C. *** *Logos Bible Software and library, New American Commentary: Matthew, the Pillar NT Commentary: Matthew, A Handbook of the gospel of Matthew were used to prepare this message.*