



True Jesus Church

Matthew



B I B L E S T U D Y G U I D E

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Matthew

TRUE JESUS CHURCH

Department of Literary Ministry

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Suggestions for Bible Study

Read Carefully

Observation is the most basic step in Bible study. Misinterpretation is often the result of careless reading. Only when we know what the passage says can we interpret what it means. Before each lesson, read the passage closely. Read it a few times until you become familiar with it. Observe words, phrases, paragraph structure, relationships, emphases, as well as anything that seems unusual. In doing so, you will discover things that you could never have if you read it casually.

Use A Pencil

Keep your pen or pencil busy by recording your observations and thoughts as you go through the passage. Mark key words and phrases. Take note of the relationship between words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs. Jotting your observations down on paper helps you focus your mind on the Bible text and leaves a much deeper impression on your mind. Your notes will also become valuable reference material the next time you come back to the passage.

Study with Prayer

“No one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God” (1Cor 2:11). The guidance of the Holy Spirit is key to understanding and being inspired by God’s word. Pray everyday and ask God to reveal to you the truth in His words. Whenever you come across a difficult passage, rely on the Holy Spirit by putting it in your prayer. Through your life of prayer, God will open your inner eyes to know His will and give you the strength to put it into practice.

Let the Word Speak to You

Bible study is not an intellectual exercise. Its aim is to change the reader in his thoughts, behavior, and lifestyle to conform to God’s will. The final goal of every Bible study is to apply God’s word in our lives. God reveals His will to the humble. So always approach the Bible with an attitude to be taught and corrected. When you are willing to let God’s word be a mirror to reflect your shortcomings and are determined to carry out His command, your Bible study will have achieved its intended purpose.

Using This Guide

Hands On Approach

This guide is not meant to be your coffee-table reading. Use it as a tool to make your study or discussion more effective. Make use of the spaces in the lessons to record your thoughts and observations.

Outline

One of the exercises under the section “observation” is to record an outline of the passage. Spend time to work on this important exercise because it helps you get the big picture of the entire passage as well as see the relationship between the parts. It also trains you to read the passage carefully and thoughtfully. Try to write the outline without copying the headings from your Bible. Each entry in the outline should accurately reflect the main idea of the paragraph.

Key Words

Key words are words that give meaning to the text or are related to the main idea. Key words are often repeated to mark emphasis. Key words tell you about who, what, when, where, why, or how. Since there are no right or wrong key words, your list may be different from the one provided at the end of the book.

Length of Lesson

Although the lessons are also designed for group Bible study, sometimes a lesson may be too long for a study session. If this happens, the Bible study leader who began the lesson should inform the next leader of where the passage was left off and the discussion results from the first study.

Thoughts on Questions

The end of this book contains suggested answers that serve as pointers when you need help. Since many of the questions do not have standard answers, use the answers provided only as reference. With these thoughts on questions as a starting point, you should be able to come up with more complete answers on your own.

Preparing for Group Bible Studies

Before leading a group Bible study, you should go through the lesson in advance to get a good understanding of the material. Then select questions based on the amount of time you have for discussion and the group’s size, makeup, level of biblical knowledge, etc. Try to also

design additional application questions that you think would suit the particular needs of the group.

The Inductive Method

The inductive approach is an effective way to study the Bible. It follows 3 basic steps: observation, interpretation, and application.

- 👁️ **Observation**—*What did God say? How did He say it?* This type of questions helps you look at the Bible passage carefully and equips you for a sound interpretation.
- 🔑 **Interpretation**—*What does it mean?* When answering this type of questions, let the Bible interpret itself whenever possible. Look at the immediate context (the surrounding verses) as well as the broader context (the surrounding chapters and the whole Bible) to derive at the intended meaning. Also ask the Holy Spirit to enlighten your heart to know the spiritual things that God wants to convey to you.
- 👣 **Application**—*How can I put this into practice?* Application questions encourage you to think about what God is teaching you personally through your study. What are His commands? What shortcomings in you is He pointing out? What message of encouragement does He have for you today? It is in examining your relationship with God and acting out God's word that the words of the Bible can truly come to life.

Because the order of the questions in this guide generally follows the order of the Bible text, we did not group the questions according to the 3 steps mentioned above. Instead, we have used symbols to identify the type of question. By helping you become acquainted with these 3 basic types of questions, we hope that you will acquire the ability to develop meaningful questions for future personal studies as well as group discussions.

Footnotes

Two numbers follow each quote, e.g. (4/134). The number before the slash refers to the reference source listed at the end of this book. The second number indicates the page where the quote is located in the reference source.

Introduction to Matthew

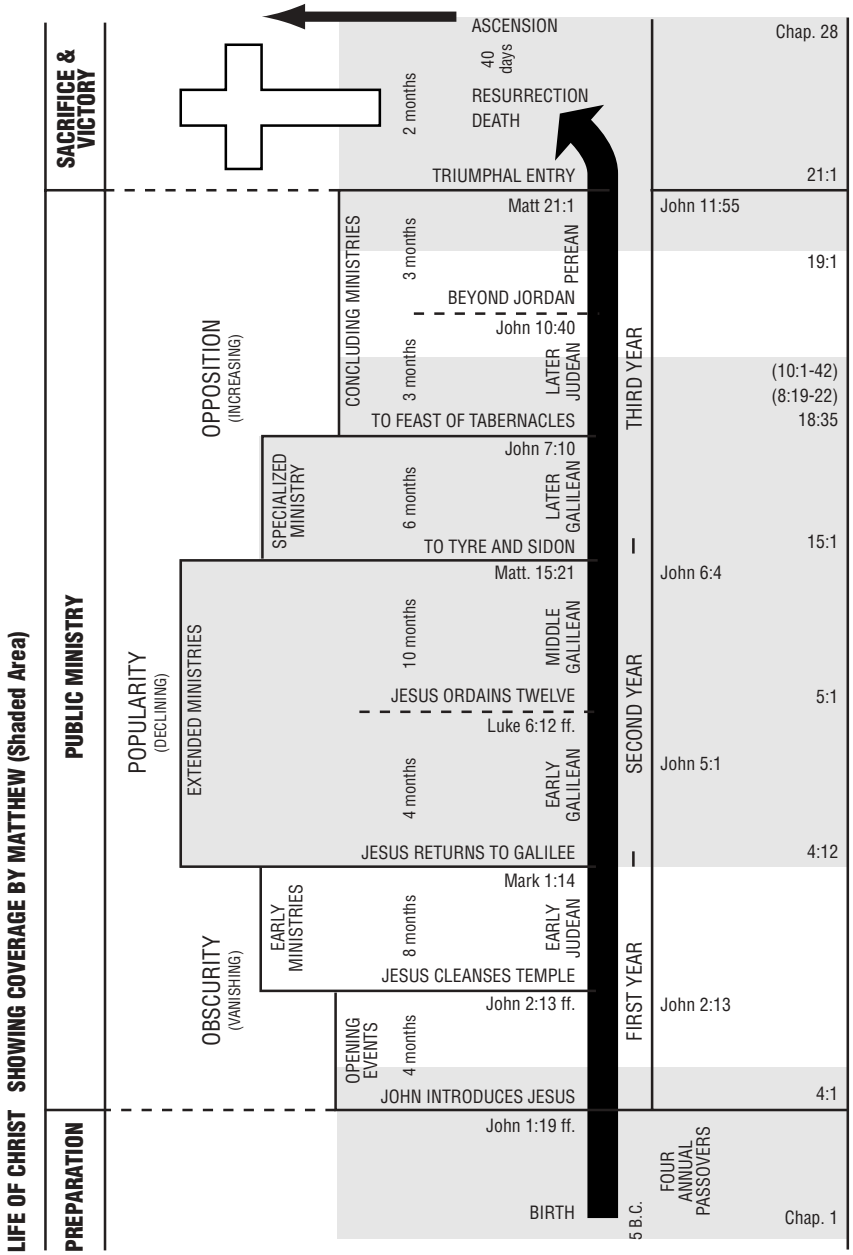


Chart A Life of Christ ^{2/9}



Map A Palestine in the time of Christ 2/12

The King and His Kingdom

Author

The early church universally accepted Matthew as the author of the book, although the Gospel itself does not tell us who the author was. In 10:3, the mention of Matthew as a tax collector is not found in either Mark or Luke; Such humble description may be an additional indication that Matthew was the author.

Recipient

It is clear from the book (see Unique Characteristics) that the first readers were most likely Jews, who were also the original hearers of the gospel message by our Lord. The Gospel assumes a certain degree of familiarity with the Old Testament Scriptures and Jewish tradition. However, it was not limited to Jewish readers. For example, at the end of the book, it records that the Lord Jesus commanded the disciples to preach to all nations (28:19). The Gospel might also have been intended for members of the church so that they might have a thorough understanding of the life, teaching, and ministry of their Savior through the eyes of first-hand witnesses.

Date

Most likely in the 60s A.D.

Place

We do not have conclusive evidence on Matthew's place of composition or destination.

Purpose/Occasion

The author does not state specifically the purpose for which the Gospel is written. From its themes, we may derive some possible purposes:

1. To show that Jesus was the Messiah, born according to the promise as the descendant of Abraham and David. Through His

life, ministry, death and resurrection, He inaugurated the kingdom of God.

2. To carefully preserve the teachings of Jesus and present them in an organized fashion.

Unique Characteristics

1. Mention of the genealogy, starting with Abraham, father of the chosen race, through David, the King from whom the Messiah would come.
2. Frequent usage of the expression, “kingdom of heaven.”
3. Numerous reference to O.T. prophecies and how they were being fulfilled in Jesus.

Central Verse

“The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham” (1:1).

Survey

Go through the entire book briefly to get a general overview and record descriptive headings in Chart B.

In Matthew we see two places where the author indicates key points in the ministry using the words “from that time.” These two indications mark out three stages in the life of Jesus:

1. Preparation (1:1-4:16): The book begins with the royal birth of Jesus and the resistance from Herod, who represented earthly authority. John the Baptist came to preach repentance in preparation for Jesus’ ministry. Jesus’ baptism was an announcement of Jesus’ ministry, and His temptation prepared Him to overcome all the challenges and forces of Satan.
2. Preaching and Healing (4:17-16:20): The majority of Jesus’ ministry, which centered in the region of Galilee, was catered to the general needs of the people. It started with the announcement of the kingdom of heaven and the call to repentance. Through His discourses, Jesus showed the people what the kingdom of heaven is and imparted His authority to the disciples so that they might advance the kingdom. Through works of signs and miracles, Jesus also demonstrated the power and authority of God’s kingdom.

Introduction to Matthew

3. Final fulfillment of ministry and the Commission (16:21-28:20):
The second stage had ended with Jesus' question to His disciples about His identity. Now, in the last stage, He began to reveal to His disciples about His sufferings, death, and resurrection. Matthew specifically records 3 predictions about Jesus' suffering. Jesus shifted the weight of His work from healing and casting out of demons to teachings and warnings. Opposition, particularly from the religious groups, grew to a point where they plotted to kill Jesus. After all that was predicted about His suffering and death had come to pass, Jesus was buried but was resurrected to life. Having received all authority, He commissioned the disciples to go into the world to continue the ministry and promised them His continual presence.

Themes

Kingdom of Heaven

The good news of the kingdom of heaven rings throughout the gospel. Jesus began His ministry, just as John the Baptist did his, by proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (3:2; 4:17). The coming of God's kingdom was powerful, for "The kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it" (11:12). Jesus brought the kingdom of heaven to earth with His authoritative teachings and countless works of healing and casting out of demons (12:22-28). Finally, through His sacrifice and resurrection, He opened the gates into the heavenly kingdom so that people of all nations may become God's children.

The message of the kingdom of heaven progressively unfolds in Jesus' five major discourses. In the teachings on the Mount (chapters 5-7), He laid out the spiritual laws of the kingdom and taught that only those who obey the will of the Father in heaven may enter this kingdom. In the second discourse (chapter 10), He empowered the disciples with the gift of healing and driving out evil spirits and commanded them to preach the good news of the kingdom. In the third discourse (chapter 13), He taught through parables how God would establish His kingdom through history. The fourth discourse (chapter 18) dealt with relationships among citizens of God's kingdom; it is those who are child-like, caring, and forgiving who may enter the kingdom of God. In the final discourse (chapters 24, 25), Jesus turned His listeners' attention to the judgment and the fulfillment of God's kingdom in the last days. The watchful, the diligent, and the loving will

enter the kingdom of heaven whereas the slumbering, the indolent, and the selfish will be cast out.

While the kingdom of heaven “forcefully advanced,” the humble and obedient were able to lay hold of it. On the other hand, the self-righteous opposed the ministry of Jesus and chose to remain outside the kingdom. The kingdom of God would be taken from them and given to those who bear fruit (21:43). Still others could not enter because their love of money prevented them from loving God and others (19:16-24). When Jesus comes on the last day, the final wedding banquet will take place (8:11-12; 22:1-14; 25:1-13). The truly righteous will be welcomed and rewarded, while the unworthy will be rejected.

Righteousness

Many of the Lord Jesus’ teachings expound the truth of righteousness. Righteousness is the conformity to God’s divine qualities expressed through His will and requirements. We are taught to seek God’s kingdom and His righteousness (6:33). We will be blessed if we hunger and thirst for righteousness (5:6). We will take hold of the kingdom of heaven if we are persecuted because of righteousness (5:10). The righteous will enter eternal life and shine like the sun in God’s kingdom (13:43; 25:46), but the wicked will be cast outside into the darkness.

The righteousness that God requires, however, is far different from the legalistic righteousness found in superficial observance of laws and regulations. True righteousness begins with humble repentance. Jesus said, “I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance” (9:13). Jesus’ message was full of harsh rebuke and warning to the proud and the self-righteous because God considers such attitude as wickedness. In the teachings on the Mount, the Lord redefined righteousness as obedience that comes from the heart. Such righteousness, which surpasses that of the Pharisees and Teachers of the law, is a requirement for entrance into God’s kingdom (5:20). Therefore, Jesus taught us to look to the Heavenly Father rather than the outward religiosity of men: “Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect” (5:48). Not only so, the Lord Himself lived out His own teachings through His life-long obedience to the Father’s will so that He might “fulfill all righteousness” (3:15).

Introduction to Matthew

Son of God

Not only was Jesus the Son of Abraham and the Son of David, He was all the more the Son of God. After Jesus' baptism, the heavenly Father anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and announced to all that He was the beloved Son (3:16,17). Although Satan hoped to mislead Jesus by posing the challenge, "if you are the Son of God..." Jesus knew that being the Son of God was not an earthly authority. His divine mission was not to display His power for its own sake but to save God's people from sin (1:21). Nevertheless, from the divine authority of the Lord, people recognized that He was the Son of God and worshiped Him (14:33). Even the demons had to acknowledge Him as the Son of God and submit to His power (8:29).

Peter's inspired confession of the Lord Jesus that He was the Christ, the Son of the living God, was a crux in the development of the gospel (16:16). The confession was immediately followed by Christ's prediction of His impending sufferings, death, and resurrection. So the Lord demonstrated Himself as the Son of God through His obedience unto death and work of atonement. Even while Jesus was on the cross, the unbelievers mocked Him saying that He ought to save Himself if He were the Son of God (27:40,43). But the fulfillment of God's salvation through His death, resulting in the resurrection of the saints and the tearing of the curtain in the temple, ultimately proved that He was indeed the Son of God (27:54). As the Son of God, Jesus accomplished everything for which God sent Him to do. Everyone who believes in Jesus, the Son of God, may be saved from sin and inherit everlasting life.

Authority

As the Son of God sent to the world to establish God's kingdom, the Lord Jesus carried out His mission with great divine authority. He taught with authority, bringing life-transforming power through His words (7:29). He healed the paralytic, demonstrating His authority to forgive sins (9:6). He also gave the disciples authority to drive out evil spirits and heal diseases (10:1). Seeing His powerful speech and actions, even the chief priests and elders in Jerusalem wanted to know where His authority came from (21:23). When commissioning the disciples after His resurrection, the Lord based His charge on His divine authority, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth" (28:18). When he comes in His kingdom, He will come with

power and great glory (24:30; 26:64), and He will receive honor and praise as the King of kings.

Key Words/Phrases

Son of David, Immanuel, King of the Jews, fulfilled, prophets, law of Moses, preaching, repent, kingdom of heaven, righteousness, follow, healing, faith, reward, heavenly Father, enter, send, judgment, sign, clean, suffer, wicked generation.

Modern Relevance

On one level, the Gospel according to Matthew provides a detailed account of Jesus' life and preserves His teachings in an organized structure. On another level, the gospel proclaims to the Jews and to the world at large that the Savior and King has come, just as God had revealed to the prophets of the Old Testament. Jesus, the Son of God, came to preach the good news of God's kingdom and laid down His life in order to save God's people from sin. The author calls everyone to repentance and acceptance of Christ so that they may enter the kingdom of heaven. The gospel is good news not only to the Jews of the apostolic era but also to people of all races in all generations. In order to be saved from sin and inherit eternal life, we must also forcefully lay hold of God's kingdom by transforming our lives in accordance with God's will and receiving the righteousness that God desires through the atoning work of Jesus Christ.

Introduction to Matthew

1:1-25		Judea, Egypt and Galilee	Birth and preparation		
2:1-23					
3:1-17		Galilee	Preaching and Healing/Ministry to the Crowd	What the Kingdom of Heaven Is	Many Miracles
4:1-16					
4:17-25					
5:1-7:28	First discourse (teachings on the mount)				
8:1-22					
8:23-9:8					
9:9-17					
9:18-34					
9:35-11:1	Second discourse (sending out the twelve disciples)				
11:2-30					
12:1-14					
12:15-50					
13:1-53	Third discourse (parables of the kingdom)				
13:54-14:13					
14:14-36					
15:1-21					
15:22-38					
15:29-39					
16:1-12					
16:13-20					
16:21-17:13	First prediction about Jesus' death / Transfiguration				
17:14-21	Second prediction about Jesus' death				
17:22-23					
17:24-27					
18:1-35	Fourth discourse (little ones/sinning and forgiveness)				
19:1-12					
19:13-15					
19:16-30					
20:1-16					
20:17-19	Third prediction of Jesus' death				
20:20-28					
20:29-34					
21:1-17					
21:18-22					
21:23-22:46					
23:1-39					
24:1-25:46	Fifth discourse (end time and judgment/separation)				
26:1-15					
26:17-35					
26:36-56					
26:57-27:26					
27:27-56					
27:57-66					
28:1-20					
		Perea	Final Fulfillment of the Ministry and the Commission	Entering the Kingdom of God or Being Rejected	Only two miracles, mainly teachings and warnings
		Jerusalem and Vicinity			

Chart B Survey of Matthew

Genealogy and Birth of the Savior

The Basics

Setting

Genealogy played an important role in Israelite life. The O.T. records about 25 genealogies (5, vol. 2/930). It was appropriate, therefore, that Matthew begins his book on Jesus with His genealogy.

The genealogy of Jesus serves a unique purpose. It tells us that He is the Messiah whom God had promised to His people and it reveals God's salvation plan in the history of the chosen people. Following the genealogy is the story of Jesus' birth, which is also important in establishing Jesus' divine origin and mission in fulfillment of the promises in the O.T.

Key Verse

"And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins" (1:21)"

Did You Know...?

1. **Genealogy** (1:1) means "origin" or "beginning." ^{1/1411}
2. **Begot** (1:2) usually means to become the descendant's father, but also refers simply to being the descendant's ancestor. Thus Josiah was the grandfather (ancestor), not the father of Jeconiah (see v. 11; 1 Chr 3:15, 16). Biblical genealogies often list only prominent ancestors. ^{1/1411}
3. **Christ** (1:16): The Anointed One, the long-expected "King of the Jews" (2:2, ...). *Christ* is a title, not a name. ^{1/1411}
4. The pledge to be married was legally binding. Only a divorce writ could break it, and infidelity at that stage was considered adultery (cf. Deut 22:23-24; Moore, *Judaism*, 2:121-22). The marriage itself took place when the groom (already called "husband," 1:19) ceremoniously took the bride home. ^{6/74}
5. In Jewish culture, the contract of marriage was made about a year before the consummation of the marriage.

Matthew 1:1-25

6. **Put her away secretly** (1:19): He would sign the necessary legal papers but not have her judged publicly and stoned (see Dt 22:23-24). ^{8/1437}
7. **“Jesus”** (1:21) is the Greek form of the Hebrew name “Joshua,” which means “The Lord is salvation.”

Observation

Outline

_____ (1:1-17)

_____ (1-6)

_____ (7-11)

_____ (12-16)

_____ (17)

_____ (1:18-25)


_____ (18-19)



_____ (20-25)


Key Words and Phrases


Segment Analysis

1:1-17

1. Compare the genealogies in Matthew and Luke (3:23-38). Write down their differences and explain the reasons for these differences. 

2. What titles are given to Jesus? What do these titles tell you about Jesus?  

3. Matthew divides the genealogy into 3 sections of 14 generations. What does each section represent in the history of the chosen people? Why do you think Matthew records the genealogy? 


- 4a. What do we know about each of the four women in the genealogy? 

Tamar (Gen 38:6-26) _____

Rahab (Josh 2:1-21; 6:16,17) _____

Ruth (Ruth 1:4) _____

Bathsheba (2Sam 11:2-5,26-27) _____

- 4b. Considering the fact that it was very unusual for women's names to appear in a Jewish genealogy, what do you think are the reasons for its inclusion in Matthew? 


Matthew 1:1-25



5. What does the genealogy remind us about God?  

1:18-25

6. How did the angel address Joseph (20)? Could there be a reason for doing so?  

7. Why was Jesus born of the Holy Spirit through a virgin? 

8. Why was Jesus born into the world? (21) 

9. In what ways was Jesus' birth a miracle?  

10a. What is the meaning of the name "Jesus"? 

10b. What is the connection between the name "Jesus" and the word "Immanuel"? 

11. What does “Immanuel” mean to you personally? Do you experience it in your life? 🦶

12. What lessons can we learn from Joseph in this story? 🦶

Wise Men's Visit and Escape to Egypt

The Basics

Setting

After the birth of Jesus, wise men from distant foreign land came to worship the King of the Jews. However, Herod, who was set up by the Roman authorities as the king of the Jews, sought to remove Jesus in fear of a possible threat to his throne. His vicious attempt to take the infant's life also foreshadows how Jesus would likewise eventually be rejected and killed by his own people.

Key Verse

“But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel” (2:6)

Did You Know...?

1. **Bethlehem** (2:1): A village about five miles (8 km) south of Jerusalem, which was the hometown of David, Israel's greatest king (1 Sam 16:1, 19). ^{1/1412-1413}
2. **King Herod** (2:1): Herod the Great, as he is now called, was born in 73 B.C. and was named king of Judea by the Roman Senate in 40 B.C. By 37 B.C. he had crushed, with the help of Roman forces, all opposition to his rule. Son of the Idumean Antipater, he was wealthy, politically gifted, intensely loyal, an excellent administrator, and clever enough to remain in the good graces of successive Roman emperors. His famine relief was superb and his building projects (including the temple, begun 20 B.C.) admired even by his foes. But he loved power, inflicted incredibly heavy taxes on the people, and resented the fact that many Jews considered him a usurper. In his last years, suffering an illness that compounded his paranoia, he turned to cruelty and in fits of rage and jealousy killed close associates, his wife Mariamne (of Jewish descent from the Maccabeans), and at least two of his sons.... ^{6/84}

3. Herod was a descendent of Esau and therefore an Edomite. The Idumeans, who were of the line of Edom, were considered “half Jews” by the Jews.
4. **Wise men/magi** (2:1): Probably astrologers, perhaps from Persia or southern Arabia, both of which are east of Palestine.
8/1437
5. **Chief priests** (2:4): The chief priests, the highest Jewish religious leaders, were in charge of the temple.^{1/1413}
6. **Scribes/teachers of the law** (2:4): The Jewish scholars of the day, professionally trained in the development, teaching and application of OT law. Their authority was strictly human and traditional.^{8/1437}
7. Micah had prophesied 700 years earlier that Bethlehem would be the birthplace of the promised King and Savior (Mic 5:2).
8. Contrary to tradition, the Magi did not visit Jesus at the manger on the night of his birth as did the shepherds. They came some months later and visited him as a “child” in his “house.”^{8/1439}
9. Bringing gifts was particularly important in the ancient East when approaching a superior (cf. Gen 43:11; 1Sam 9:7-8; 1 Kings 10:2).
6/89
10. **Frankincense** (2:11) is a glittering, odorous gum obtained by making incisions in the bark of several trees.^{6/89}
11. **Myrrh** (2:11) exudes from a tree found in Arabia and a few other places and was a much-valued spice and perfume (Ps 45:8; S of Songs 3:6) used in embalming (John 19:39).^{6/89}
12. **Ramah** (2:18) was located about 5 miles north of Jerusalem. It was one of the towns that the people passed through when taken in exile to Babylon (see Jeremiah 40:1).
13. **Archelaus** (2:22): This son of Herod the Great ruled over Judea and Samaria for only ten years (4 B.C.-A.D. 6). He was unusually cruel and tyrannical and so was deposed. Judea then became a Roman province, administered by prefects appointed by the emperor.^{8/1439}
14. **Galilee** (2:22): Galilee, about 30 miles wide and 60 miles long, was the populous northernmost region of the three divisions of Palestine; Judea, Samaria, and Galilee.^{12/104}

Matthew 2:1-23

15. **Nazareth** (2:23): A rather obscure town, nowhere mentioned in the OT. It was Jesus' hometown (13:54-57; see Lk 2:39; 4:16-24; Jn 1:45-46).
16. **“He shall be called a Nazarene”** (2:23): These exact words are not found in the OT and probably refer to several OT prefigurations and/or predictions (note the plural, “prophets”) that the Messiah would be despised (e.g., Ps 22:6; Isa 53:3), for in Jesus' day “Nazarene” was virtually a synonym for “despised” (see Jn 1:45-46). Some hold that in speaking of Jesus as a “Nazarene,” Matthew is referring primarily to the word “Branch” (Hebrew *nešer*) in Isa 11:1. ^{8/1439}

Observation

Outline

_____	(2:1-12)
_____	(1-2)
_____	(3-8)
_____	(9-11)
_____	(12)
_____	(2:13-18)
_____	(13-15)
_____	(16-18)
_____	(2:19-23)



Key Words/Phrases


Segment Analysis

2:1-12


1. What was the impact of the news from the wise men? What could have caused the reaction?  

2. What can you learn about Herod from this story?  

3. What does the prophecy of Jesus' birth teach us about Jesus and His ministry?  

4. What is the significance of the wise men's visit? 

5. Compare the wise men and Herod. What do their actions and attitudes teach us about worshipping God?  

6. Have you ever felt threatened like Herod by God's will and plan? What would it take to overcome such fear? 

2:13-23

7. Why do you think that the killing of the infants fulfilled the prophecy about the weeping in Ramah? Could there be a

Matthew 2:1-23

connection between weeping in Bethlehem and its vicinity and the weeping of exile in Jeremiah's time? 🔑

8. What qualities can we learn from Joseph? 👁️ 🍷

Preparation for the Ministry

The Basics

Setting

Matthew does not tell us anything about Jesus' childhood or youth. When the Lord came to the Jordan to be baptized, he was about 30 years old. By this time, John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus, had paved the way for Jesus' ministry by preaching repentance and baptizing the people. We can read about John's birth in Luke. His mission was to "make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Lk 1:17).

Key Verse

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire" (3:11).

Did You Know...?

1. **John the Baptist** (3:1): In the Scriptures several men were named John, but only one had the distinguishing name John the Baptist, that is, the Baptizer. While self-imposed proselyte baptism was known to the Jews, John's baptism was unusual for he was the first person who came baptizing others. ^{12/24}
2. **Wilderness of Judea** (3:1): An area that stretched some 20 miles from the Jerusalem-Bethlehem plateau down to the Jordan River and the Dead Sea, perhaps the same region where John lived (cf. Lk 1:80). The people of Qumran (often associated with the Dead Sea Scrolls) lived in this area too. ^{8/1440}
3. **Clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist** (4): Clothes of camel's hair and a leather belt (v. 4, the latter to bind up the loose outer garment) were not only the clothes of poor people but establish links with Elijah (2 Kings 1:8; cf. Mal 4:5). ^{6/102}
4. **Locusts and wild honey** (3:4): "Locusts" (*akrides*) are large grasshoppers, still eaten in the East, not the fruit of the "locust

Matthew 3:1-17

tree” (BAGD, s.v.). Wild honey is what it purports to be, not gum from a tree (cf. Judg 14:8-9; 1Sam 14:25-29; Ps 81:16). Both suggest a poor man used to wilderness living, and this suggests a connection with the prophets (cf. 3:1; 11:8-9).^{6/102}

5. **Baptize** (3:6): The verb “baptize” (*baptizō*, intensive form of *baptō*, “to dip”) means “to immerse, submerge.”^{12/104}
6. **Jordan River** (3:6): The principal river in Palestine, beginning in the snows of Mount Hermon and ending in the Dead Sea. Its closest point to Jerusalem is about 20 miles.^{8/1491}
7. **Pharisees** (3:7): The Pharisees...were a legalistic and separatistic group who strictly, but often hypocritically, kept the law of Moses and the unwritten “tradition of the elders” (15:2).^{8/1441} They were held in high regard by the people.
8. **Sadducees** (3:7): A Jewish party that represented the wealthy and sophisticated classes. They were located largely in Jerusalem and made the temple and its administration their primary interest. Though they were small in number, in Jesus’ time they exerted powerful political and religious influence.^{8/1516}
9. **Winnowing** (3:12): done by tossing the grain into the air with winnowing forks (Jer 15:7) so that the wind, which usually came up for a few hours in the afternoon, blew away the straw and chaff (Ps 1:4), leaving the grain at the winnower’s feet.^{8/363}
10. **Chaff** (3:12): ...the refuse of winnowed grain, consisting of husks and broken straw. In the East it was the custom to burn chaff, in case, with the changing wind, it might be blown again among the grain (Job 21:18; Pss. 1:4; 35:5; Isa. 17:13; 29:5; 41:15; Hos. 13:3; Zeph. 2:2).^{10/217}
11. Jesus had to travel at least 18 miles (30 kilometers) to be baptized (from Nazareth to River Jordan (v. 9).
12. **Spirit of God descending like a dove** (3:17): In the baptisms of the True Jesus Church, we have witnessed that some members received the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues immediately after coming out of the water.

Observation

Outline

_____ (3:1-12)
 _____ (1-6)
 _____ (7-10)
 _____ (11-12)
_____ (3:13-17)
 _____ (13-14)
 _____ (15)
 _____ (16-17)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

1. Summarize the words of each of the following people 


John _____
Isaiah _____
Jesus _____
Heavenly Father _____

2. What symbolic images or actions can we find in this passage?
(e.g. brood of vipers) 

Segment Analysis

3:1-12


1. Describe John the Baptist. What does this description tell you about his life?  

2. List the ways in which John fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy. How did John prepare the way for Jesus? 

3. On what basis did the Pharisees and Sadducees build their confidence? According to John, why was such a basis unreliable?



4. What is the meaning of John's words, "the kingdom of heaven is near"? 

5. What can we learn from the fact that John was called "a voice in the wilderness"? What can we learn from his attitude towards his ministry and towards Jesus? 

6. Why did John call the Pharisees and Sadducees “brood of vipers”? Why were his words so harsh? 🔑

7. What do the gathering of wheat and burning of chaff refer to? 🔑

8. What is the meaning of repentance? How does it demonstrate itself in our hearts and actions? How is repentance related to the kingdom of heaven? 🔑 📍


9. How would Jesus baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire? 🔑

3:13-17

- 10a. Why did Jesus have to be baptized? 🔑

- 10b. What did Jesus mean by “fulfill all righteousness”? 🔑

Matthew 3:1-17

11a. What events took place after Jesus was baptized? 

11b. What is the significance of the events following Jesus' baptism?



12. What can we learn from Jesus' actions and words in this passage?



Temptation and Beginning of Ministry

The Basics

Setting

Having been baptized by John, Jesus was brought by the Spirit to the desert to be tempted by the devil. With the word of God, the Lord overcame the devil's trickery. Then, after hearing that John was put in prison, Jesus moved up north to the regions around Galilee, where He called the first disciples and began His public ministry.

Key Verse

"Then He said to them, 'Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men'" (4:19).

Did You Know...?

1. The word "**devil**" (4:1) means "slanderer"; and the name "Satan" means "adversary."
2. **Capernaum** (4:13) is one of the territories assigned to the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali. It is located at the northern end of the Sea of Galilee.
3. Fishermen had more income than average people in Galilee, so James and John left behind a good job. ^{3/55}
4. **Synagogues** (4:23): (Hellenistic Gk. *sunagōgē*, "gathering of people," "a congregation," "a place of prayer," Acts 16:13 NIV)... As only a small proportion of the people could become proficient in the study of the law under the scribes, and as it was desirable that all should have at least an elementary acquaintance therewith, the custom grew up in postexilic times of reading the Scriptures in the synagogue on the Sabbath day. ^{10/1229}
5. **Syria** (4:24): The area north of Galilee and between Damascus and the Mediterranean Sea. ^{8/1444}
6. **Decapolis** (4:25): "ten cities"...A district containing ten cities in the NE part of Galilee, near the Sea of Galilee. ^{10/295} A league of free cities...characterized by high Greek culture. All but one,

Matthew 4:1-25

Scythopolis (Beth Shan), were east of the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan river. The league stretched from a point northeast of the Sea of Galilee southward to Philadelphia (modern Amman). ^{8/1444}

Observation

Outline

- _____ (4:1-11)
_____ (4:12-16)
_____ (4:17)
_____ (4:18-22)
_____ (4:23-25)

Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis



4:1-11

1. Why did Jesus have to be tempted? 


2. What were Satan's three challenges to Jesus? 



3. What are the common characteristics of the temptations? 

4. What traps was Satan laying down with each of his temptations?


5. Were the temptations similar to any that came to Jesus later during the course of his earthly career? (Lk 4:13 reads, “Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time”)  

6. Explain each of Jesus’ response to Satan’s challenges. 


7. What does Satan’s ability to quote the Scriptures tell us about Satan and his work? 

8. What was the difference between Satan’s and Jesus’ use of the Scriptures? What can we learn from this about our attitude to God’s word?  


9. What does Jesus’ victory over Satan’s temptations teach us about how to overcome temptations in our lives? 

Matthew 4:1-25


4:12-17

10. What message did Jesus preach? 



11. What do the images of darkness and light mean? 

12. Could there be a significance to the term “Galilee of the Gentiles” (4:15)? 

4:18-22

13a. What does the term “fishers of men” mean? 

13b. How did the disciples later become fishers of men? 

14. What does the reaction of the disciples to Jesus’ calling teach us about our attitude towards God?  

15. According to this passage, how can we become fishers of men?



4:23-25

16. What threefold ministry did Jesus carry out? 

Citizens of the Kingdom

The Basics

Setting

This section is the beginning of Jesus' teachings on the mount. It is also the first major discourse recorded in Matthew. This event took place probably on a mountainside in Capernaum.

Key Verse

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (5:16).

Did You Know...?

1. **When he was seated** (5:1): It was the custom for Jewish rabbis to be seated while teaching (see Mk 4:1; 9:35; Lk 4:20; 5:3; Jn 8:2). ^{8/1444}
2. The Beatitudes are named from the Latin word *beatus* meaning blessed...The Greek term means "happy, fortunate." ^{1/1418}
3. **Salt** (5:13): Whereas the Phoenicians obtained quantities of salt from the Mediterranean by evaporation in salt-pans, the Hebrews had access to an unlimited supply on the shores of the Dead Sea (Zp. ii. 9) and in the hill of Salt (Jebel Usdum), a 15-square-mile elevation at the SW corner of the Dead Sea...Such salt was of the rock or fossil variety, and, because of impurities and the occurrence of chemical changes, the outer layer was generally lacking in flavour. The reference in Mt. v. 13 is to this latter, much of which was discarded as worthless. Salt was valued as a preservative and for seasoning food. It was often used among Oriental peoples for ratifying agreements, so that salt became the symbol of fidelity and constancy. ^{7/1125}

Matthew 5:1-16

Observation

Outline

- _____ (5:1-12)
 _____ (1-10)
 _____ (11-12)
_____ (5:13-16)
 _____ (13)
 _____ (14-16)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

- 1a. Who was Jesus' target audience in the teachings on the mount?



- 1b. Were there others who heard the sermon besides the target audience?

Segment Analysis

5:1-12

1. Explain each of the beatitudes in terms of a present-day application.

vs 3 _____

vs 4 _____

vs 5 _____


vs 6 _____

vs 7 _____


vs 8 _____

vs 9 _____



vs 10-12 _____

2. Could there be a significance in the use of the present tense in the first and last beatitudes? 

3. What is the meaning of “righteousness” in the beatitudes? 

4. How are the blessings in Jesus’ teachings different from people’s common notion of what “blessings” should be? 

5:13-16

5. Compare salt and light. What are their differences in function and position?  

Matthew 5:1-16

6. How are we to be salt of the earth and light of the world? 🐾

7. What does the fact that the salt without saltiness is useless teach us about our values and purpose in life? 🐾

Laws of the Kingdom

The Basics

Setting

Having talked about the character and influence of the citizens of God's kingdom, the Lord Jesus continued to expound the laws of the kingdom. In His discourse, the Lord set a higher moral requirement and pointed His listeners to a new dimension in observing God's laws.

Key Verse

"Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill" (5:17).

Did You Know...?

1. **Raca** (5:22): An insulting term of strong personal abuse. ^{1/1419}
May be related to the Aramaic word for "empty" and means "Empty-head!" ^{8/1446}
2. **Certificate of divorce** (5:31; cf. Dt 24:1-4): The Law was supposed to deter divorce rather than encourage it. It required a "writing of divorcement"—a public document granting the woman the right to remarry without civil or religious sanction. Divorce could not be done privately. ^{4/439}
3. **Swear** (5:33): The Pharisees were notorious for their oaths, which were made on the least provocation. Yet they made allowances for mental reservations within their oaths. If they wanted to be relieved of oaths they had made by heaven...by earth...by Jerusalem, or by one's own head, they could argue that since God Himself had not been involved their oaths were not binding. ^{12/31}
4. **Tax collectors** (5:46): Traditionally known as "publicans," these were local men employed by Roman tax contractors to collect taxes for them. Because they worked for Rome and often demanded unreasonable payments, the tax collectors gained a

Matthew 5:17-48

bad reputation and were generally hated and considered traitors.
8/1447

Observation


Outline

_____	(5:17-20)
_____	(5:21-48)
_____	(21-26)
_____	(27-30)
_____	(31-32)
_____	(33-37)
_____	(38-42)
_____	(43-48)

Key Words/Phrases


General Analysis

1. Do you observe a recurring pattern in this section of Jesus' discourse? Record each of the commands using this pattern. 

2. Compare the old and the new requirements of God's law. What characterizes the new requirements? 


Segment Analysis

5:17-20



1. What does "the Law or the Prophets" refer to? 

2. How did Jesus fulfill the law? 



- 3a. What is the righteousness of the Pharisees? 

- 3b. How can we surpass it?  


5:21-26

4. Why should we reconcile with our brother before offering a gift at the altar?  

5:27-30

- 5a. Should we literally gouge out our eyes and cut off our right hand to avoid sin? Explain your answer.  

Matthew 5:17-48

5b. How can we apply these words to our lives if we have the tendency to sin? 

5:33-37


6a. What do the words “let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No’” mean? 

6b. What does this command have to do with swearing?  


7. Could we as Christians swear in a court of law? Why? 

5:38-42

8a. What is the teaching behind verses 39 to 42? 

8b. Is Jesus teaching us to be timid and weak? Explain your answer. 

5:43-48

9. Is it possible to fulfill Jesus’ command, “Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect”?  

True Religion in the Kingdom

The Basics

Setting

This section continues with the teachings on the mount. Based on the theme of the new order of the Law, the Lord Jesus went on to teach the disciples and the crowd about true worship.

Key Verse

“...and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly” (6:4,6,18).

Did You Know...?

1. **Fast** (6:16): As far as general Jewish practice is concerned, the Day of Atonement is the only annual fast referred to in the New Testament (see Acts 27:9). Some strict Pharisees fasted every Monday and Thursday (see Lk. 18:12). Other devout Jews, like Anna, might fast often. ^{7/419}

Observation


Outline

- _____ (6:1)
- _____ (6:2-4)
- _____ (6:5-15)
- _____ (5-6)
- _____ (7-15)
- _____ (6:16-18)



Key Words/Phrases

Matthew 6:1-18

General Analysis


1. As in the previous section, record the recurring pattern and summarize the teachings in this section. 

2. Based on the context of this passage, define the term “hypocrites.”  

3. If we are to do good deeds, pray, and fast in secret, should we refrain from any of these things when there are people around? Explain your answer.  

Segment Analysis

6:5-15

1. Record the themes in the Lord’s prayer. 

2. Why is addressing God as “our Father” significant? 

Explain the following: 

3a. Hallowed be your name:



3b. Your kingdom come:

3c. Do not lead us into temptation:

4. How does the teaching that we should not use vain repetitions in our prayers apply to us? Does it mean that we should not make lengthy prayers or pray about the same things more than once?



5. Is the Lord teaching us to just recite the Lord's prayer every time we pray? How should the Lord's prayer apply to us?  

6. Note the use of the words, "our" and "us" in the Lord's prayer. What does this teach us?  

6:16-18

7. What is the purpose of fasting? 

Attitudes in the Kingdom

The Basics

Setting

In this section of His teachings on the mount, the Lord instructed us about our attitudes toward material possessions, life, others, and God. In addition to providing us practical guidelines, He also guided His listeners to see the logic and reason behind His commands.

Key Verse

“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon” (6:24).

“Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets” (7:12).

Did You Know...?

1. **Mammon** (6:24): “Money” renders Greek *mamōna* (“mammon”), itself a transliteration of Aramaic *māmōnā* (in the emphatic state; “wealth,” “property”). The root in both Aramaic and Hebrew (*mn*) indicates that in which one has confidence; and the connection with money and wealth, well attested in Jewish literature... is painfully obvious. Here it is personified. ^{6/178}
2. **Dogs** (7:6): “Dogs” must not be thought of as household pets: in the Scriptures they are normally wild, associated with what is unclean, despised.... ^{6/185}
3. **Swine** (7:6): The “pigs” are not only unclean animals but wild and vicious, capable of savage action against a person. ^{6/185}

Observation


Outline

(6:19-24)

_____ (19-20)
_____ (21-24)
_____ **(6:25-34)**
_____ (25-30)
_____ (31-34)
_____ **(7:1-6)**
_____ (1-2)
_____ (3-5)
_____ (6)
_____ **(7:7-11)**
_____ (7-8)
_____ (9-11)
_____ **(12)**

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

List the reasons for the following teachings: 

1a. Lay up treasures in heaven:

1b. Do not worry:

1c. Do not judge:

Matthew 6:19-7:12

1d. Ask, seek, knock:

2. Jesus made use of many comparisons and contrasts to bring out His teachings. Write down the comparisons and contrasts that you notice. 👁

Segment Analysis

6:19-24

1a. What does it mean to love or serve mammon? 🔑

1b. Why can't we serve both God and mammon? Can we love one without hating the other? 🔑 👣

1c. How do we “hate” or “despise” mammon? 🔑 👣

1d. How should we lay up treasures in heaven? 🔑 👣

2. Why did Jesus talk about the eye when teaching about storing up treasures? What was He referring to? 🔑

6:25-34

3. How can we seek God's kingdom and His righteousness?



7:1-6

4. When we assert a certain view on something, we inevitably make a judgment about others who do not conform to our principles. So does the Lord's teaching about not judging others include standing up for our moral principles?



5. Explain the analogy of giving what is sacred to the dogs and throwing pearls to the pigs.



7:7-11

6. What actions and attitudes does each of the following involve?



6a. Ask

6b. Seek

6c. Knock

7. In the context of this passage, what are we to ask, seek, or knock for?



10

Matthew 7:13-29

Test of True Citizenship in the Kingdom

The Basics

Setting

As a conclusion to His teachings on the mount, the Lord used three analogies with sharp contrasts to show who will be able to enter and stand firm in God's kingdom.

Key Verse

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven" (7:21).

Observation

Outline

- _____ (7:13-14)
_____ (7:15-23)
_____ (15-20)
_____ (21-23)
_____ (7:24-27)
_____ (7:28-29)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

- 1a. Record the contrasts in this passage. 

1b. What is the purpose of such contrasts? 

2. What key concept lies behind all three analogies?  

Segment Analysis


7:13-14

1a. Define the narrow and wide gates. 

1b. How can we find and enter through the narrow gate? 


7:15-23


2. What truths can we learn from verses 15 through 23? 

3. How can we apply the analogy of tree and fruit to ourselves? 


Matthew 7:13-29



4. What is the meaning of “I never knew you”? 

5a. Why did the Lord say that these people “practiced lawlessness” when they have done so much for God? 

5b. What can we learn from this about our priorities when serving God? 

7:24-27

6. What do the beating of the rain, the flood, and the winds refer to? 

7. Why is it so important to put what we have heard into practice?  

7:28-29

8. How was Jesus’ teaching authoritative? 

Final Thoughts

9. Review the teachings on the mount and list some changes you plan to make in your life. 🍌

Power and Authority of the King (1)

The Basics

Setting

These events took place after Jesus' first discourse on the mountain. Jesus' ministry in this stage was still in the region of Galilee.

Key Verse

“that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: ‘He Himself took our infirmities And bore our sicknesses.’” (8:17).

Did You Know...?

1. **Leper** (8:2): Leprosy here refers to a chronic infectious skin ailment probably not the same as the disease called leprosy today. To touch a leper made one ritually unclean according to the OT law. ^{1/1425}The law required that the person who has been healed of leprosy be examined by the priest. Then the priest would perform ceremonial cleansing and offer sacrifices on behalf of the person who has been healed.
2. **Centurion** (8:5): The centurion was a Roman army officer, theoretically in charge of 100 men.... ^{1/1425}
3. **“Let the dead bury their own dead”** (8:22): ...Jews placed great importance on the duty of children to bury their parents. ^{8/1450}

Observation

Outline


- _____ (8:1-4)
- _____ (8:5-13)
- _____ (5-9)
- _____ (10-12)


_____ (13)
_____ (8:14-15)
_____ (8:16-17)
_____ (8:18-22)


Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis

8:1-4

1. Why did Jesus tell the man with leprosy not to tell anyone about the healing? (see Mk 1:45; Lk 5:15,16). 

2. What was the significance of Jesus' command to the man with leprosy to show himself to the priest? 

3. What can we learn from the man with leprosy about our attitude in prayer?  

8:5-13

4. How did the healing of the centurion's servant show Jesus' authority? Pay attention to Jesus' and the centurion's words.



Matthew 8:1-22

5. In what ways did the centurion demonstrate his faith? 




6. What do Jesus' words in verses 10 through 12 teach us about who will be in God's kingdom?  

8:14-15

7. What can we learn from Peter's mother-in-law?  

8:18-22

8. Explain the phrase "let the dead bury their own dead." 

9. Applying the Lord's words to ourselves, what does following Jesus entail?   

Power and Authority of the King (2)

The Basics

Setting

These events took place around the sea of Galilee during Jesus' ministry in Galilee. He first crossed over to the Gadarenes and later returned to His home town.

Key Verse

“But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins’ –then He said to the paralytic, ‘Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house’” (9:6).

Did You Know...?

1. **Sea of Galilee** (8:24): The position of the lake in the Jordan rift below sea level with the high mountains to the E and W creates a natural condition for storms. The cool air masses from the mountain heights rush down the steep slopes with great force causing violent eruptions of the lake. Such tempests are not infrequent and are extremely dangerous to small craft. ^{9, vol. 2/646}
2. **Gergesenes/Gadarenes** (8:28): The region around the city of Gadara, six miles southeast of the Sea of Galilee. Mark and Luke identify the region by the capital city Gerasa, located about 35 miles southeast of the Sea. ^{8/1450}
3. **Tax collectors** (9:10): see notes in lesson 7.

Observation

Outline

- _____ (8:23-27)
- _____ (8:28-34)
- _____ (9:1-8)
- _____ (1-2)

Matthew 8:23-9:13


_____ (3)
_____ (4-8)
_____ **(9:9-13)**
_____ (9)
_____ (10-13)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis


1. In what ways did the Lord demonstrate His authority in this passage? 


2. Record the various reactions of the people to Jesus' words and actions. 

3. What were the objections of the teachers of the law and the Pharisees? 

Segment Analysis

8:23-27

- 1a. What situations in your life have come upon you like a sudden storm? 


- 1b. What has this story taught you about dealing with these situations? 

8:28-34

- 2. Why did the people of the town beg Jesus to leave their region? 

- 3. What lesson can we learn from the people's rejection of Jesus? 



9:1-8


- 4. What is blasphemy? Why did the teachers of the law think that Jesus blasphemed? 

- 5. Explain 9:5-6. 




Matthew 8:23-9:13

9:9-13

6. What lessons can we learn from Jesus' calling of Matthew and His words to the Pharisees?  

7. Explain "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick" and "For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." 

Final Thoughts

8. What caused the teachers and Pharisees to criticize Jesus? How can we avoid making the same mistake today?   

13

Matthew 9:14-34

Power and Authority of the King (3)

The Basics

Setting

Jesus has been demonstrating His power and authority through His preaching, healing, and casting out of demons. But at the same time, His ministry also began to draw some criticism. This lesson starts out with the questions of John's disciples and continues with four other miracles of healing.

Key Verse

"For she said to herself, 'If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well.'" (9:21).

Did You Know...?

1. **Wineskins** (9:17): In ancient times goatskins were used to hold wine. As the fresh grape juice fermented, the wine would expand, and the new wineskin would stretch. But a used skin, already stretched, would break. ^{8/1451}

Observation

Outline

- _____ (9:14-17)
- _____ (14,15)
- _____ (16,17)
- _____ (9:18-26)
- _____ (9:27-31)
- _____ (9:32-34)

Key Words/Phrases


General Analysis

1. How did each of these people demonstrate their faith? 

1a. the ruler:

1b. the woman:

1c. the two blind men:

2. Record the phrases that hint at the urgent need of the people for Jesus' healing, leading up to Jesus' words in 9:37, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few." 

Segment Analysis



9:14-17

1. Explain Jesus' answer to the question of John's disciples. 



2. What is the meaning behind Jesus' analogy of the old and the new? 

9:27-31

- 3a. Why do you think Jesus asked the blind men “Do you believe that I am able to do this?”? 

- 3b. What do the blind men’s actions and Jesus’ question to them teach us about seeking for God’s help?  



9:32-34

- 4a. Why did the Pharisees and the multitudes have such different reactions to the same miraculous healing?  

- 4b. What lessons can we learn from this? 

Final Thoughts

5. Why is faith such an important factor in answered prayers? 

6. From this and the previous two lessons, what constitutes true faith? Apply these to our lives today.  

Sending out the Twelve

The Basics

Setting

Jesus went through every town and village, teaching, preaching, and healing. Seeing the great number of people that needed help, He called His disciples to Him, gave them authority, and commissioned them to spread the gospel of the kingdom. In this second discourse, Jesus gave them warnings and instructions to prepare them for the challenges ahead.

Key Verse

“Then He said to His disciples, ‘The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few’” (9:37).

Did You Know...?

1. **Simon the Canaanite/Zealot** (10:4): Either a description of Simon’s religious zeal or a reference to his membership in the party of the Zealots, a Jewish revolutionary group violently opposed to Roman rule over Palestine. ^{8/1452}
2. **Samaritans** (10:5): A mixed-blood race resulting from the intermarriage of Israelites left behind when the people of the northern kingdom were exiled and Gentiles brought into the land by the Assyrians (2 Ki 17:24). Bitter hostility existed between Jews and Samaritans in Jesus’ day (see Jn 4:9). ^{8/1452}
3. **“Shake off the dust from your feet”** (10:14) This was a symbolic gesture, with a purpose of warning. In effect, the disciples were saying to those refusing a hearing, as Paul said at a later time, “Your blood be upon your own heads” (Acts 18:6). ^{2/52}
4. **Beelzebub** (10:25): Satan, the ruler of demons.

Observation

Outline

- _____ (9:35-38)
- _____ (10:1-15)
- _____ (1-4)
- _____ (5-8)
- _____ (9-10)
- _____ (10:16-11:1)
- _____ (16-20)
- _____ (21-23)
- _____ (24-33)
- _____ (34-39)
- _____ (40-42)
- _____ (11:1)

Key Words/Phrases


General Analysis

1a. Record the recurring references to the end time. 

1b. Why do you think these references were made? 

Matthew 9:35-11:1

2. With what encouragements did the Lord give for the command, “do not fear them” (10:26)? 

3. What necessary criteria for an evangelist do you see in this passage? 

Segment Analysis

9:35-38


1. What aspects did the ministry of Jesus consist of? 

2. What can we learn from Jesus and His ministry?  


3. What does the Lord’s command in 37 have to do with us today? 


10:1-15

4. Why did Jesus tell the disciples not to go among the Gentiles or Samaritans? 


5a. The Lord instructed the disciples about an important principle that serves as a motivation for our ministry. What is it? 

5b. How does this principle apply to us? 

6. Jesus commanded the disciples not to take money, bags, extra tunic, sandals, or a staff along with them on their journey. Why was this command important? 



7. Is the command to shake off the dust from the feet contrary to the command to love our enemies? Explain your answer. 

10:16-23

8. What was the reason for these instructions? 

9. List the things Jesus taught about persecutions. 

10. Explain verse 16. 

11a. What other passage in Matthew are verses 22 and 23 very similar to?  

Matthew 9:35-11:1

11b. What could the prediction in verse 23 refer to? 

10:24-33

12. Explain the teaching behind these verses according to the context of the passage: 

12a. 24,25

12b. 27

12c. 28-31

12d. 32,33

10:34-39

13. What kind of warfare was the Lord speaking of in 34-36? 

14. What does 37-39 teach about discipleship? 

10:40-11:1

15. Apply the teaching of this passage to us today. 🍌

Rejection of the King (1)

The Basics

Setting

After sending out the twelve disciples, the Lord Jesus continued in His ministry. Once again we read about John the Baptist and his role in Jesus' ministry. Jesus, seeing the unrepentant heart of the people, began to denounce the cities in that region. But even then, He still called out to the people to come to Him for rest.

Key Verse

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls” (11:28,29).

Did You Know...?

1. **Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum** (11:21,23): all three near the Sea of Galilee's northwest shore. ^{12/44} The doom pronounced against Capernaum and the other unbelieving cities (Matt. 11:23) has been remarkably fulfilled. Tell Hum, its generally accepted site, is an uninhabited place two and a half miles SW of where the Jordan enters the Sea of Galilee. ^{10/209}
2. **Tyre and Sidon** (11:21) were large Phoenician cities on the Mediterranean, not far away, and often denounced by OT prophets for their Baal worship (Isa 23; Ezek 26-28; Joel 3:4; Amos 1:9-10; Zech 9:2-4). ^{6/273}
3. **Sackcloth and ashes** (11:21): The Israelites used sackcloth as a ritual sign of repentance or a token of mourning. The dark color and coarse texture of this goat's hair material made it ideal for that use. ^{4/480} Ashes were added in cases of deep emotion (cf. Job 42:6; Dan 9:3), whether one put them on the head (2 Sam 13:19; Lam 2:10), sat in them (Jonah 3:6), lay on them (Esth 4:3), or even rolled in them (Jer 6:26; Mic 1:10). ^{6/273}
4. **Hades** (11:23): is the place of the dead. ^{12/44}

5. **Yoke** (11:29): A yoke was a piece of timber or a heavy wooden pole, shaped to fit over the neck with curved pieces of wood around the neck fastened to the pole, and was used to hitch together a team of draft animals so that they could pull heavy loads evenly. ^{9,vol. 5/1022}


Observation


Outline

- _____ (11:2-19)
- _____ (2-6)
- _____ (7-15)
- _____ (16-19)
- _____ (11:20-24)
- _____ (11:25-30)
- _____ (25-27)
- _____ (28-30)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

1. List the verses that indicate the people's reluctance in accepting the gospel. 


2. According to Jesus' words in this passage, what is the purpose and role of miracles? 


Segment Analysis

11:2-6

1. Why was John thrown into prison?
- _____



Matthew 11:2-30

2a. What did John's question imply? 

2b. What might have led him to ask this question? 

2c. Do you sometimes have doubts about God's power and promise?
What enables you to renew your faith in such circumstances?



3a. How did Jesus' response answer John's question? (see Isa 35:5-6;
61:1).  

3b. How was Jesus' response encouraging?  

4. Explain verse 6 and apply it to ourselves.  

11:7-19

5. Record Jesus' comments about John. 

6. What truths are taught about the kingdom of heaven in these
verses?  

6a. 11



6b. 12

7. Explain the significance of verse 13 

8. How were the people of those days like the children in Jesus' analogy? (see verse 20).  

9. Compare this paragraph to Luke 7:29-35. What do you think Jesus meant by the children (or actions) proving wisdom right?



10. According to verses 11-19, how can we come into the kingdom of heaven?  

11:20-24

11. Why would the judgment on these cities be worse than those of the pagan cities in the Old Testament? 

12. What does Jesus' denouncement teach us about our attitude and response toward miracles?  

Matthew 11:2-30

11:25-30

13. How is this paragraph related to the entire passage?  

14a. Who are the “wise and prudent” and who are the “babes”? 


14b. Why does God hide His will and deeds from the wise and prudent but reveal them to babes? 

15. Explain verse 27 in light of John 14:6  

16a. Who are those who “labor and are heavy laden”? 

16b. How should we come to Jesus?  

17a. What is Jesus’ yoke? 

17b. Why is it easy? 

17c. “Yoke” and “rest” usually do not go together. But why did Jesus tell us to take up His yoke in order to find rest for our souls? 🔑

18. How can we also be “gentle and lowly” in heart? 🔑 🧠

Rejection of the King (2)

The Basics

Setting

Despite the many miraculous work that Jesus had performed in Galilee, most people were unrepentant. In this section, the Pharisees attempted to find grounds for accusing Jesus. The opposition grew to such intensity that they began plotting for Jesus' death.

Key Verse

"For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath" (12:8).

Did You Know...?

1. **Plucking heads of grain** (12:1): According to the Pharisees, plucking wheat from its stem is reaping, rubbing the wheat heads between one's palms is threshing, and blowing away the chaff is winnowing! ^{12/45}
2. **Showbread/consecrated bread** (12:4): lit. 'bread of the face', *i.e.* bread set before the face or presence of God (Ex. 25:30; 35:13; 39:36, etc.)... The showbread consisted of twelve baked cakes, made of fine flour, each containing two-tenths of an ephah... These were set in two rows, six to a row (*ma^ureket*, Lv. xxiv. 6). ^{7/1183}
3. **Priests profane the sabbath** (12:5): By definition, priestly duties are considered "work." In this sense, the priests profaned the Sabbath by doing work associated with the sacrifices on this day (cf. Numbers 28:9).

Observation


Outline

- _____ (12:1-14)
- _____ (1-8)
- _____ (9-14)

(12:15-21)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

1. Read the following passages for some background information and briefly summarize each subject. 

1a. Showbread: Lev 24:5-9

1b. David: 1Sam 21:1-6

1c. Priests: Num 28:9-10

1d. Mercy: Hos 6:6 (cf Mt 9:13)



Segment Analysis



12:1-14



1a. How did the examples of David eating the showbread and the priests in the temple answer the Pharisee's accusation? 



1b. What did Jesus mean by, "the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath"? 

Matthew 12:1-21

2. Point out the mistake in using this passage to support the belief that the Lord did away with the Sabbath.  

3. How was the question in verse 10 intended to be a trap?  

4. What are the basic spiritual principles in this paragraph that the Lord wanted to point out to His accusers?  

5. If the Lord Jesus did not abolish the Sabbath, what types of things can we do on the sabbath? Base your answer on this passage.  

6. How have we sometimes neglected mercy while we “offer sacrifice”? 

- 7a. What do you think was the Pharisees’ motive for plotting against Jesus?  

- 7b. What can we learn from this regarding our attitude toward God and relationship with others? 🦶

12:15-21

8. What is your impression when reading the words of Isaiah? Refer also to Isa 42:1-4 for the source of the quotation. 👁

9. In what ways did Jesus fulfill this Messianic prophecy? 👁 🦶

10. Compare the Pharisees and the Lord Jesus in their attitude and actions. What do they teach us about the right way of fighting for truth and justice? 👁 🦶

11. Describe an experience in which you were like a “bruised reed” and “smoking flax” but God showed you His tender love. 🦶

Rejection of the King (3)

The Basics

Setting

The opposition from the Pharisees and teachers of the law had been building up. The warnings from our Lord also grew more serious. He pointed out the gravity of the sin of blasphemy and warned the “evil and adulterous generation” of the coming judgment.

Key Verse

“But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you” (12:28).

Did You Know...?

1. **Nineveh** (12:41): A famous and ancient city situated on the eastern bank of the Tigris River opposite the modern city of Mosul. The Bible names Nimrod as the founder of Nineveh (Gen. 10:8-11). In 612 B.C. the ancient splendid city and capital of the Assyrian Empire was so completely obliterated, according to its prophesied decimation by Hebrew prophets, that it became like a myth until its discovery by Sir Austen Layard and others in the nineteenth century.^{10/924}
2. **Queen of the South** (12:42): In 1Ki 10:1 she is called the queen of Sheba, a country in southwest Arabia, now called Yemen.^{8/1457}

Observation



Outline

- _____ (12:22-24)
- _____ (12:25-37)
- _____ (25-28)
- _____ (29)
- _____ (30-32)

- _____ (33-37)
- _____ (12:38-42)
- _____ (12:43-45)
- _____ (12:46-50)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

1. The themes of this passage are closely connected to the quotation of Isaiah's prophecy in 18-21. See if you can establish the connection.  

Segment Analysis

12:22-37

1. Why did the Pharisees react to Jesus' healing so differently from the crowd?  

2. Explain in your own words the three defenses Jesus gave in answer to the accusations. 

- 2a. 25-26


- 2b. 27

Matthew 12:22-50



2c. 29

3. What characterizes the kingdom of God according to 28? 

4a. How was the Pharisees' accusation blasphemy against the Spirit?  

4b. Why is "blasphemy against the Spirit" a sin that cannot be forgiven? 

5. Fruit is to tree as _____ is to _____.  

6. What did Jesus teach in this section about  

6a. His own power?

6b. The heart?

6c. Judgment?

12:38-45

7a. What were the scribes' and Pharisee's demanding from Jesus? What was wrong with their demand?  

7b. In what ways do we sometimes make the same mistake? 🦶

8. How was Jonah a sign? 🔑

9. What lessons and warnings can we gather from the men of Nineveh and the Queen of the South? 👁️ 🦶

10a. Explain the meaning and teaching about the demon-possessed man. 🔑

10b. What must we do after we have been “swept and put in order”? 🔑 🦶

12:46-50

11. Was Jesus denying His family relationships? Explain his response in verses 48-50. 🔑

Parables of the Kingdom (1)

The Basics

Setting

In the face of growing opposition, the Lord Jesus gave His third discourse, which served as both revelation and warning. Unlike the other major discourses, Jesus here spoke in parables. While the meaning of these parables was hidden from the people in general, it was revealed to the followers of Christ. In fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, the Lord here spoke of what God has kept secret since the beginning—the advancement and final consummation of the kingdom of heaven.

Key Verse

“He answered and said to them, ‘Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given’” (13:11).

Did You Know...?

1. **Parables** (13:3): Our word “parable” comes from the Greek *parabole*, which means “a placing beside”—and thus a comparison or an illustration. Its most common use in the NT is for the illustrative stories that Jesus drew from nature and human life. ^{8/1457}
2. **Stony places** (13:5): Not ground covered with small stones, but shallow soil on top of solid rock. ^{8/1457}

Observation

Outline

_____ (13:1-2)

_____ (13:3-9)


_____ (13:10-17)

_____ (13:18-23)

Key Words/Phrases



General Analysis

1. What were the two settings where Jesus spoke these parables? Who were the two groups of audience? 

2. Do you see a symmetry in the two groups of parables? 

Segment Analysis

13:3-9, 18-23

1. Think of a modern scenario (example) for each of the four kinds of soil.  

- 1a. Seeds that fell by the wayside


- 1b. Seeds that fell on stony places


- 1c. Seeds that fell among thorns

- 1d. Seeds that fell on good soil


Matthew 13:1-23

2. What is the point of this parable? 


3. How can you be a good soil and let God's word take root in you?  



4. What are "the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches"? How do they "choke" the word (22)? 

5. What fruit does the Lord want us to yield (23)?  


6. What is the teaching behind "he who has ears to hear, let him hear" (9)?  



13:10-17



7a. What are the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven"? 

7b. Who are the ones who have been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven (11)? What does it take for us to "understand" the word of the kingdom (19,23)?  

8a. Why did Jesus use parables instead of just teaching the people plainly? 

8b. Does verse 15 teach that God does not want certain people to understand the mysteries? 

9. What are the symptoms of “hearts grown dull and ears hard of hearing”? Do you sometimes see these symptoms in yourself?  

10. How are we as blessed as the disciples (16,17)?  

Parables of the Kingdom (2)

The Basics

Setting

In the first parable, the parable of the sower, the Lord Jesus spoke of the four different responses to the message of the kingdom. He also explained that the effect of the parables is further hardening of heart for the unbelieving. In the remaining parables, we will get a closer look at the expansion of the kingdom of heaven and the final separation of the righteous and the wicked.

Key Verse

“that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: ‘I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world’” (13:35).

Did You Know...?

1. **Tares/weeds** (13:25): Darnel, a weed that closely resembles wheat. The two are almost indistinguishable until fully mature at harvest time. ^{1/1437}
2. **Mustard seed** (13:31): The mustard seed is not the smallest seed known today, but it was the smallest seed used by Palestinian farmers and gardeners, and under favorable conditions the plant could reach some ten feet in height. ^{8/1458}
3. **Three measures of meal/three sats of flour** (13:33): probably about 1/2 bushel or 22 liters.
4. **“The kingdom of heaven is like”**: The kingdom of heaven is not “like a man” but “like the situation of a man...”: the “is like” formula reflects an Aramaic idiom meaning “It is the case with X as with Y.” ^{6/316}
5. Under rabbinic law if a workman came on a treasure in a field and lifted it out, it would belong to his master, the field’s owner. ^{6/328}

Observation

Outline



- _____ (13:24-30)
- _____ (13:31-32)
- _____ (13:33)
- _____ (13:34-36)
- _____ (13:37-43)
- _____ (13:44)
- _____ (13:45-46)
- _____ (13:47-50)
- _____ (13:51)
- _____ (13:52)
- _____ (13:53)

Key Words/Phrases


Segment Analysis


To better understand the meaning of the term, “the kingdom of heaven is like,” read it instead as “the kingdom of heaven is like the situation of.” For example, the kingdom of heaven is not “like a man,” (24) but like the situation of a man who sowed good seeds....


13:24-30, 37-43


1. Who is the man that sowed the good seeds? How did he sow the seeds?  

Matthew 13:24-53

2. What distinguishes the “sons of the kingdom” and the “sons of the wicked one” in the same way that the wheat can be distinguished from the tares? 

3. What does the parable teach us about the presence of wickedness in the world? 

4. What is the kingdom of heaven? Put your definition in relation to the parable. 



5. Does the parable teach that we should tolerate evil? If so, wouldn't this be contradictory to the command to expel wicked doers in the church (1Cor 5:1-13)? 

13:31-33

6. Explain these analogies: 



- 6a. Birds nesting in the branches.

- 6b. Leaven hidden in the meal (flour).

7. What do these two parables teach us about the expansion of the kingdom of heaven?  

8. How is the kingdom of heaven different from what the people of Jesus' time thought?  

13:34-36

9. What does Isaiah's prophecy (35) tell us about the function of parables? Compare this to the prophecies recorded in 13-15. Is there a contradiction?  

13:44-46

- 10a. What can we learn here about the value of the gospel of the kingdom?  

- 10b. What does the action of selling everything to buy the land or pearl teach us about what we should do to inherit the kingdom?



13:47-50

11. How is the parable of the dragnet similar to the parable of the wheat and tares? 

13:51-53

- 12a. What kind of "scribe" was the Lord referring to?  

Matthew 13:24-53

12b. What is the meaning of “bringing out things new and old”? 

Jesus Despised and John Beheaded

The Basics

Setting

Jesus' name had spread throughout Galilee and had even reached the ears of Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee and Perea. But the people of His own town despised and rejected Him. When Herod heard about Jesus' great power, he believed that Jesus was John risen from the dead. Herod, an instrument of evil, not only killed John the Baptist but also later plotted to kill Jesus (Lk 13:31).

Key Verse

“Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief” (13:58).

Did You Know...?

1. **Herod the Tetrarch** (14:1) bore the distinctive name of Antipas. He was Herod's younger son by Malthace, and inherited the Galilaean and Peraan portions of his father's kingdom...He was the ablest of Herod's sons, and like his father was a great builder; the city of Tiberias on the Lake of Galilee was built by him (AD 22) and named in honor of the Emperor Tiberius. He married the daughter of the Nabataean king Aretas IV (q.v.), but divorced her in order to marry Herodias (q.v.), the wife of his half-brother Herod Philip.^{7/522}
2. **Herodias** (14:3) was married to Herod Philip (not Philip the tetrarch, Luke 3:1), son of Herod the Great and Mariamme II...and therefore half-brother to Herod Antipas...Herodias was not only Antipas' sister-in-law but also his niece, the daughter of his half-brother Aristobulus.^{6/338}
3. God's law forbids marrying one's brothers' wife (Lev 18:16; 20:21).
4. **The daughter of Herodias** (14:6): Herodias' daughter by her former marriage, Salome, a girl between twelve and fourteen

Matthew 13:54-14:12

years of age...The dance may have been very sensual, but the text does not say so. The outrageous morals of the Herodians suggest it, as does the low status of dancing girls. ^{6/338}

Observation



Outline

- _____ (13:54-58)
- _____ (14:1-2)
- _____ (14:3-12)
- _____ (3-5)
- _____ (6-11)
- _____ (12)


Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis

13:54-58

- 1a. Why were the people of Jesus' town offended at Jesus?  

- 1b. In what ways are many people of today also offended at Jesus?

- 1c. Is your faith in the Lord sometimes weakened because you think you know Him too well? 

1d. How do we sometimes make the same mistake in our judgment of others? 🦶

2a. How did the people of Jesus' town show their lack of faith? 👁

2b. Why is faith necessary in order for the Lord to work in our lives (58)? 🔑 🦶

14:1-12



3. Imagine how Herod must have felt when he commented that Jesus was John the Baptist risen from the dead. Do you think he sincerely wanted to believe in Jesus? Explain. 🔑

4a. What does this passage tell you about Herod's character? 👁



4b. Do you see some of his character in yourself? What can you do about it? 🦶

5a. Why did Herod want to kill John? Why is it that people who live in sin, such as Herod and Herodias, want to remove a righteous man such as John? 🔑

Matthew 13:54-14:12

5b. How does Herod's and Herodias' attitude reflect the heart of many people who do not want to accept the gospel or even slander it?  

6. What mistake did Herod make that led to John's tragic death? What does it teach us?  

7. How is John an example for us in his sufferings and death?  

Feeding the Multitudes and Walking on Water

The Basics

Setting

Despite the rejection of His own people and potential danger from Herod, the Lord Jesus continued in His ministry. In this lesson, we will study two of His well-known miracles and learn with the disciples the importance of faith. We will also observe the actions of Christ and learn from His heart of compassion.

Key Verse

“And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, ‘O you of little faith, why did you doubt?’” (14:31).

Did You Know...?

1. **Bread and fish** (14:17) were staples in Galilee, especially for the poor. John 6:9,13 specifies *barley* loaves—the cheaper, coarser bread. ^{6/341}
2. **Fourth watch** (14:25): The ancient Hebrew world divided the night from sunset to sunrise into three watches (Judg 7:19; Lam 2:19), but the Romans used four. Jesus’ approach to the boat therefore occurred between 3.00 A.M. and 6.00 A.M. ^{6/344}
3. **Gennesaret** (14:34): Either the narrow plain, about four miles long and less than two miles wide, on the west side of the Sea of Galilee near the north end (north of Magdala), or a town in the plain. The plain was considered a garden spot of Palestine, fertile and well watered. ^{8/1461}

Observation


Outline


- _____ (14:13-21)
- _____ (14:22-32)
- _____ (14:34-36)


Key Words/Phrases


Segment Analysis



14:13-21

1. Why do you think Jesus withdrew to a deserted place by Himself? 

- 2a. What was it about the multitude that moved Jesus' heart of compassion? 

- 2b. Why is the mention of Jesus' compassion important in beginning the story of feeding the multitudes? 

3. Why do you think Jesus asked the disciples to feed the multitude (16)? 


- 4a. What lesson can we learn from this miracle?  

- 4b. Think of an incident where God has also met your needs with very limited resource. What did you learn from the experience?




5. Why is the gesture of looking up to heaven significant in the story? 

14:22-33

- 6a. “Made” in 22 is a very strong verb, which might be translated “compelled.” Why did the Lord “make” the disciples get into the boat “immediately”? 

- 6b. What lesson can we learn from this action? 



7. What might be the significance of recording Jesus’ prayer by Himself? Why was it important for Jesus to pray alone? 




8. Observe and contrast the disciples and Jesus. 

Matthew 14:13-36

9. What details in this story indicate the authority of Jesus? 

10a. Why do you think Peter wanted to go to the Lord? What does this tell us about his personality? 



10b. Why did Peter begin to sink? What does this teach us?  

11. What can we learn about Jesus in the three verses that mention “immediately” (22,27,31)?   

12. What is the significance of the disciples’ worship (33)? 

14:34-36

13a. What can we learn about Jesus in this story?   

13b. What do the people of Gennesaret teach us about seeking God’s help?   

The Basics

Setting

We now move into the late Galilean period of Jesus' ministry. In this lesson, we read of another confrontation with the scribes and Pharisees and the Lord's subsequent teachings to the multitudes and the disciples on the issue at hand—cleanliness.

Key Verse

“Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man” (15:11).

Did You Know...?

1. **Traditions of the elders/hand washing** (15:2): The “tradition of the elders,” the “tradition of men” (Mark 7:8; Col 2:8), “your tradition” (Matt 15:3, 6; Mark 7:9, 13), and the “traditions of the fathers” (Gal 1:14) refer to the great corpus of oral teaching that commented on the law and interpreted it in detailed rules of conduct, often recording the diverse opinions of competing rabbis. This tradition in Jesus' time was largely oral and orally transmitted; but the Pharisees, though not the Sadducees, viewed it as having authority very nearly equal to the canon. It was later codified under Rabbi Judah the Prince (c. A.D. 135-200) to form the Mishnah...One entire tractate, *Yadaim*, deals with “hands”, (i.e., *yādāyim*), specifying such details as how much water must be used for effective ceremonial purification: e.g. “if a man poured water over the one hand with a single rinsing, his hand is clean; but if over both hands with a single rinsing, R. Meir declares them unclean unless he pours over them a quarter-log or more” (M *Yadaim* 2:1). ^{6/348}

Observation



Outline


- _____ (15:1-9)
- _____ (15:10-11)
- _____ (15:12-14)
- _____ (15:15-20)

Key Words/Phrases



Segment Analysis



15:1-9

- 1. Where were the scribes and Pharisees from? What does this tell you about what lay ahead of Jesus?  

- 2a. How did the scribes and Pharisees transgress and nullify God's commandments? How did the example in 5-6 reflect their hypocrisy? 



- 2b. Think of a modern example of transgressing or nullifying God's commandments for the sake of religious tradition.

3. If the traditions of the elders were meant to help people keep the commandments, then why did they become reasons to break God's commandments?  

4. Are all traditions bad? Under what circumstances do traditions become "commandments of men" and a hindrance in our relationship with God?  

- 5a. What kind of heart does Isaiah's prophecy in 8-9 reveal? Why would people teach the commandments of men?  


- 5b. In what ways could such hypocrisy creep into our worship of God today?  

- 5c. What is the contrast in verse 8? What is the worship that God desires?  

15:12-14

6. Why were the scribes and Pharisees offended? What does this show?  

Matthew 15:1-21

7. Explain the analogy of verse 13. 

8. How were the scribes and Pharisees “blind leaders”? 

15:10-11, 15-20

9. How was Jesus’ teaching in 11 a response to the challenge of the scribes and Pharisees?  

10a. What kind of defilement was Jesus speaking about? 

10b. What does this defilement have to do with traditions? 

11. In view of these teachings, what must we do to be clean? 

Healing and Feeding

The Basics

Setting

After the encounter with the scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem, the Lord Jesus made a special trip up north to the region of Tyre and Sidon. The miracle of healing the Canaanite woman's daughter sheds light on the eventual mission to the Gentiles. Upon returning to Galilee, Jesus again drew great multitudes which came to him for healing. The Lord fed the multitudes once more, in a manner similar to His feeding of the five thousand in chapter 14.

Key Verse

"Then Jesus answered and said to her, 'O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire.' And her daughter was healed from that very hour" (15:28).

Did You Know...?

1. **Canaan/Canaanites** (15:22): Centuries earlier that area's inhabitants were called Canaanites (Num 13:29). ^{12/55}
2. **Magdala/Magadan** (15:39): A small town in Galilee, on the W shore of the Sea of Galilee, between Capernaum and Tiberias, mentioned only in Matt. 15:39 ("Dalmanutha" in the parallel passage, Mark 8:10), and may be the same as Migdal-el (Josh 19:38). It was the birthplace of Mary Magdalene...It is now probably the small village of el-Mejdel, three miles NW of Tiberias. ^{10/798}

Observation



Outline



- _____ (15:21-31)
- _____ (21-28)
- _____ (29-31)


Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis

15:21-28

1a. Did Jesus' words and actions show that he was concerned for the Israelites only? Explain your answer.  



1b. What does this story teach us about Jesus' mission to the Gentiles?  



2. It seems to be against the Lord's nature to say such degrading words to the Canaanite woman (26). Why do you think He did so? 

3a. What attitude did the disciples show with their words?  

3b. How are we sometimes like the disciples? 

4a. In what ways did the Canaanite woman show her faith? 



- 4b. Have you ever been discouraged when your prayer is not answered and even thought that God doesn't love you as much as He loves his other children? What aspects of faith found in the Canaanite woman do you still lack?  

5. Compare the Canaanite woman with the scribes and Pharisees in their attitude toward the Lord (see 15:12). Could there be any significance to the sharp contrast shown in the Gospel records?  

6. What do the woman's words in 27 teach us about the right way of seeking God's mercy?   

7. Could this story be a support for the effectiveness of infant baptism? If so, how?  

15:29-31


8. Observe the actions of the multitudes and the Lord. What do the healings teach us about Jesus and His mission?  

9. Why is it significant that the people "glorified the God of Israel"? 

Matthew 15:21-39

15:32-39

10. Compare this miracle with that of 14:13-21. 

11a. How did the disciples show their lack of faith? 

11b. What human weakness did the disciples reflect? What can we do about this weakness?  

Confessing Jesus as the Christ

The Basics

Setting

Up to this point, the Lord Jesus had been demonstrating His Messiahship through His teachings and works. There had been different responses from the people to Jesus' ministry and various views as to who Jesus was. Peter's confession of Christ in this chapter is the pivotal point in the gospel. The identity of Jesus was now fully revealed. From verse 21 on, the gospel moves into the last phase of Jesus' ministry. The Lord Jesus would face increasing opposition and ultimately fulfill his mission through suffering, death, and glory.

Key Verse

"Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (16:16).

Did You Know...?

1. **Caesarea Philippi** (16:13): Caesarea Philippi was built by Herod Philip the tetrarch (cf. 2:20, 22), who enlarged a small town on a plane 1150 feet above sea level at the base of Mount Hermon, renaming it in honor of Caesar, "Philippi" being added to distinguish it from the coastal city of the same name. It lies twenty-five miles north of Galilee...The inhabitants were largely Gentile. ^{6/364}
2. **Bar-Jonah** (16:17): Son of Jonah or John.

Observation

Outline

- _____ (16:1-4)
- _____ (16:5-12)
- _____ (16:13--20)



Matthew 16:1-28

_____ (16:21-23)



_____ (16:24-28)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis



1. Compare Jesus' different attitudes and responses to the two groups of people in 1-12 and explain the difference.  

- 2a. What is the connection between 1-12 and 13-20?  

- 2b. Between 13-20 and 21-28?  

Segment Analysis



16:1-4

- 1a. What was the intention of the Pharisees and Sadducees in seeking for a sign from Jesus?  



- 1b. Do you ever ask for something from God with a similar intention?
What is wrong with such intention? 

- 2a. What are the signs of the times (3)? 

- 2b. What is the sign of Jonah, and how is it a sign? 

3. Why did the Lord call the people the “wicked and adulterous”
generation?  

16:5-12

4. In view of 1-4, what were the teachings of the Pharisees and
Sadducees?  

5. Why were the teachings of Pharisees and Sadducees “leaven”?


6. How did the disciples’ ignorance show that they were of little
faith?  

Matthew 16:1-28

16:13-20

7a. What is the difference between Jesus' two questions (13,15)?



7b. Why was it important for the disciples to know who Jesus was?



7c. Do you have a personal knowledge of Jesus? Who is Jesus to you?



8. What does it mean that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the living God"?




9a. Do the Lord's words in 18 mean that Peter would be the foundation of the church? Explain your answer.



9b. What is "church"?



9c. What is the “gates of Hades”? Why shall it not prevail against the church? 

10. Explain “the keys of the kingdom of heaven” and “the authority to bind and lose” in 19. 

11. Why did the Lord want the disciples to conceal His identity? 

16:21-23

12. Why did Jesus consider Peter’s words and actions the work of Satan?  

13. Explain the following terms 

13a. Deny himself

13b. Take up his cross

13c. Follow Me

Matthew 16:1-28

13d. Saving and losing life. See also 26.

14. With these teachings about discipleship in mind, what should you do about your personal life to be a true disciple of Christ? 🍌

15. What event was the Lord referring to in 28? 🗝️

The Transfiguration

The Basics

Setting

The transfiguration is closely linked to Peter's confession of Jesus as the Christ in the previous chapter. Now that the Lord had revealed His identity fully to the disciples, He gave them a glimpse of His heavenly glory. But this glory can only be achieved through suffering, and for this reason, the transfiguration story is enveloped by two predictions about the sufferings, death, and resurrection that were waiting for Jesus. After coming down from the mountain, Jesus would go on to Jerusalem to fulfill the work that He came to do.

Key Verse

“When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only” (17:8).

Did You Know...?

1. **Temple tax** (17:24): The *didrachmon* or 2 drachma piece was used among Jews for the half-shekel required for the annual Temple tax... This regulation derived from the atonement-money prescribed in Ex. 30:11-16, which, according to Maimonides, later developed into a regular annual poll-tax.^{7/840} All Jewish males over 20 years old paid an annual half-shekel tax (about two days' wages) to support the temple... In Jesus' day, the tax was collected a month before Passover....^{1/1446}

Observation

Outline

- _____ (17:1-8)
- _____ (17:9-13)
- _____ (17:14-21)

Matthew 17:1-27


_____ (17:22-23)

_____ (17:24-27)

Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis


17:1-8

1. Who did Jesus bring with Him to go up the mountain? Why these three people?  

2. What could be the significance behind the appearance of Moses and Elijah? 

3. Why was Peter's comment in verse 4 inappropriate? Recall 16:22,23. 

4. What can we learn about Jesus from the words spoken by the voice from heaven?  

5a. What was the purpose of the transfiguration? See also 16:21-28 

5b. What are the teachings behind “they saw no one but Jesus only”?



17:9-13

6a. What were the disciples referring to about the coming of Elijah?



6b. How was John the Baptist the Elijah? How did he “restore all things”?



17:14-21

7. Why did Jesus make the comment in 17?



8. What does verse 20 teach us about faith?



9. Why are prayer and fasting necessary for the driving out of this kind of demon?



Matthew 17:1-27

17:22-23

10. What does the disciples' exceeding sorrow tell us about them?



17:24-27

11. Why were Jesus and the disciples exempt from tax?



12. What lessons can we learn from the Lord in paying the temple tax?



Caring for and Forgiving Our Brothers

The Basics

Setting

The disciples had learned of Jesus' final mission to suffer and die in Jerusalem. But they could not fully comprehend its purpose and significance. The disciples still had a false expectation of what the kingdom of God would be, and wanted to be the greatest in the kingdom. In this lesson, the Lord gave His fourth major discourse in response to the disciples' two questions. Jesus' extensive teachings aimed to correct the disciples' misconceptions and tell them the importance of love and unity among His followers.

Key Verse

"Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (18:4).

Did You Know...?

1. **Millstone** (18:6): Lit. "a millstone of a donkey," i.e., a millstone turned by a donkey—far larger and heavier than the small millstones (24:41) used by women each morning in their homes. ^{8/1465}
2. **Seven times** (18:21): ...the traditional Rabbinic teaching was that an offended person needed to forgive a brother only three times. ^{12/62}
3. **10,000 talents** (18:24): This probably equaled several million dollars, for a talent was probably a measure of gold, between 58 and 80 pounds. ^{12/62} About 60 million denarii; one denarius was an average day's wage. Therefore this was a debt impossible to repay. ^{1/1447}




Observation


Outline



_____ (18:1-14)
 _____ (1-4)
 _____ (5-9)
 _____ (10-14)
_____ (18:15-21)
_____ (18:22-35)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis



1. Take note of how the word “little” sheds light on the meaning of “great.” Go through the passage and list the things that make a person “great” in the kingdom of heaven.   

2. Which verses show that God is concerned about the well-being of one of the little ones? 

3. Why is it that our attitude towards the little ones have direct bearing on our attitude toward God?  

Segment Analysis

18:1-14

1. What was the disciples' mentality for asking about who is the greatest, and why is this mentality wrong?  

2. What is it about little children that we should learn from? 

3. What is the quality that underlies both being like a little child (3) and receiving a little child (5)? 

- 4a. Why is it such a serious offense to cause someone to sin? 

- 4b. Why is it that "offenses must come"? If so, why should the one who offends still be condemned? 

- 4c. Think of some things that could cause a little one to sin. 

5. How should we apply the teaching in 8 and 9? 

Matthew 18:1-35

6a. Who are the “little ones” in 11-14? 

6b. What can we learn about God from this passage?  


18:15-20

7. Relate this paragraph to 11-14.  

8a. List the steps we should take for the brother who has sinned.




8b. What is the spirit behind these instructions? 

9. Shouldn't we simply forgive those who have sinned? Why bring witnesses against them or even tell it to the church? 

10. What do 18-20 teach us about  


10a. Our responsibility towards brothers who sin.

10b. The authority of the church

11. What is the meaning of gathering “in My name”? 

18:21-35

12. Record the teachings or personal lessons you can gather from this paragraph.  

13. Explain forgiving “up to seventy times seven.” 



- 14a. Why couldn't the wicked servant forgive his fellow servant?



- 14b. What enables us to forgive, even when we have been seriously wronged or deeply hurt? 

- 15a. Read verse 35 and think about the seriousness of this teaching. Why does God take it so personally if we don't forgive others?



- 15b. Why isn't it enough to forgive by not retaliating? Why must forgiveness be done from the heart?  

Ministry in Judea (1)

The Basics

Setting

The Lord Jesus had completed His ministry in Galilee. Now He came to Judea, knowing that suffering and death were awaiting Him. The final period of Jesus' ministry would not last many days, but the gospel writer pays great deal of attention to this period and records the Lord's many teachings as well as the events leading up to the crucifixion.

Key Verse

"Jesus said to him, 'If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me'" (19:21).

Did You Know...?

1. **Judea beyond Jordan** (19:1): The east side, known later as Transjordan or Perea and today simply as Jordan. ^{8/1466}
2. **Certificate of divorce** (19:7): see Deuteronomy 24:1-4 and notes in Lesson 7.

Observation

Outline

- _____ (19:1,2)
- _____ (19:3-12)
- _____ (19:13-15)
- _____ (19:16-30)
- _____ (16-22)
- _____ (23-30)

Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis

19:3-12

1. What was the intended trap behind the Pharisees' question?



2. How was Jesus' answer very different from what the Pharisees expected?



- 3a. What did the Lord teach here about marriage?



- 3b. About divorce and remarriage?



- 4a. Record the contrast in this paragraph between what was commanded and what was permitted. Why did the Lord Jesus make this distinction?



- 4b. What lessons can we learn from this distinction?



Matthew 19:1-15

5. What does it mean to not marry for the kingdom of heaven? 



19:13-15


6a. Why do you think the disciples forbade the children from coming to Jesus? 



6b. In what ways do we sometimes make the same mistake? 

7. What do these verses teach about what God values in the kingdom of heaven?  

19:16-22



8. What was Jesus' point about goodness in 17? How does this expose the man's false belief?  


9. Why did the Lord mention only five of the Ten Commandments? 

10. How did the young man's reaction show that he still had not kept the commandments perfectly?  

11a. Why is it hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven?




11b. Is it riches that prevent someone from entering God's kingdom, or is it something deeper? What do we have to give up, whether we are rich or poor, in order to enter God's kingdom?  

11c. How should we sell what we have and give to the poor?  

19:23-30

12. What does 26 teach us about the nature of salvation?  

13. How is Peter's statement in 27 related to the Lord's words about riches? 

Matthew 19:1-15

14. How have you left your houses, family, and lands for the sake of the Lord Jesus? 

15. Explain verse 30 and its relationship to the context.  

The Basics

Setting

In His Judean ministry, the Lord placed the weight of His teachings on who will enter into God's kingdom and on the consummation of God's kingdom when He returns. He also concentrated His last teachings and deeds on strengthening, correcting, and building up the disciples so that they would be good and faithful servants until He comes again. At this point, however, the disciples still had a false notion of God's kingdom. So in this passage, He once again taught them what it is to be truly great in the kingdom of heaven.

Key Verse

“but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (20:26-28).

Did You Know...?

1. **Denarius** (20:9): The usual daily wage. A Roman soldier also received one denarius a day. ^{8/1467}
2. Third hour = 9 AM, sixth hour = 12 noon, ninth hour = 3 PM, eleventh hour = 5 PM.
3. **Jericho** (20:29): A very ancient city located five miles west of the Jordan and about 15 miles northeast of Jerusalem. In Jesus' time OT Jericho was largely abandoned, but a new city, south of the old one, had been built by Herod the Great. ^{8/1513}

Observation

Outline

-
- (20:1-16)
-
- (20:17-19)

Matthew 20:1-34


_____ (20:20-28)

_____ (20:29-34)

Key Words/Phrases


Segment Analysis

20:1-16


1. According to the Lord's own words, what is the point of the parable?  

2a. Who are the ones that are last but will be first? 

2b. Who are first that will become last? 


3. How is this parable contrary to common sense and expectations? 

4a. What does the paying of wages represent? Explain your reason. 

- 4b. What does this parable teach about the nature of salvation and about God?  

5. Does this parable contradict the teachings of 1Cor 3:8? 

20:17-19



6. Compare this prediction with the first two (16:21; 17:22-23). 

7. To whom was the prediction given? Why did He do so?  

20:20-28


- 8a. Mk 10:35 tells us that James and John were the two disciples in question. What was their mother's and their expectation?






- 8b. Why did the Lord say to her, "you do not know what you ask"? What was it that she did not know?  


9. What does the other disciples' great displeasure indicate? 

Matthew 20:1-34



10a. What is the “cup” or the “baptism” that the Lord referred to? 

10b. How can we drink the Lord’s cup and be baptized with the baptism he received? 

11a. What does being servant or slave involve? What can we learn from the Lord in this respect?   

11b. In what ways can you be a servant of others? 

20:29-34

12. What can we learn from the two blind men?  

13a. Observe very carefully what the Lord did and said. How was He a servant (see 28)?   

13b. What can you learn from the Lord Jesus in this miracle?



Entry into Jerusalem

The Basics

Setting

As the Lord Jesus went into Jerusalem, he also entered the final week of His ministry. He came to the city on a donkey in fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy about the King of peace, and the multitudes welcomed Him with shouts of praise. But this short-lived adoration would soon be overshadowed by an ever-increasing animosity.

Key Verse

“Tell the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your King is coming to you, Lowly, and sitting on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey’” (21:5).

Did You Know...?

1. **Bethphage** (21:1):...lay on the southeast slope of the Mount of Olives. ^{6/437} The name means “house of figs.” It is not mentioned in the OT, and in the NT only in connection with the Triumphal Entry. ^{8/1469}
2. **Mount of Olives** (21:1): Olivet, or the Mount of Olives, is a small range of four summits, the highest being 2,723 feet, which overlooks Jerusalem and the Temple Mount from the east across the Kidron Valley and the pool of Siloam. Jesus knew the Mount as a thickly wooded locality, rich in the olives which occasioned its name. ^{7/907}
3. **Hosanna** (21:9): ...“Save (us), we pray,” taken from Psalm 118:25. It came to be a note of praise as well as petition. ^{12/68} The Hebrew expression meant: “Save us now!” It came to function like the modern-day exclamations “God save the king!” or “Hail to the chief!” ^{1/1452}
4. **Bethany** (21:17): A village on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, about two miles from Jerusalem and the final station on the road from Jericho to Jerusalem. ^{8/1469}

5. **“Found nothing on it but leaves”** (21:19): Fig leaves appear about the same time as the fruit or a little later... Thus the leaves normally point to every prospect of fruit, even if not fully ripe. Sometimes, however, the green figs fall off and leave nothing but leaves. ^{6/444}

Observation

Outline

- _____ (21:1-11)
_____ (21:12-17)
_____ (21:18-22)

Key Words/Phrases


General Analysis

1. List the many different reactions of the various groups of people.



Segment Analysis

21:1-11

1. Record the things that show the people's great fervor and excitement over the coming of the Lord Jesus. 

2. How was this event a great miracle? 

Matthew 21:1-22

3a. How is the image of riding on a donkey different from what we might expect of a king?

3b. What does this tell us about the King we serve?

4. If one day God says to you about something you own, “the Lord has need of them,” would you give him what he asks for “immediately” (3)? What would it take on your part to do so? 🦶

21:12-17



5a. How many different groups of people does Matthew record in this paragraph? 👁

5b. What are the two sets of contrasts that we can observe and what can we learn from these contrasts? 👁 🦶



6a. How have the buyers and sellers turned the house of prayer into a den of thieves? 🔑

6b. What does this teach us about true worship that pleases God?



7. What did the words of Jesus in 16 ironically point out?  

21:18-22

8a. What was the withering of the fig tree symbolic of, and what was the warning behind this symbolic action? Relate your answer to the context of the passage.  

8b. In what ways could a worshiper of God become like fig trees with only leaves but no figs?  

9a. Does God grant every request we make if we believe and not doubt?  

9b. What does faith involve?  

30

Matthew 21:23-22:14

Confrontation in the Temple (1)

The Basics

Setting

From this point on, the confrontation between Jesus and the Pharisees would continue to mount. In this lesson, the Lord silenced those who questioned His authority and gave three parables that pronounced judgment on the chief priests, elders, and Pharisees. Far from being repentant, these religious leaders sought to lay their hands on Him. In time, their hardened hearts would turn into intense hatred.

Key Verse

“Jesus said to them, ‘Have you never read in the Scriptures: ‘The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD’S doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes?’” (21:42).

Observation

Outline

- _____ (21:23-27)
- _____ (21:28-32)
- _____ (21:33-46)
- _____ (22:1-14)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

- 1a. To what two things was the kingdom of heaven compared? 

1b. In the three parables, who are worthy of the kingdom of heaven?



2. How many times in this passage were the religious leaders caught in a dilemma?



Segment Analysis

21:23-27

1a. What are “these things” in 23?



1b. Why did the chief priests and elders question Jesus’ authority?



2a. Why did Jesus ask them about John’s baptism?



2b. What was the problem of these chief priests and elders, and how did Jesus’ counter-question reveal their problem?



21:28-32


3a. What was different between these two sons?



3b. Which son is more similar to you?



Matthew 21:23-22:14

4. Why would tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before the Pharisees and elders? 

5. How is this parable linked to 23-27?  

21:33-46

6. What did the following represent in the parable? 

6a. Landowner

6b. Vineyard

6c. Vinedressers

6d. Servants

7. Why did the vinedressers commit such great wickedness?



8. What was the effect of letting the listeners answer the question in 40 and 41?  

9. How should we render to God the fruits in their seasons?




10a. What was the meaning of the teaching about the stone? 

10b. What reasons would cause someone to reject Jesus? 



11. What did the reaction and fear of the chief priests and Pharisees tell us about them?

22:1-14

12a. What does this parable suggest about the gospel of salvation and the status of believers? 

12b. How does the parable show man's persistent refusal to accept the gospel? 

13. What does the wedding garment represent? Why was it such an offense to not wear the wedding garment? 

14a. How was the first invitation different from the second? Who did the two groups of people represent?  

Matthew 21:23-22:14

14b. In this parable, who were called, and who were chosen?



15. According to this parable, what must we do to enter God's kingdom?



Confrontation in the Temple (2)

The Basics

Setting

Perceiving that Jesus was speaking against them in His parables, the Pharisees plotted to trap Him in His words. The Sadducees, who were also angered by Jesus' parables, joined the Pharisees in challenging Jesus. Through the debate on theological issues, the Lord Jesus proved to be the supreme teacher who had perfect knowledge of God. Then with a question about the scriptural reference to Christ, Jesus decisively silenced the tempters.

Key Verse

“And when the multitudes heard this, they were astonished at His teaching” (22:33).

Did You Know...?

1. **Herodians** (22:16): A party among the Jews of the apostolic age, and keenly opposed to Jesus (Matt. 22:16; Mark 3:6; 12:13)...The party was probably formed under Herod the Great and appears to have held that it was right to pay homage to a sovereign who might be able to bring the friendship of Rome and other advantages, but who had personally no title to reign by law and by religion. On this question they differed from the Pharisees (Matt. 22:16-17), although they joined forces with them in disguised opposition, or in open union against Jesus, in whom they saw a common enemy. The Herodians were obviously something more than a political party and something less than a religious sect. ^{10/565}

Observation

Outline

_____ (22:15-22)

_____ (22:23-33)

Matthew 22:15-46

_____ (22:34-40)


_____ (22:41-46)


Key Words/Phrases


Segment Analysis



22:15-22

1. How did the Pharisees' comment in 16 reflect their hypocrisy?
(18) 

2a. What would have been the consequence had Jesus answered, "Yes, it's lawful to pay taxes to Caesar"? 

2b. And had Jesus answered "No, don't pay taxes to Caesar"? 


3a. Explain the answer Jesus gave. 



3b. How did His answer correct the misconception that lay underneath the question?  

4. What are "the things that are God's"? 

5. What can we learn here about Christians' social obligations and the reasons for these obligations?   

22:23-33

6. What point were the Sadducees trying to prove by their question? 

- 7a. According to the Lord, how were the Sadducees ignorant of the Scriptures in their view of the resurrection?  

- 7b. How were they ignorant of the power of God? 

- 8a. How did the quotation in 32 show that God is not the God of the dead, but of the living?  

- 8b. How does this understanding apply to the resurrection? 

22:34-40



9. How was the lawyer's question a test? 

Matthew 22:15-46

10a. What does it mean that “all the Law and the Prophets hang on the two great commandments”? 

10b. How is the second great commandment like the first (39)? 

22:41-46

11. How did the Pharisees’ inability to answer show their misunderstanding about the Christ?  

Woes on the Scribes and Pharisees

The Basics

Setting

We are now coming to the end of Jesus' public ministry. Having silenced the Pharisees, scribes, and Sadducees, the Lord launched a series of rebukes against them with the most severe condemnations. This was to be expected because it was the religious elite who had been the strongest opposition to the message of the kingdom. The Lord's rebukes also served as sobering warning to the disciples and multitudes against the deception of false piety.

Key Verse

"Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness" (23:28).

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!" (23:37).

Did You Know...?

1. **"Phylacteries"** (v.5) were small leather or parchment boxes containing a piece of vellum inscribed with four texts from the law (Exod 13:2-10, 11-16; Deut 6:4-9; 11:13-21). They were worn on the arm or tied to the forehead according to Exodus 13:9,16; Deuteronomy 6:8; 11:18 (though originally these passages were probably metaphorical). ^{6/474}
2. **Rabbi:** (v. 7), the transliteration of the Hebrew word meaning "my master" or "my teacher"...By Talmudic times a rabbi's status was immense: his disciple had to obey him without question, never walk beside or in front of him, never greet him first, and so forth.... ^{6/474}
3. **Proselyte** (23:15): Pharisees and teachers of the law would travel extensively to make one "proselyte"—a word used in the NT only

Matthew 23:1-36

here and in Acts 2:10; 6:5; 13:43 and one that at this time probably refers to those who have been circumcised and have pledged to submit to the full rigors of Jewish law, including the oral tradition for which the Pharisees were so zealous. ^{6/478-479}

4. **Mint, Anise and Cummin** (23:23) are common garden herbs.
5. **Strain out** (23:24): The strict Pharisee would carefully strain his drinking water through a cloth to be sure he did not swallow a gnat, the smallest of unclean animals. But, figuratively, he would swallow a camel—one of the largest. ^{8/1474}
6. **Whitewashed tombs** (23:27): A person who stepped on a grave became ceremonially unclean (see Nu 19:16), so graves were whitewashed to make them easily visible, especially at night. ^{8/1474}
7. **“From the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias”** (23:35). Jesus here is including all such murders of Old Testament times by citing the first recorded in Scripture, that of Abel (Gen 4:8), and the last, that of Zacharias (2Chron. 24:20-22). (In the Hebrew canon 2 Chronicles is the last book to be listed.) ^{2/90-91}

Observation


Outline

- _____ (23:1-12)
- _____ (23:13-36)
- _____ (23:37-39)

Key Words/Phrases


Segment Analysis

23:1-12


1. What does it mean that “the scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat”? 

2. What is an example that illustrates the point in 4?

3. What is wrong with being called “rabbi,” “father” or “teacher”?

4. According to the context, what does it mean to humble ourselves (12)?  

23:13-36

5a. List briefly the 7 charges that the Lord brought against the scribes and Pharisees. 

5b. How do you justify the Lord’s strong charges? 

6a. How have the scribes and Pharisees shut up the kingdom of heaven against men (13)? 

Matthew 23:1-36

6b. Today, are there people who teach the Bible but actually shut up the kingdom of heaven? Cite an example. 🦶

7a. What hypocrisy did the Lord expose in 16-22? 👁️ 🔑

7b. In what ways do we sometimes reverse our priorities in our worship and Christian living? 🦶

8a. Why are justice, mercy, and faith “weightier,” and why were they neglected? 🔑

8b. Was Jesus doing away with the keeping of the law? 🔑

9. Why do people, including the scribes and Pharisees, “strain out a gnat and swallow a camel”?

10. What did the Lord mean by “serpents and brood of vipers” (33)?



11. Why did these people kill and persecute God's messengers? 🔑

23:37-39

12. How does the analogy of the hen gathering her chicks apply to God and His people? 🔑

13. When will the people say, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord"? 🔑

The Basics**Setting**

The Lord left the temple and withdrew from the multitudes. His final ministry now turned to the disciples. Prompted by the disciples' question about the signs of the Lord's coming and of the end time, He delivered the last discourse, also known as the Olivet Discourse (24:1-25:46). In this lesson, we will look at the first part of the discourse, which predicts the progression of events leading up to Christ's return, warns against deceiving claims, and instructs us to be watchful.

Key Verse

"But he who endures to the end shall be saved" (24:13).

"Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming" (24:42).

Did You Know...?

1. **"Not one stone shall be left here upon another"** (24:2): Fulfilled literally in A.D. 70, when the Romans under Titus completely destroyed Jerusalem and the temple buildings. Stones were even pried apart to collect the gold leaf that melted from the roof when the temple was set on fire. Excavations in 1968 uncovered large numbers of these stones, toppled from the walls by the invaders. ^{8/1474}
2. **Abomination of desolation** (24:15): The detestable thing causing the desolation of the holy place. The primary reference in Daniel...was to 168 B.C., when Antiochus Epiphanes erected a pagan altar to Zeus on the sacred altar in the temple of Jerusalem. According to some, there were still two more stages in the progressive fulfillment of the predictions in Daniel and Matthew: (1) The Roman destruction of the temple in A.D. 70 and (2) the setting up of an image of the antichrist in Jerusalem. ^{8/1475}

3. **Housetop** (24:17): Most roofs were flat (cf. Deut 22:8; Mark 2:4; Acts 10:9)—pleasant places in the cool of the day. Verse 17 implies such haste that fugitives will not take time to run downstairs for anything to take with them but will run from roof to roof to evacuate the city as quickly as possible (cf. Jos. Antiq. XIII, 140 [v.3]).^{6/501}

Observation

Outline

- _____ (24:1-3)
- _____ (24:4-22)
- _____ (24:23-28)
- _____ (24:29-31)
- _____ (24:32-35)
- _____ (24:36-44)
- _____ (24:45-51)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

1. Which verses describe the following events or stages?  


1a. The fall of Jerusalem.

1b. The period of distress before the end.

1c. The end and the coming of the Son of Man.

2a. What things might affect the faith of Christians and even cause them to forsake the truth? 

Matthew 24:1-51

2b. Which of these do you see occurring today? 

3. What will the coming of Christ be like? 

4. What was the purpose of this discourse? To answer this question, list all the imperatives (instructions) that may apply to us.



Segment Analysis

24:1-3

1. What three questions did the disciples ask? 

2. Why did the disciples show Jesus the buildings of the temple?



24:4-14

3a. What events will signify that the end is near? 

3b. What marks the beginning of the “end”? 


4. Why is it important that the gospel must first be preached in all the world? 


24:15-20

5. Why must the residents of Judea flee? 

24:21-28

6a. How would the false christs and false prophets deceive? 

6b. Knowing their means of deception, how can we discern and guard against false christs and false prophets? 

7. What does it mean that “the coming of the Son of Man will be like the flashing of lightning from east to west”? 



8. “Eagle” in 28 should be translated as vultures. What does the image of carcass and vultures represent? 

24:32-35

9a. What are “all these things” in 33?  

Matthew 24:1-51



9b. What is “near and at the doors”?  

10. Why did Jesus include the saying in 34-35?  

24:36-44

11. Why did Jesus repeatedly emphasize that He will come at an hour we do not know? 


12. What lesson can we learn from the generation of Noah?  

13. How does the picture of “one taken, one left” add to the impact of Jesus’ warning?  

24:46-51

14a. How was the good servant faithful and wise? 

14b. What does 45 tell us about our Christian responsibilities and the meaning of being ready?  

15. How has the evil servant ignored Jesus' warnings? 

16. Specifically, how are you preparing for the master's return? 

The Basics

Setting

The second half of the Olivet Discourse continues the theme of preparing for the Lord's coming. The three sections in this passage all teach us how to be ready for the return of the king. The wise, faithful, and righteous will inherit the kingdom whereas the foolish, lazy, and wicked will be shut out.

Key Verse

"Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming" (25:13).

"His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord'" (25:23).

"And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me'" (25:40).

Did You Know...?

1. **Ten Virgins** (25:1): The bridesmaids, who were responsible for preparing the bride to meet the bridegroom. ^{8/1476}
2. **Talent** (25:15): The talent was first a measure according to weight, between fifty-eight and eighty pounds (twenty-six to thirty-six kg), and then a unit of coinage, one common value assigned it being six thousand denarii...It may be more sensible to compare the talent with modern currency in terms of earning power. If a talent was worth six thousand denarii, then it would take a day laborer twenty years to earn so much—perhaps three hundred-thousand dollars. ^{6/516}
3. **Bankers/bank** (25:27): In Scripture the term *bank* does not designate a financial institution for the custody of money but rather a "table" or "counter" (Gk. *trapeza*) at which money

changer stood or sat, exchanging coins (Matt. 21:12; Mark 11:15; John 2:15). In Luke 19:23, however, the word apparently approximates “bank” in the modern sense of the word.^{10/141}

Observation

Outline

- _____ (25:1-13)
_____ (25:14-30)
_____ (25:31-46)

Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis

25:1-13

1. How is this parable related to the teachings in 24:36-51?  


2. Why is Christ compared to the bridegroom? 


- 3a. How were all ten virgins alike in what they did? 

- 3b. What made the wise different from the foolish? 

- 4a. What does taking enough oil represent? 

Matthew 25:1-46



4b. What does the fact that oil could not be shared tell us? 

5. Why did not being watchful lead to such serious consequences (12)? 

25:14-30

6. What must we do with the talents we have received? 

7a. On what basis were the servants rewarded or punished? What does this teach us?  

7b. Was the master a hard man as the servant claimed in 24? Why did the master himself concede to this claim in 26?  

8. What can we learn from 29 in our service?  

9. How does this parable show the fairness and grace of God?



25:31-46

10. Observe the beginnings of each section in this lesson and explain the reason for the difference between this and the previous two.



11. On what basis will the final separation be? 

12. Who are the least of the King's brethren (40)? 

13. Apply the following to today's context and write down what you can do in these areas. 

13a. Feeding the hungry and quenching the thirsty.

13b. Taking in strangers.

13c. Clothing the naked.

13d. Visiting the sick.

Matthew 25:1-46

13e. Going to those in prison.

14. What can we learn from the fact that neither the righteous nor the wicked were aware of what they had done? 🐾

The King Betrayed and Tried (1)

The Basics

Setting

The Lord Jesus was now only a few days from His crucifixion. He chose to spend His remaining time with His disciples in seclusion. Everything would take place according to the Lord's prediction. He was anointed in preparation for His burial; He ate the Passover meal with the disciples; He was betrayed by His own. As you read this passage, picture yourself to be with Jesus in these last hours and feel the deep emotions that permeate the story.

Key Verse

“For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (26:28).

Did You Know...?

1. **Passover** (26:2): The Passover began Thursday afternoon with the slaughter of the lamb. ^{6/523} The Jewish festival commemorating the time when the angel of the Lord passed over the homes of the Hebrews rather than killing their firstborn sons as he did in the Egyptian homes (see Ex 12:13,23,27). The lambs or kids used in the feast were killed on the 14th of Nisan (March-April), and the meal was eaten the same evening between sundown and midnight. Since the Jewish day began at sundown, the Passover Feast took place on the 15th Nisan. ^{8/1519}
2. **Caiaphas** (26:3): High priest A.D. 18-36 and the son-in-law of Annas (Jn 18:13), a former high priest, who served 6-15. ^{8/1481}
3. **Thirty silver coins** (26:15) were the redemption price paid for a slave (Ex 21:32). This same amount was also prophesied as the price for the services of the rejected Shepherd (Zech. 11:12). The exact value of the agreed price cannot be determined because the coinage was not identified. ^{12/82}

Matthew 26:1-35

4. **Feast of the Unleavened Bread** (26:17): Most Bible students believe that the events recorded in Matt 26:17-30 took place on Thursday of Passion Week. This was the first day of the seven-day Feast of the Unleavened Bread. On that first day Passover lambs were sacrificed (Mark 14:12). The Feast of Unleavened Bread followed immediately after the Passover; the entire eight-day event was sometimes called the Passover Week...^{12/82}
5. **Hymn** (26:30): The hymn normally sung was the last part of the *Hallel* (pss 114-118 or 115-18). It was sung antiphonally: Jesus as the leader would sing the lines, and His followers would respond with "Hallelujah!"^{6/539}


Observation

Outline

- _____ (26:1-5)
- _____ (26:6-13)
- _____ (26:14-16)
- _____ (26:17-19)
- _____ (26:20-25)
- _____ (26:26-30)
- _____ (26:31-35)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

1. In what ways did Jesus show Himself to be the sovereign Lord who voluntarily gave Himself as a sacrifice rather than a helpless victim of the circumstances? 

Segment Analysis


26:1-5

1. Why is it significant that the Lord was crucified during Passover? 

2. Why did the writer put the plot of the chief priests, scribes, and elders immediately after the Lord's prediction?  

26:6-13



- 3a. Why were the disciples indignant?  




- 3b. What do the words, "why this waste" tell us about the disciples?  

- 3c. Do you sometimes feel "indignant" about others' offering or service to God? 

4. Compare the woman and the disciples in this story. 

Matthew 26:1-35

5. According to the Lord Himself, why was the woman's action a good work (or a beautiful thing)?  

6. What can we learn from Jesus' commendation and promise in 13?   

26:14-16

7. Could there be any connection between Judas' action and the disciples' reaction in 8-9?  


- 8a. How was Judas the very opposite of the woman who poured out oil on Jesus?  

- 8b. How do we sometimes, like Judas, also "betray" Jesus? 


26:20-25


- 9a. Why do you think the Lord revealed that one of the disciples was about to betray Him? 

- 9b. Why didn't Jesus just point out directly that Judas was the betrayer? 

10. Why should Judas be condemned if the betrayal was already prophesied in the Scriptures (24)? 

26:26-30


- 11a. Was the Communion only symbolic of Christ's body and blood? Explain your answer. 

- 11b. What is the new covenant in 28? What does it have to do with the Lord's blood? 

12. What should we commemorate when we partake of the Communion today?  

26:31-35

- 13a. What can we know about Peter from his words? 

- 13b. Have you ever made a sincere promise which you failed to keep? Why did you make the promise? Why did you fail? 

The King Betrayed and Tried (2)

The Basics

Setting

The hour of darkness had come. The Lord Jesus was betrayed into the hands of wicked men to be tried and sentenced to death. The sinless Son of God stood in trial before sinners. What bitter irony! But He gave Himself willingly because of love. In His final moment before the arrest, He prayed alone in the garden, being in extreme sorrow. But He did not shrink back in fear. He overcame and left the garden to meet His captors.

Key Verse

“Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?” (26:53-54).

Did You Know...?

1. **Gethsemane** (26:36): ...means “an oil press.” In a field covered with olive trees, oil presses were used to extract oil from the fruit. An olive grove was in that place (John 18:1). ^{12/83} A garden, east of Jerusalem beyond the Kidron valley and near the Mount of Olives.... ^{7/465}
2. **Legions** (26:53): A Roman legion numbered about 6,000 soldiers. Such angelic protection (of about 72,000 angels!) could easily have defended Jesus from any opposition. ^{12/85}
3. **“Your speech betrays you”** (26:73): Peter had a decidedly Galilean accent that was conspicuous in Jerusalem. ^{8/1483}

Observation

Outline


-
- (26:36-47)
-
- (26:48-56)

_____ (26:57-68)

_____ (26:69-75)


Key Words/Phrases


General Analysis

1. Record your observation on how Jesus was most lonely during these painful hours. 



Segment Analysis

26:36-47

- 1a. Compare the Lord Jesus and the disciples (You need to look at the whole passage, starting with 31). 

- 1b. Observe the Lord Jesus before, during, and after the prayer and record your observation. What change took place in Him? 


Matthew 26:36-75


2a. If the prayer in Gethsemane was a decisive struggle, what was the Lord struggling with and how did He overcome?  

2b. What can we learn from the Lord's prayer in our prayers to God?  

3a. What did the Lord expect from the disciples? Why?  

3b. Why do you think the disciples could not do what the Lord asked? 

4a. What does it mean to “watch and pray” (41)? 

4b. How does watchful prayer guard us against temptation? 

4c. Why did the Lord add the words to His command “the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak?” 

5. Have you ever had the experience of prayer in Gethsemane? Describe the experience and its effect. 🦶

26:48-56

6. The chief priests and elders sent a great multitude with swords and clubs to look for and arrest Jesus (47,55). What does this tell us about these religious leaders and about the multitudes? 🔑

7. Have you ever been “betrayed with a kiss”? 🦶



8. How do we sometimes feel compelled to defend a good cause with a “sword” the way the Lord’s follower did? Why is this wrong? 🦶


9. How did the Lord’s words in 53-54 show His greatness? 👁️ 🔑

26:57-68


10. Have you ever followed the Lord “at a distance” the way Peter did? What made you do that? 🦶

Matthew 26:36-75

11a. How was Jesus' trial grossly unfair and how did it show the hypocrisy of the religious leaders?  



11b. How did these leaders show their bitter hatred towards Jesus? 

12a. What can we learn from Jesus' silence? 

12b. How do the suffering and humiliations Jesus endured serve as encouragement for you in your sufferings? 

26:69-75

13a. Have you ever been compelled by adverse situation to deny your faith? 

13b. Why did Peter weep bitterly? If you were Peter, how would you have felt?  

The King's Death and Burial

The Basics

Setting

The chief priests and elders had condemned the Lord and decided to put Him to death. Having no authority to execute anyone, they delivered Him to Pilate, the Roman governor and forced Him to make an unjust ruling. After receiving the death sentence, the Lord suffered even more torture and ridicule under the hands of the Roman soldiers before they led Him to Golgotha. During the hours of crucifixion, dramatic events happened. Even the soldiers and the Centurion said with fear, "Truly this was the Son of God!" The Son of God had died and was buried, but a greater miracle would soon take place.

Key Verse

"Now Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor asked Him, saying, 'Are You the King of the Jews?' Jesus said to him, 'It is as you say'" (27:11).

Did You Know...?

1. **Pontius Pilate** (27:2): To get a death sentence, they needed to take the case to Pilate, the governor, the procurator of Judea and Samaria, A.D. 26-36 (cf. Luke 3:1)...Pilate's home was in Caesarea, but at this festival time, he was in his Jerusalem palace. ^{12/86}
2. **Barabbas** (27:16) had taken part in a rebellion (Lk 23:19; Jn 18:40), presumably against the Romans. So he would have been a folk hero among the Jews. ^{8/1484}
3. **Scourge** (27:26): Among the Jews, scourging was limited to forty lashes (Deut 25:3; cf. 2 Cor 11:24), but the Romans were restricted by nothing but their strength and whim. The whip was the dreaded *flagellum*, made by plaiting pieces of bone or lead into leather thongs. The victim was stripped and tied to a post. Severe flogging not only reduced the flesh to bloody pulp but could open up the body until the bones were visible and the

Matthew 27:1-66

entrails exposed... Flogging as an independent punishment not infrequently ended in death. It was also used to weaken the prisoner before crucifixion. Jesus' flogging took place before the verdict (cf. Luke 23:16, 22; John 19:1-5; ...) and so was not repeated after the verdict. Repetition would doubtless have killed him. ^{6/571-572}

4. **Praetorium** (27:27): 1. The headquarters in a Roman camp, the tent of the commander in chief. 2. The palace in which the governor or procurator of a province resided (John 18:28, 33; 19:9; Acts 23:35). ^{10/1024}
5. **Scarlet robe** (27:28): The robe is probably the short red cloak worn by Roman military and civilian officials. Mark and John describe it as purple, Matthew as scarlet. The purple calls to mind the robes worn by vassal kings, and the scarlet shows what the garment probably was—a trooper's cloak. ^{6/573}
6. **Gall** (27:34) can refer to various substances that have a bitter taste. It may have been offered to Jesus as a mild narcotic to deaden pain. Mark 15:23 identifies this substance as myrrh. ^{1/1468}
7. **“Eli, Eli, Lama Sabachthani”** (27:46): The words were spoken in Aramaic (but with some Hebrew characteristics), one of the languages commonly spoken in Palestine in Jesus' day. ^{8/1526}
8. **Joseph Arimathea** (27:57): “a prominent member of the Council, who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God,” and was a secret disciple of Jesus... Luke describes Joseph as “a good and righteous man” and adds that “he had not consented to their plan and action,” i.e., of the Jewish authorities. From this remark it seems to be evident that he was a member of the Sanhedrin. ^{10/710}
9. **Day of Preparation** (27:62): Friday.
10. **Sealing the tomb** (27:66): Once the stone was in place, soft wax was poured over the crevice between the stone and the wall of the opening. The official Roman government seal was then pressed into the wax. The penalty for breaking the seal was death. ^{1/1469}

Observation

Outline

- _____ (27:1-2)
- _____ (27:3-10)
- _____ (27:11-14)
- _____ (27:15-26)
- _____ (27:27-31)
- _____ (27:32-44)
- _____ (27:45-56)
- _____ (27:57-61)
- _____ (27:62-66)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

1. In this passage, what things did the priests and elders do that resulted in Jesus' death? 

2. Record the sufferings Jesus endured. 

Segment Analysis

27:3-10

1a. How was Judas fooled and betrayed? 

1b. What can we learn here about the deceitfulness of sin?  

27:11-14

2. Why did Pilate ask Jesus, “Are you the king of the Jews?”? 

27:15-26

3a. What various considerations influenced Pilate’s decision? What consideration finally won? 

3b. Have you ever been in a dilemma like Pilate’s? How did you act? 



4. In this story, who were condemned besides Jesus? 

5. In what ways are we like Barabbas? 

27:27-31

6. What human depravity is seen in the soldier's cruelty?  

27:32-44

7. Jesus was called "king of the Jews" three times in this passage. How is this king very different from what we normally expect of a king?  

- 8a. What three groups of people hurled insults at Jesus? 

- 8b. Compare the insults in 40 and 43 with Satan's temptation in 4:3.



- 8c. Why was the cross a "stumbling block" to these people (cf. 1Cor 1:23)?  

9. Is it possible for people of today to "crucify" Jesus? If so, how?



Matthew 27:1-66

27:45-56

10a. What miraculous signs occurred while Jesus was on the cross?



10b. What did these signs mean?



11a. How did Jesus address God, and how was this unusual?



11b. Why was He forsaken by God? What does this have to do with you?



27:57-60

12. How did Jesus' burial fulfill the Scriptures?



13. What can we learn from the women mentioned in 55, 56 and 61?



27:61-66

14a. Why were the Chief priests and Pharisees still worried that the disciples might steal the body? What does this tell us about them? 🔑

14b. How did the sealing of the stone and guarding the tomb later become important proofs that Jesus had indeed resurrected? 🔑

Final Thoughts

15. Write down your feelings and reflections on Jesus' suffering, death, and burial. 👁️ 👣

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Matthew 28:1-20

The King's Resurrection and Great Commission

The Basics

Setting

The gospel of Jesus Christ did not end with His death. Without His resurrection, our faith would be in vain and we would still be in our sin (1Cor 15:17). But after the Lord had suffered, died and been buried, He rose from the grave just as He had told the disciples. He had conquered death once for all and become our Savior. As the King of kings who had received authority in heaven and on earth, He commissioned His disciples to bring the gospel of salvation to the whole world until He comes again.

Key Verse

“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth’” (28:18).

Observation

Outline

- _____ (28:1-8)
- _____ (28:9-10)
- _____ (28:11-15)
- _____ (28:16-20)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

1. In which two places did the scenes in this chapter take place?



- 2a. Why is the Lord's resurrection central to our faith?  

- 2b. How should the Lord's resurrection direct our daily lives? 

Segment Analysis

28:1-8


1. Why did the angel roll back the stone from the door? 

28:9-10

2. Why should the women "rejoice"? Why should you rejoice today?





28:11-15

3. What do the reactions and decisions of the chief priests and elders tell us about them?  

Matthew 28:1-20

4a. What two things does the “large sum of money” indicate? 


4b. Does Satan also bribe people today to keep them from telling others about the resurrection? If so, how does he do it? 



5a. Why did the chief priests and elders promise the guards to appease the governor and make them secure? 

5b. Why was the story of the stolen body unconvincing and illogical? 



28:16-20


6. What is a recurring word/theme in the Great Commission (see KJV)? 


7. What is the authority that Jesus had received? 


8. The word “therefore” shows a direct connection between Jesus’ authority and the commission. Explain this connection.  

- 9a. How can we “make disciples”? 

- 9b. What do the Lord’s words tell us about what characterizes a disciple?   

10. How was the Lord’s promise to Abraham in Gen 12:3b fulfilled here? 

- 11a. What is “the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit”? Why did Jesus give such a long description when He could have just spelled out the name? 

- 11b. “Baptizing them in the name of ...” Is this command to be merely recited as a formula during baptism? What does it mean to be baptized in the Lord’s name? 

Matthew 28:1-20

12a. How does the great commission apply to you personally? How would you fulfill the great commission? 🕯️

12b. Explain the Lord's promise, "I am with you always, even to the end of the age" and apply it to the commission. 🕯️ 🕯️

Thoughts on Questions

Lesson 2

Observation

Outline

The Genealogy of Jesus (1:1-17)

From Abraham to David (1-6)

From David to exile (7-11)

From exile to Christ (12-16)

3 stages of 14 generations (17)

The Birth of Jesus (1:18-25)

Mary's conception and Joseph's intention to divorce (18-19)

Angel's instruction and Joseph's obedience (20-25)

Key Words and Phrases

Son of David, son of Abraham, fulfill, virgin, Immanuel

Segment Analysis

1. The book of Matthew begins the genealogy of Jesus with Abraham while Luke traces the genealogy back to Adam. Matthew starts with Abraham to show and emphasize that Jesus was the Son of Abraham, born according to promise.
Matthew follows the line of Solomon while Luke follows that of Nathan (Solomon and Nathan were brothers). Some propose that Matthew's genealogy records the ancestors of Joseph while Luke's records the ancestors of Mary.
2. Christ, the son of David, the Son of Abraham.
Christ: the anointed—designation for priests (Lev 4:3; 6:22), kings (1Sam 2:10; 16:13; 24:10; 2Sam 19:21; Lam 4:20); also designation for the coming Messiah (Mt 2:1-6; 16:16)
Son of David (Ps 89:29; 2Sam 7:16; Isa 9:6-7).
Son of Abraham (Gen 22:18, Gal 3:16).
3. Abraham to David: Age of wandering, bondage, and anarchy.
David to the exile: Age of the kingdom
Exile to the Christ: Age of restoration, foreign rule, and silence (Intertestamental period).

Matthew

- 4b. At least two of the women were gentile and some of them had had illicit occupations or relationships. But it is possible that Matthew chooses to include them to demonstrate God's mercy in His salvation plan. It is also God's will to extend His salvation to all people, regardless of their gender or race.
5. God is faithful to His promises. He is the sovereign and loving Lord who carries out His will throughout all generations. It also reminds us that God acts according to His timetable, and at the proper time, God sent His Son to the world (Gal 4:4)
6. He probably addressed Joseph as the son of David to stress the kingly descent of Jesus.
7. Jesus was God in the flesh. Since He was born as the Son of God, He could not come from human descent because all human beings are under sin (Rom 5:12).
9. 1) Born of the Holy Spirit through a virgin; 2) Fulfillment of prophecy
- 10a. "Jesus" is the Greek form of the Hebrew name "Joshua," which means "the Lord is salvation." His name indicated His mission to save God's people from sin.
- 10b. The coming of Jesus to the world brought God's salvation to His people. God's grace and deliverance had come to His people through Jesus.
12. He could have put Mary to public disgrace to vent his outrage or jealousy, but, instead, he was full of mercy and compassion.

Lesson 3

Observation

Outline

- Visit of the Wise Men (2:1-12)
 - The wise men's inquiry (1-2)
 - Herod's anxiety and plot (3-8)
 - Finding and worshiping Jesus (9-11)
 - Returning by another route (12)
- Escape to Egypt (2:13-18)
 - Angel's instruction and the flight to Egypt (13-15)
 - Massacre of infants (16-18)
- Return to Nazareth (2:19-23)

Key Words/Phrases

King of the Jews, worship, fulfilled, child

Segment Analysis

1. King Herod, along with all Jerusalem, was disturbed by the news. It is obvious that Herod felt threatened by the birth of this “King of the Jews,” since he himself was supposed to be the king. The reaction of the people could have come from a mix of uncertainty about the outcome of this event and an eager expectation of the promised Shepherd of Israel.
2. He was crafty; he tricked the wise men into believing that he also wanted to worship the child king. He had no concern for the people whom he was ruling over. Because of his lust for power and selfishness, he would rather kill all the innocent infants than give up his throne.
3. He was the ruler from Judah (6). He brought justice and truth to His people and established God’s kingdom on earth. He carried authority and power, and people of all nations will worship Him.
He was the Shepherd. He tended his flock with love and compassion. He came to seek the lost and provide healing (Isa 40:11; Ezek 34:11-16). According to Jn 10, He was the good shepherd who even laid down his life for the sheep.
4. Ps 72:10-11 and Isa 60:6 prophesied that foreign kings would come and bow down to the King of Israel and bring Him tribute. The writer probably has this prophecy in mind when he records this visit. The wise men must have also understood the extraordinary nature of this king’s birth. The universal reign and influence that Jesus would have on this world explains the wise men’s diligent and persistent efforts to travel long distances to seek and worship this king.
5. Herod actually had no intention whatsoever to worship Christ. So he did not even make an effort to look for Jesus. Instead, he simply asked the wise men to report his whereabouts. The wise men, on the contrary, earnestly and persistently inquired of the people and sought for the king until they finally reached the house where Jesus was. It was to such people that God provides guidance and revelation in their search.
6. Because God’s will in our lives often runs contrary to our personal wants and interests, we may feel threatened to allow God to work. We have to remove our pride, selfishness, or pleasure and humbly submit to God regardless of the cost. Such self-denial, required of all the followers of Christ, is what it takes to remove the obstacles in obeying God.
7. In this story, the people of Bethlehem wept just as the Israelites wept when they passed through Ramah during exile. Incidentally, Herod’s atrocity and the weeping of the people could be representative of the evil

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of sin and the captivity of God's people under sin. Therefore, the citation of Jeremiah's prophecy was appropriate not only because of the weeping that had occurred but also its connection to the condition of God's people. According to Jeremiah's prophecy (Jer 31:16-17), the people will be comforted when God brings the people back from exile. Likewise, God's people will also be comforted when Jesus, the true King of the Jews, delivers them from their sins.

8. We can learn from his unconditional obedience and quick response to God's word. Although he was the head of the house, he submitted to the Lord's guidance. Throughout the story, he never spoke a word. Instead of reasoning with God, he simply trusted God in every incident.

Lesson 4

Observation

Outline

- Preparation by John the Baptist (3:1-12)
 - Appearance of John and his ministry (1-6)
 - Warning to the Pharisees and Sadducees (7-10)
 - Pointing to Christ and His ministry (11-12)
- The Baptism of Jesus (3:13-17)
 - John's deterrence (13-14)
 - Jesus' answer and John's consent (15)
 - The baptism and God's approval (16-17)

Key Words/Phrases

Preaching, repent, kingdom of heaven, prepare, confessing their sins, baptize, produce fruit, Holy Spirit, fire, righteousness, heaven was opened, beloved Son.

General Analysis

2. Ax, trees, fruit, carrying of sandals, winnowing fork, threshing floor, wheat and chaff, gathering into the barn, unquenchable fire.

Segment Analysis

1. The descriptions of John are very similar to those of Elijah (2Kgs 1:8). He was in fact the Elijah that was to come to restore all things (Mt 17:11-13; Mk 9:11-13; Lk 1:16,17). His attire and diet reflected his simple and harsh lifestyle (Mt 11:8,18). His life and actions conformed to his message of repentance.

2. He was the voice because he proclaimed repentance. He was in the desert—the Desert of Judea. He was a forerunner who prepared the way for Jesus. He prepared the way by making the people's hearts ready to accept Jesus and His message. Through true repentance and baptism, the people turned from their sins to God's righteousness. John foretold of the coming of the one who was greater as well as the nature of Jesus' ministry. John's baptizing of Jesus also served as an announcement to the people that Jesus was the one they ought to accept and believe. He even directed his disciples to their new master (Jn 1:35,36).
3. Many people took pride in their heritage as the children of Abraham (Jn 8:39a). But John told them that God could choose to raise up children for Abraham from the stones. In other words, if they were unrepentant, they would be rejected by God despite their physical lineage.
4. The kingdom of heaven is not a physical establishment. It is an eternal kingdom for God's people which Jesus Christ inaugurated by His teachings, works, and redemption. The kingdom of heaven is found in the heart of men (Lk 17:20,21). The coming of God's kingdom refers to God's rule in people's hearts. Those who accept and obey the gospel message will be in the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven was near in the sense that God's kingdom was coming to the people through Jesus' ministry and saving works.
5. A voice has no form or identity. John clearly knew his role as a forerunner. He did not want to vie for any authority or glory. He faithfully announced the coming of the one who was greater than him and directed everyone's attention to Jesus (Jn 3:25-30). A voice in the wilderness reflects the insignificance of its presence. Instead of being spread in the city squares, it echoed in a desolate place. But the unmistakable voice in the wild drew people out of the cares of their busy environments into the lonely desert where they could focus on their need for repentance.
6. The hypocritical actions and lifestyle of the Pharisees and Sadducees were as deadly as vipers' poison. They misled the people, killed the prophets, and placed on people heavy burdens that God did not require. Jesus' words to them were just as harsh. He called them the brood of vipers and descendants of those who murdered the prophets (23:31-32). True repentance is demonstrated in accepting admonition with humility, regardless of how harsh the rebuke might be. If these candidates for baptism were able to accept John's words and change their ways, that would show that they were truly repentant.
7. Palestinian farmers used winnowing forks to separate the wheat from the unwanted chaff. This process is used to refer to the judgment, when God will separate the righteous from the wicked (see 13:37-43). In the same

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way, Jesus' ministry will separate the true believers from the unbelievers (21:42-44; Rom 9:30-33; 1 Pet 2:7,8). Believers will be gathered into God's kingdom. Unbelievers will be rejected.

8. The Greek word for "repentance" literally means "change of heart." Repentance consists of sincere sorrow over sin (2Cor 7:10,11), confession (Ps 32:5), and change of action (3:8; Acts 26:20). Repentance is an expression of faith in God and obedience to His commands.

According to the Lord Jesus, the kingdom of God will be taken from the unrepentant and given to those who will produce its fruit (21:43); and it is those who obey and conform to God's righteousness who will be worthy of God's kingdom (21:28-32). Therefore, repentance is a necessary step in entering the kingdom of heaven.

9. The baptism of the Holy Spirit points to the giving of the promised Holy Spirit starting with Pentecost (Acts 1:5; 11:15,16). The Holy Spirit is also the spirit of judgment and spirit of burning that cleanses the people of God (Isa 4:3,4). According to John 16:8-11, the Holy Spirit will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin, righteousness, and judgment. God's word is also like fire, testing men's hearts (Jer 23:29). When Jesus comes, He will be like a refiner's fire (Mal 3:2). Jesus' ministry will test the hearts of men to see whether they were worthy of God's kingdom. Whoever accepts Christ and pays the cost of being a disciple will be able to come into His kingdom.

- 10a. In addition to being an announcement of Jesus as the Messiah, the baptism of Jesus was to fulfill all righteousness. "Righteousness" refers to meeting God's requirements. God's requirement that Jesus be baptized may be a fulfillment of the requirement for priests, who were to be washed before their service (Ex 29:4). It could also be an example for all believers, to show that we must be baptized and receive the Holy Spirit to become the children of God (Gal 3:26,27; Rom 8:16).

- 10b. Jesus dedicated His entire life to fulfilling God's righteous requirements. He ultimately fulfilled all righteousness by offering Himself as a sacrifice pleasing to the Lord. Incidentally, by consenting to Jesus' request, John also fulfilled God's righteousness.

- 11b. The opening of the heavens may be symbolic of the reconciliation between God and men which was made possible through Jesus. The anointing of the Holy Spirit was a sign that God had sent Jesus to the ministry (Lk 4:18). The descent of the Holy Spirit and the voice from heaven served as seal of approval that Jesus was "the beloved Son."

12. Humility: Although He was greater than John, He asked John to baptize Him.

Gentleness: He did not rebuke John for hesitating to baptize Him. He spoke with grace and reason. Sometimes, we tend to rebuke others

harshly when we think that we are in the right. We ought to learn to be as gentle as Jesus and invite others to see and obey God's will with us.

Submission: He was baptized to fulfill all righteousness and therefore received God's approval. We also need to fulfill all of God's commands to be His beloved children.

Lesson 5

Observation

Outline

The Temptation of Jesus (4:1-11)

Return to Galilee (4:12-16)

Beginning of Jesus' Preaching (4:17)

Calling the First Disciples (4:18-22)

Healing the Sick (4:23-25)

Key Words/Phrases

Tempted, Son of God, "It is written," light, kingdom, fishers of men, at once, immediately, teaching, preaching, healing.

Segment Analysis

1. It was God's will that Jesus should go through the suffering of temptation so that He may sympathize with our weaknesses and become our merciful and faithful High Priest (Heb 2:14-18)
3. They all aim at these human weaknesses: self-centeredness; desire to prove oneself or to satisfy one's lust; submission to Satan's commands in exchange for physical or material gains.
4. By asking Jesus to turn stones into bread, Satan hoped to lure Jesus into obeying his commands and misusing his divine power for personal interests.
By asking Jesus to throw himself down the temple, Satan hoped that Jesus would prove his divinity by calling upon God's protection.
By asking Jesus to bow down to him, Satan hoped that Jesus would defy God's commands and surrender His authority to Satan in order to gain the world.
5. Several times Jesus was presented with situations where He could have fed on his pride or "proved" that He was from God. For example:
The people wanted to make Him king by force (Jn 6:14,15).
The Pharisees and Sadducees demanded a sign (Mt 16:1-4).

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People insulted Him, “Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God” (Mt 27:40).

6. Jesus responded to Satan’s challenge to turn stones into bread by pointing out that obedience to God’s command in order to have spiritual life is more important than sustaining the body with food.

Jesus quoted the Scriptures, “You shall not tempt the LORD your God” to show that it is wrong to deliberately put ourselves in a situation to test the truthfulness of God’s promise.

Jesus turned down Satan’s attractive offer by God’s very command that we are to worship and serve only the Lord God.

7. He is a deceiver and liar (Rev 12:9; Jn 8:44). He disguises himself as an angel of light (2Cor 11:14-15) in order to take advantage of our ignorance or spiritual dullness. He leads people into false doctrines and sin in the same way the serpent deceived Eve (2Cor 11:3). Satan is well versed in the Scriptures and is able to fool those who are not watchful or those who have wrong motives for following God’s word.

8. Satan misused the Scriptures in order to make his case strong. Such application of God’s word for self-justification or gratification is the source of error.

Jesus’ quotation of God’s word, on the contrary, were all based on the truth in God’s words and a sincere obedience to God’s authority.

Therefore, we should not use God’s word to justify ourselves for our selfish gain. Instead, we ought to study and apply God word with the intent to know and obey God’s will.

9. Store God’s word in our hearts and know God’s will.

Have a sincere desire to obey God’s will over our personal needs.

Be faithful to God and not be distracted by material or fleshly allurements.

11. Darkness refers to the hopeless condition of death (shadow of death in verse 16) that results from futile thinking and shameful deeds of disobedience (see Eph 4:17,18; 5:11,12).

Light refers to God’s mercy and salvation, which bring us unto the path of hope and peace (Lk 1:78-79; Acts 26:17,18)

12. The Lord Jesus Christ brought salvation to not only Israel but also the gentiles (Acts 26:23).

- 13a. They would win souls and make disciples of all nations (28:19).

- 13b. They were sent by their master to preach God’s kingdom and heal the sick. After they received the Holy Spirit, they became Christ’s witnesses from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

14. Be quick to respond to Jesus' command. Put God first in our lives. This calls for trust in God and total dedication.
15. Verse 19 teaches us that to be fishers of men, we need to follow the Lord Jesus. This means imitating the examples of the Lord, serving Him, obeying His word, and participating in His sufferings.

The same verse also teaches us that it is the Lord who makes us fishers of men. We need the life-transforming power of God in order to be the Lord's witnesses (Eph 2:8-10). We need to trust in the Lord, feed on His word, and be filled with the Holy Spirit. Through constant change and renewal, the Lord makes us fishers of men.
16. Teaching, preaching, and healing (4:23).

Lesson 6

Observation

Outline

- The Characters of the Kingdom's Citizens (5:1-12)
 - The beatitudes (1-10)
 - Expansion on the last beatitude (11-12)
- The Influence of the Kingdom's Citizens (5:13-16)
 - Salt of the earth (13)
 - Light of the world (14-16)

Key Words/Phrases

Teach, blessed, righteousness, kingdom of heaven, salt, light, good works.

General Analysis

- 1a. Jesus' disciples (verses 1 and 2)
- 1b. Yes. See 7:28 and Lk 6:17

Segment Analysis

1. Those who humbly acknowledge their spiritual inadequacy are true citizens of God's kingdom.

The contrite in heart and the afflicted will find forgiveness and joy in God (Ps 119:136; Isa 40:1; Rev 7:17).

Those who deal humbly and gently with others will receive God's promises and enter the heavenly inheritance (cf 11:29; 21:5; Jas 3:13).

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Those who are eager to know and do God's will be satisfied when God's kingdom is fully realized (2Pet 3:13).

The forgiving and compassionate will receive God's mercy (6:12-15; 18:33-34).

The upright in heart will meet God face to face (Ps 24:3-6; Heb 12:14; 1Jn 3:1-3).

Those who bring reconciliation to others and preach the good tidings of the gospel will be true heirs to God's kingdom.

Those who suffer persecution, insult, and slander for doing what is right and for following Christ are true citizens of God's kingdom (1Pet 2:19-21).

2. The kingdom of heaven begins here and now when our hearts conform to God's will.
3. Righteousness refers to being obedient to God's will and imitating Christ. Notice that "for my sake" in verse 11 parallels "for righteousness" sake in verse 10.
4. The blessings in the beatitudes have to do with spiritual standing and rewards rather than material riches or physical well being.
The condition for blessing has more to do with our heart and attitude than with how hard we ask God for blessings or how much possession we offer to God.
5. The salt is on the ground. Its function is to season and preserve. Its areas of service seem to be more mundane.
The light is on the stand. Its function is to provide sight and directions. Its effect is more far reaching and more prominent.
6. Just as the salt seasons and preserves, we are to bring God's goodness to the world and preserve against moral decay in our environment (cf Col 4:6).
As the lamp gives light to everyone around it, we are to manifest God's truth and goodness to the people around us and thus be a witness for God (1Pet 2:12).
7. Our true value lies not in what we can accomplish for ourselves in the world. God calls us to be Christians so that we may bring God's qualities to the world. If we fail to meet that expectation, we fail in our duty as Christians and our lives become worthless.

Lesson 7

Observation

Outline

- The Law's Fulfillment (5:17-20)
- The Old and the New (5:21-48)
 - Personal offense and reconciliation (21-26)
 - Adultery and purity (27-30)
 - Divorce and remarriage (31-32)
 - Oaths and truthfulness (33-37)
 - Personal injury and self-sacrifice (38-42)
 - Hatred and love (43-48)

Key Words/Phrases

Law, fulfill, accomplished, righteousness, but I tell you, be perfect.

General Analysis

1. Each topic begins with quotation of the old law, "you have heard that it was said" or the like, and is followed by the new principle: "But I tell you...." In all topics except one, the Lord Jesus also gave further instructions and applications.
2. Higher moral standard that rises above the common expectation of people.
Emphasis on the spirit of loving God and men from the heart rather than a superficial observance.

Segment Analysis

1. The Scriptures (see 7:12; 11:13; 22:40; Lk 16:16; Jn 1:45; Acts 13:15; Rom 3:21).
2. Jesus Christ came to fulfill the requirements of the law perfectly, so that the requirements can also be met in those who obey and trust him (Rom 8:3,4). The Law and the Prophets all point to the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom 3:21; Gal 3:24). Therefore, the true spirit of the Law and the Prophets can only be understood in light of Christ and His teachings.
- 3a. The righteousness of the Pharisees refers to the careful keeping of God's law, right down to the letters. But such practice has often been turned into a mere outward observance.

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- 3b. The Pharisees' careful observance of the Scriptures was good, but not good enough. The Lord demands something more. He wants us to also keep the spirit of God's commands from the heart.
4. Our heavenly Father will not forgive us if we do not forgive our brothers from our heart (6:14,15; 18:35). Our offering will also be unacceptable to God.
- 5a. Literally gouging out our eyes and cutting off our hands would not guarantee a sinless life.
- 5b. The Lord teaches us to be radical in dealing with sin. Only the "violent" may lay hold of God's kingdom (Mt 11:12). Paul uses similar language when he exhorts us to put to death the deeds of the body (Rom 8:13; Gal 5:24). We need to turn away from sin, even if it involves drastic changes in our thoughts and lifestyle, and even if it means denying our desires in order to deal with our weak spots.
- 6a. Be truthful.
- 6b. While an oath was meant to be a solemn declaration and sign of trustworthiness, it was often misused as a means to make up for the lack of personal integrity. So the Lord teaches us to be truthful in our words instead of relying on oaths to make us credible.
7. The command of our Lord is to be truthful and not call upon heaven, earth, or our heads to boost our credibility. The Lord Jesus himself testified under oath (26:63,64); Paul also claimed that God was his witness (Rom 1:9; 2Cor 1:23; 1Thess 2:5,10; Phil 1:8). As long as we are not using the oath to cover up any untruthfulness, we do not need to refuse to testify under oath.
- 8a. Instead of retribution, we should repay evil with good (Prov 25:21,22).
- 8b. Concession is not a sign of weakness but leaving room for God to carry out His justice (Rom 12:19-21). Furthermore, loving those who have wronged us is the way to overcome evil and win over our enemies.
9. The command does not say "be as perfect as the heavenly Father," since no one can ever be as perfect as God (Mk 10:18). But the imperative "be perfect" sets a direction and goal for us to aim for (The word "perfect" is from *telos*, meaning "end, goal, limit"). Just as we are to be holy as God is holy (Lev 11:44,45; 19:2; 20:7; 1Pet 1:16), we are to be perfect as God is perfect. We ought to imitate our heavenly Father in every way rather than just settling for mere compliance to the regulations of the law. As a conclusion to the subject of loving our enemies, the Lord requires us to be perfect in our love just as God is perfect in His love.

Lesson 8

Observation

Outline

- Avoiding Doing Acts of Righteousness before Men (6:1)
- Giving Alms in Secret (6:2-4)
- Prayer (6:5-15)
 - Prayer in secret (5-6)
 - How we should pray (7-15)
- Fasting in Secret (6:16-18)

Key Words/Phrases

Hypocrites, reward, in secret, I tell you the truth, your Father.

General Analysis

1. Each teaching begins with a warning on what not to do and the reward from men. Then the Lord instructs us to do these deeds in secret so that the heavenly Father who sees in secret may reward us openly.
2. Hypocrites are those who like to do good in public in order to receive men's praise. Their acts are superficial and insincere.
3. What the Lord condemns is the hypocrisy that lies behind the deeds, not the place where the deeds are performed. The Bible teaches us to take every opportunity to do good (Gal 6:10). As long as we do not deliberately display our generosity or piety to receive men's praise, the setting where we perform these good deeds should not determine their value.

Segment Analysis

1. Honoring of God's name; establishment of God's kingdom on earth; daily provision; forgiveness; deliverance.
2. God is not only a king but also a caring father. He is the father of all men (Eph 4:6). As our father, he will give us good gifts when we ask Him in prayer (7:11).
- 3a. Everyone may know God for who He is and honor Him (Ezek 36:23).
- 3b. May everyone submit to God's authority and carry out His will (Rev 11:15-17). This also means the spreading of the gospel of the kingdom to the ends of the earth (24:14; 28:19,20)
- 3c. Asking God to lead us not into temptation does not suggest that God might lead someone to sin, for God does not tempt anyone (Jas 1:13); Looking at the words that follow, "but deliver us from evil," we can

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understand that we need to ask God to not give us over to sin lest we be ensnared by it (Mt 26:41; cf. Rom 1:24; Gal 6:1). The word “temptation” also means “trial that results in fall.” We need to ask the Lord to let us not be tempted beyond what we can bear (1Corinthian 10:13; Lk 21:36).

4. There is a difference between meaningless repetition and persistence in prayer. The Lord Himself made lengthy prayers and repeated Himself in prayer (Lk 6:12; Mt 26:44); He also taught the disciples to always pray and not give up (Lk 18:1). What Jesus wanted to correct was the false assumption that prayer with many words will be heard. A prayer with a sincere and contrite heart means much more to God than one with repetitive words and fancy language (see Lk 18:9-14).
5. The Lord’s instructions have to do with how to pray rather than what to pray (see vs 9). Reciting the Lord’s prayer without understanding what we are praying about would be meaningless. Instead, we ought to make the Lord’s prayer our own and live a life that reflects this attitude.
6. We are to intercede on behalf of everyone (1Tim 2:1). Saints of the past, such as Moses, Samuel, Nehemiah, Daniel, Jeremiah, and Paul were known for their intercessory prayers.
7. Personal or group fasting was done usually as self-humiliation before God, often in connection with repentance (Neh 9:1,2; Ps 35:13; Isa 58:3,5 Dan 9:2-10; 10:2,3; Jon 3:5; Acts 9:9) or as special petition to the Lord (Deut 9:18; Judg 20:26; 2Sam 1:12; 2Chr 20:3; Ezra 8:21-23; Est 4:16; Acts 14:23). Fasting was also done in connection with devotion and service to God (Lk 2:36,37; Acts 13:2,3; Mt 4:1-2). Prayer with fasting, if done with sincerity, is powerful; it can even drive out evil spirits (Mt 17:21).

Lesson 9

Observation

Outline

Storing up Treasure (6:19-24)

Earthly versus heavenly treasures (19-20)

Serving God or money (21-24)

Do Not Worry (6:25-34)

Do not worry about food or clothing (25-30)

Be worry-free but seek God’s kingdom and righteousness (31-34)

Do Not Judge (7:1-6)

We will be judged if we judge (1-2)

Judge ourselves first (3-5)

- Be discerning (6)
- Ask, Seek, Knock (7:7-11)
 - The promise (7-8)
 - The heavenly Father compared to the earthly father (9-11)
- Whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them (12)

Key Words/Phrases

Treasures, heart, eyes, lamp, serve, do not worry, much more, seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, judge, ask, seek, knock, good gifts.

General Analysis

- 1a. The treasures in heaven are secure and incorruptible. Our heart is where our treasure is. If we store up treasures in heaven, our hearts will always be on the things of God rather than on earthly things.
- 1b. If God takes care of the birds and the lilies, how much more will He take care of us? Worrying cannot sustain our lives. It is the unbelievers who worry. Each day has enough trouble of its own.
- 1c. We will be judged in the same way that we judge others. We often have worse shortcomings than the people we judge.
- 1d. God answers our asking, seeking, and knocking. If our earthly father gives us good things, the heavenly Father will all the more give us good gifts if we ask, seek, and knock.
2. Treasures on earth and treasures in heaven; light and darkness; God and mammon; life and food; body and clothes; birds and human beings; lilies and human beings; speck and plank; dogs and sacred things; swine and pearls; bread and stone; fish and serpent; earthly father and heavenly Father.

Segment Analysis

- 1a. Loving and serving mammon means laying up treasures on earth so as to “take life easy, eat, drink, and be merry” (Lk 12:13-21). It means having our minds on earthly things and serving our fleshly desires (Phil 3:18,19).
- 1b. Just as a slave can only serve one master, we can only serve either God or mammon. Either master demands total loyalty. It is not possible to love both because they are conflicting. The materialistic pursuits of this life that comes from our lusts are contrary to the spiritual growth that God has called us to (Gal 5:17). We cannot love one without giving up the other (Rom 8:5-8; Jas 4:2-5).
- 1c. We need to remove the love of money from our hearts and acknowledge God as the owner of our possessions. Not only so, we should not set our

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minds on how to gratify the desires of the flesh (Rom 13:13,14). We need to lead simple lives and not let the material things become our masters.

- 1d. Believe and hold firmly to the gospel, since it is our “treasure” and “pearl” (Mt 13:44-46). Be fruitful in our spiritual lives (2Pet 1:10,11). Be rich in good deeds (1Tim 6:17-19).
2. The eye is an analogy of the inclination of the heart (see Ps 119:36,37). If our hearts are set on the material possessions of this world, we are spiritually blind and lose our direction in life. Our values and goals in life determine whether we are walking in the way that God desires.
3. This command is related to the teaching of storing up treasures in heaven. To seek God’s kingdom means making every effort to enter into God’s kingdom, live by its principles, and spread the good news of the kingdom so that God’s kingdom may come and His will be done on earth. Seeking God’s righteousness involves eagerly obeying God’s will in our lives.
4. Although we ought not judge others, we are to make right judgments about all things (Jn 7:24, 1Cor 2:15). Such spiritual discernment is necessary for the spiritually mature (Heb 5:14). The judgment that the Lord warns against is one that arises out of a hypocritical attitude of condemning others when we are worse than the one we are condemning (Rom 2:17-29).
5. In the Bible, pigs and dogs are unclean animals. They are used figuratively to represent the evil doers and the morally filthy (Prov 26:11; Phil 3:2; Rev 22:15; 2Pet 2:22). The sacred thing and the pearl represent the gospel (13:45,46). The Lord is not teaching us to discriminate against any group of people when we preach, but that we should turn away from those who show contempt for the gospel (10:14; Prov 9:8; Tit 3:10,11).
- 6a. Humbly and sincerely acknowledging our need and God’s sovereignty.
- 6b. Persistently and wholeheartedly searching for God’s will.
- 6c. Earnestly and diligently pleading until we receive God’s favor.
7. We need to ask, seek, and knock so that God’s kingdom and righteousness can be fulfilled in our lives.

Lesson 10

Observation

Outline

Two Ways (7:13-14)

Two Trees (7:15-23)

The hypocrisy of false prophets (15-20)

Mere confession versus doing God's will (21-23)

Two Builders (7:24-27)

The Crowd's Amazement (7:28-29)

Key Words/Phrases

Narrow gate, life, only a few, bearing good fruit, does the will of My Father in heaven, I never knew you, build on the rock, astonished, authority.

General Analysis

- 1a. Narrow/wide gate; small/broad road; destruction/life; many/few; sheep/wolves; grapes/thornbushes; figs/thistles; good/bad; say/do; wise/foolish; rock/sand; did not fall/great was its fall.
- 1b. These contrasts emphasize the truth that there is a definite criterion for entrance into God's kingdom. The contrasts also bring to our attention the drastically different endings of the two types of followers of Christ.
2. It is those who abide by God's will, not those who claim to know God, who are in the kingdom of heaven.

Segment Analysis

- 1a. Verse 14 says that the road that leads to life is difficult. While obeying our desires (the wide gate and broad way) is much easier, following Christ and God's will is often harsh and restrictive (the narrow gate and difficult way). Being in God's kingdom involves suffering for righteousness' sake and enduring persecution (5:10-12,44; 10:16-39; 24:4-13; Acts 14:22).
- 1b. Having found the one true church of salvation, we need to accept the truth and determine to obey God's will all our lives. We must follow Christ regardless of the cost, be it self-denial, persecution, restrictions, or hardships.
2. We can recognize whether a prophet is from God by observing whether he truly practices God's words.
Confessing Christ does not guarantee our place in God's kingdom.
Having divine gifts does not necessarily mean that God is pleased with us.
Doing God's will is of utmost importance.
3. In order to bear good fruits through our good deeds, we need to first be "good trees." This means that we need to examine ourselves spiritually and make sure that we have good motives and are receptive of God's word (Prov 4:23; Mt 12:33-35; 13:23).

Matthew

4. The knowing here is more than mere recognition, but an intimate knowledge of someone. The Bible uses such language to refer to God's closeness to those He loves (Deut 34:10; 1Cor 8:3). By the same token, Christ would also say to those that displease him, "I do not know you" (25:12; Lk 13:25,27).
- 5a. On the surface, these people were zealously serving God, but God was not pleased with them. To God, rebellion and disobedience is as evil as witchcraft and idolatry (1Sam 15:23).
- 5b. While it is important to accomplish much for God, we need to examine ourselves constantly to see if our thoughts, speech, attitude, motive, and deeds are pleasing to God (see 1Cor 9:27; 1Tim 4:16). We cannot use divine gifts as a measure of our standing before God because they are given to accomplish God's work rather than to serve as a sign of a person's closeness with God. Instead of putting our confidence in divine gifts, we must be obedient in every aspect of our lives in order to be acceptable.
6. They could refer to any form of test that may come to a believer, including persecution (13:21), cares of this world, deceitfulness of riches (13:22), and trial from God (1Cor 3:13).
7. An intellectual understanding of God's word without diligence and self-discipline cannot help us in times of trial. Spiritual maturity comes by constant training (Heb 5:14). It is also in living out God's word that we and others around us can experience God's power and blessings (Jas 1:22-25; 2:14-17).
8. The Lord often referred to Himself as the authority behind His teachings with the words "I tell you...." He also calls the heavenly Father "my Father" (7:21). Not only so, He claims that obedience to His words is necessary for entering God's kingdom.

Jesus' words also carried divine power because God was with Him and worked with Him through the Spirit (Lk 4:18; Acts 10:38).

Lesson 11

Observation

Outline

Healing the Man with Leprosy (8:1-4)

Healing the Centurion's Servant (8:5-13)

The centurion's request and faith (5-9)

Jesus' comment on the faith of this gentile (10-12)

Commanding the centurion to go and the instant healing (13)
Healing Peter's Mother-in-Law (8:14-15)
Healing Many Others (8:16-17)
Cost of Discipleship (8:18-22)

Key Words/Phrases

Willing, can, be clean, touched, heal, testimony, go, faith, took up, bore, follow.

Segment Analysis

1. From the parallel records in the other gospels, we can see that Jesus probably wanted to avoid the people's misconception that He was just a miracle-worker and thus affect the more important aspects of His ministry.
2. The key phrase that shows the significance of Jesus' command is "as a testimony to them." The command to show himself to the priest was more than a compliance to the Mosaic regulation, but a direct proof that the Lord's ministry was the fulfillment of the law. Jesus' healing of the man was a testimony that He was the true source of healing and cleansing.
3. He came to Jesus, showing his initiative. He knelt, showing his humility. He acknowledged Jesus' sovereign will and said, "if you are willing." He also trusted in Jesus' power with the words, "you can make me clean."
4. The centurion was a man in authority. But he came and asked Jesus for help. In the process, he acknowledged Jesus' authority and said that Jesus' words would be authoritative in the same way that a centurion's words would have authority over his subjects. Then Jesus commanded, "Go!", which echoed the centurion's own words in verse 9, and the servant was healed.
5. He humbly confessed his need for Jesus' help. He trusted in Jesus' power, that he could heal his servant just with his words. He submitted himself to the Lord's command.
6. We may infer from the Lord's words in verse 10 that the centurion was a gentile. The Lord wanted the people to know that it is not the physical descendants of Abraham who will inherit God's kingdom, but everyone who has faith in Jesus Christ, regardless of their race (Gal 3:26-29).
7. We should repay the Lord's salvation by serving Him (see Lk 8:1-3).
8. Let the spiritually dead (unbelieving sinners) bury the physically dead. The Lord is not abolishing the command to honor our parents, but He sets the matters of God's kingdom above our family ties (10:37; Lk 9:60).

Matthew

9. Our determination to follow the Lord must consist of a readiness to suffer with Jesus. We should not put serving the Lord as second place in our hearts. The Lord's teaching is not telling us to ignore our duties to our parents, since He Himself submitted to and lived with His earthly parents. However, God's kingdom must be the constant and ultimate goal and purpose of every aspect of our lives. When the need arises, God's affair comes before all others.

Lesson 12

Observation

Outline

- Calming the Storm (8:23-27)
- Healing the Two Demon-Possessed Men (8:28-34)
- Healing the Paralytic (9:1-8)
 - "Your sins are forgiven" (1-2)
 - Accusation of the teachers of the law (3)
 - Healing as evidence of forgiveness (4-8)
- Calling of Matthew (9:9-13)
 - Jesus' calling and Matthew's response (9)
 - The Pharisee's accusation and Jesus' rebuttal (10-13)

Key Words/Phrases

You of little faith, rebuked, marveled, who can this be?, go, faith, forgiven, authority, follow, mercy, sinner.

General Analysis

1. He exercised authority over the winds and the waves. He commanded the demons to leave, saying, "Go!" He demonstrated His authority to forgive sins. He identified Himself as the one who calls people to Him and the healer of souls.
3. The teachers of the law objected to Jesus' words of forgiveness because they thought that He, as a man, was not in the position to forgive anyone. The Pharisees objected to Jesus' association with sinners because they thought that Jesus as a teacher and master must be separate from the morally defiled (The word "Pharisee" is derived from the word "separate").

Segment Analysis

- 1b. If we are disciples of the Lord who follow his ways, we have no need to fear in times of trouble because he is with us.

Our Lord is always in control. No problem is ever too great for God, even though the trouble may seem to be “sweeping over” us.

2. They had lost their possessions because of what Jesus did.
3. The value we place on our possessions or personal interests often makes us unwilling to accept the Lord and blinds us from the more valuable things (e.g. the healing of the demon-possessed men). Our self-centeredness can easily come in the way of the Lord’s work and take away the opportunity for us to receive even better blessings.
4. The word blasphemy is related to “slander.” It means speaking evil of God’s name. The teachers of the law expanded the meaning to include misusing the authority that only God has (i.e. forgiveness. See Isa 43:25; 44:22). Thinking that Jesus was only a man, they condemned Jesus for taking God’s place.
5. On the one hand, it would be easier for anyone to say, “your sins are forgiven you,” than “arise and walk,” since the forgiveness of sins is intangible where healing requires tangible result. On the other hand, it is more difficult to say “your sins are forgiven you” than “arise and walk” because while men are allowed to command someone to walk, no man could forgive sins. In either case, the Lord Jesus healed the man as evidence that he truly had the divine authority to forgive sins and that the man’s sins indeed had been forgiven.
6. The Lord seeks those who are willing to come to Him, regardless of their past. God is merciful and likes to see mercy, not just an outward keeping of the law.
7. This language connects Jesus’ healing of sinners to His healing of physical sickness. Jesus’ words made clear His mission—to save God’s people from their sins. The Lord did not come to confirm our righteousness but to awaken us to our need for repentance.
8. The teachers of the law and the Pharisees condemned Jesus’ actions because they used themselves, rather than God’s word, as the standard and judged Jesus accordingly. Their actions were not out of a sincere desire to follow God’s will, and they had become ignorant of what truly pleased God. Their mistake reminds us that while we need to stand up for what is right, we also need to constantly examine ourselves to see if we are still in line with God’s will.

Lesson 13

Observation

Outline

Question about Fasting (9:14-17)

Question from John's disciples and Jesus' answer (14,15)

Incompatibility of the old and the new (16,17)

Raising the Dead Girl and Healing the Woman with Bleeding (9:18-26)

Healing Two Blind Men (9:27-31)

Healing the Mute and Demon-Possessed Man (9:32-34)

Key Words/Phrases

Fast, old, new, came to Him, faith, believe, marveled.

General Analysis

- 1a. He believed without a doubt that Jesus was able to do the impossible.
- 1b. She believed that Jesus was so powerful that even touching His garments would make her well. Her many years of illness did not make her doubt for a moment whether what she hoped for was possible.
- 1c. Before they asked for Jesus' mercy, they had already believed that Jesus was the Messiah. With that knowledge, they called out to the Lord for help. Although Jesus did not heal them right away, they kept following Him into the house.
2. "While He spoke these things to them, behold, a ruler came..." (18).
"And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came..." (20).
"When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him..." (27).
"As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a man, mute and demon-possessed." (32)

Segment Analysis

1. John the Baptist had at one point told his disciples that Jesus was the bridegroom and he was the friend of the bridegroom (Jn 3:29). The coming of the Messiah should be an occasion of joy. It was after the Lord was taken from them that the disciples would fast (Acts 13:3; 14:23).
2. It was not appropriate for the people to try to fit the ministry of Jesus in the old framework of Pharisaic laws. As Jesus stressed in His teachings on the mount, the coming of God's kingdom must be accepted with a

new mind and attitude, not with the rigid and superficial religious observances.

- 3a. We notice that Jesus asked them this question after the men had followed him for a while and finally into the house. Perhaps Jesus' delay in response and His question to them was a test to their faith.
- 3b. Sometimes when our prayers are not answered immediately, the very act of waiting with patience would be a sign of faith in God. In the meantime, we should also examine and strengthen our belief in God's power.
- 4a. As it will become more apparent later on in the Lord's ministry, the Pharisees and other religious leaders considered Jesus' teachings and deeds a threat to their prominent status among the people. While the multitudes marveled at God's power, the Pharisees' eyes were blinded by their jealousy and self-centeredness.
- 4b. When we shift our attention from God's work to our own glory, we easily become biased in our attitude and judgments. Instead of praising God for His deeds and acknowledging the gifts others have received, we would feel threatened. Out of selfish ambition, we may even criticize those whom God has used to carry out His work.
5. From the gospels, we see that the recording of Jesus' healings was to show that He had divine authority and power. Therefore, faith on the part of the person asking for healing or help that Jesus was the Messiah was essential. Without faith in who Jesus is, miracles would become just a spectacle and would not lead people to a saving knowledge of God.
6. Faith means accepting Jesus as Lord and the Anointed One of God. Faith means believing that nothing is too difficult for the Lord. Faith means removing all fear. Faith means submitting to God's will and timing. Faith means humbly asking for mercy.

Lesson 14

Observation

Outline

Setting (9:35-38)

Commission (10:1-15)

Calling the twelve (1-4)

Extent and content of ministry (5-8)

Providence and reception (9-10)

Counsel (10:16-11:1)

Matthew

Being on guard and trusting in the Spirit (16-20)

Endurance (21-23)

Do not fear (24-33)

Supreme loyalty (34-39)

Receiving the one sent by God (40-42)

Conclusion of discourse and continuation of Jesus' ministry (11:1)

Key Words/Phrases

Good news of the kingdom, sheep, compassion, harvest, send, authority, judgment, do not be afraid, love, cross, follow, receive, reward.

General Analysis

- 1a. 10:15, 23, 32, 33, 39, 41, 42
- 1b. God's judgment and the reward of discipleship are not immediate. But knowing what will happen in due time helps us carry out our mission faithfully and stand firm to the end.
2. The Holy Spirit will teach them what to say (10:19-20). Suffering for the gospel will be nothing new (10:24,25). Fear God rather than man because they cannot do anything without the Father's permission (10:28-31). Christ will acknowledge those who acknowledge Him (10:32,33).
3. Compassion (9:36), prudence and innocence (10:16), readiness to suffer, boldness (10:26-31), undivided love for Christ (10:37-39).

Segment Analysis

1. Teaching, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing.
2. Jesus tirelessly preached the gospel and was concerned about the ministry because He had compassion on the people. We need to have a compassionate heart to serve as a driving force behind our ministry.
3. If the harvest was plentiful in Jesus' days, how much more so is today's harvest! Not only so, there is an urgent need of workers in the Lord's ministry. Note that it was to the disciples, who were sent out by the Lord, that the Lord commanded them to pray for more workers. In other words, we should not simply ask the Lord to send other people to work for Him. We ought to constantly pray to the Lord to send *us* out by giving us the authority and power of the Holy Spirit (See Isa 6:8).
4. The Lord was not teaching exclusion of the Samaritans from God's kingdom because He Himself said that the gospel was to reach all nations (24:14; 28:16-20). But it was God's intention that salvation began with the Israelites and eventually encompass the Gentiles (Rom 1:16; Acts 1:8). So the disciple's primary mission at the beginning was to preach to the Jews.

- 5a. “Freely you have received, freely give” (10:8).
- 5b. We should not expect anything in return for our preaching and works of service, since we have received God’s grace without charge.
6. We should not let the accumulation of belongings weigh us down and hamper the ministry (2Tim 2:4). The Lord will provide for His workers through the help of His people (1Cor 9:7-10). The Lord’s command trains God’s workers to lead simple lives and trust God with complete faith (e.g. 1Kgs 17:2-6).
7. Shaking off the dust from the feet was not a gesture of hatred, but a testimony that the people were not worthy of the gospel. Such action served as a warning and freed the preacher from his responsibility (Acts 13:51; 18:6).
8. The disciples would surely face persecutions. These instructions would apply in those situations.
9. They will surely happen and the disciples will suffer as a result (10:17). Such persecution will also be an opportunity to witness for Christ (10:18-20). Persecutions will be widespread, and may even come from the family (10:21-22). We must stand firm to the end (10:22).
10. Since the people the disciples minister to will be as ferocious wolves, the disciples are to be prudent and at the same time innocent. As the Lord teaches in verse 17, we are to be aware of evil doers’ schemes while be free from evil intent or retaliation (e.g. Neh 6:1-14).
- 11a. 24:4-14
- 11b. It is not clear whether the coming of the Son of Man was referring to the Lord’s return or something more immediate. But if it is referring to the last days, then Jesus’ prediction would apply to disciples of all ages. In connection to the theme of persecution in the passage, “the cities of Israel” may be symbolic of the house of Israel, which has always resisted the gospel. If this interpretation is correct, then it means that the church will not be able to thoroughly convert the Israelites before Christ’s return.
- 12a. The disciples will certainly be persecuted in the same way that their master was persecuted. They should not expect anything less.
- 12b. Despite the persecution, the gospel will continue to be spread. The disciples will proclaim what the Lord had taught them to the public.
- 12c. We should fear no one except God alone. People can harm our bodies, but not our soul; even then, our bodies will not be harmed unless it is our Father’s will. So we should entrust ourselves to God because He will always watch over and provide for us.

Matthew

- 12d. We must hold firmly to our confession of Christ as Lord even during severe persecution so that the Lord will also acknowledge and receive us when He comes.
13. In order to uphold their faith, believers of the Lord will be persecuted, even by close relatives (10:21).
14. Our love for the Lord must come before our love for all others. That is what discipleship demands and entails (cf. 8:22). Such dedication to Christ requires self-denial, which is what the cross refers to. But the Lord's disciples, who give up their lives in this age, will inherit eternal life in the coming age (16:24-27; 19:28,29).
15. We must receive those who live by and preach the word of God. This reception is more than showing hospitality. It also includes welcoming and obeying the message that they bring (10:14; 1Thess 5:20). We should not despise God's representatives, even if they seem to be insignificant, because they are sent by God.

Lesson 15

Observation

Outline

- Jesus and John the Baptist (11:2-19)
 - John's question and Jesus' response (2-6)
 - Jesus' testimony to John's ministry (7-15)
 - Unresponsive generation (16-19)
- Woe to the Unrepentant (11:20-24)
- Acceptance of the Weary and Burdened (11:25-30)
 - Revelation of the Father through the Son (25-27)
 - Coming to Jesus and learning from Him (28-30)

Key Words/Phrases

Things which you hear and see, not offended because of Me, prophet, messenger, prepare, kingdom of heaven, the violent take it by force, hear, wisdom, repent, judgment, hide/reveal, wise/babes, Father/Son, yoke/burden, gentle and lowly in heart, rest, easy/light.

General Analysis

1. 6, 14, 15, 16-19, 20-21, 25, 27.
2. Jesus' response to John's question teaches us that miracles serve to strengthen our faith in the Lord. Jesus' rebuke on the unrepentant cities

teaches us that miracles ought to lead us to a change of heart and returning to God (cf. Jn 10:37,38). If we do not accept Christ despite the miracles we have seen, the miracles will become a basis of our judgment.

Segment Analysis

1. See 14:1-5
- 2a. John was perplexed about whether Jesus was actually the one to whom John once testified, “He who is coming after me is mightier than I” (3:11).
- 2b. Read 3:11-12. John had probably anticipated the Christ to bring immediate judgment and blessings. If so, the work of Christ had turned out to be quite different from his expectation.
- 3a. The ministry of healing and preaching speaks for Jesus and shows that He is indeed “the Coming One.”
- 3b. He did not rebuke John or the disciples for lack of faith. He gently pointed them to the right direction so that they may see the answer for themselves.
4. Our Lord is the cornerstone of our faith. But if we reject Him, He becomes to us a stumbling block (1Pet 2:4-8). We cannot be neutral about Jesus’ teachings. We either trust in Him and be saved or reject Him and fall away.
5. He was much more extraordinary than the reeds, and more rugged and powerful than those in the palace. He was more than a prophet. He was the one of whom the prophets spoke of. He was greater than anyone born of women. He was the Elijah. He came, neither eating nor drinking.
- 6a. The ministry of Jesus Christ (establishing the kingdom of heaven) was greater than that of John, even though John was the greatest of all prophets. In the same way, those who accept the gospel are more blessed than even the prophets of the past (13:16,17; 1Pet 1:10-12).
- 6b. There are two possible interpretations to this verse. The first refers to the opposition to the kingdom from the “violent.” Violent men constantly attacked the gospel while it was being spread.

The second interpretation takes on a positive side. Through the powerful ministry of John and Christ, the kingdom of heaven had been “forcefully advancing” (NIV). The message of the kingdom called for new attitudes and actions that require thorough repentance. So only those who are willing to undergo drastic changes (the “violent”) are able to come into God’s kingdom.
7. Jesus is the fulfillment of all the prophecies under the Old Testament up to the time of John (Rom 10:4; Gal 3:24).

Matthew

8. The people of those days did not accept John's preaching of repentance. Neither did they accept the good news of the kingdom. Instead, they charged Jesus with gluttony (cf. 9:10,11). Whether it was John's call to repentance or Jesus' grace of forgiveness, the people remained indifferent.
9. Two interpretations have been offered. First, the wisdom and righteousness of God had been proven by the works of John and Jesus. Second, only those who are humble (true children of wisdom) will accept the message of the kingdom.
10. We need to accept the good news of the kingdom with strong faith (6). We must be humble and be open to the call (14). We must listen (15).
11. They should have repented much more readily because they had seen the deeds of Christ which the pagan cities did not have the privilege to witness. God is just in His judgments (cf. Lk 12:48).
12. We should not take miracles at their face value and think that they are an end in themselves. Miracles should lead to faith in Christ, demonstrated in repentance and change of behavior.
13. The ministry of Jesus was "hidden" to many in that they either did not understand or refused to accept it. But even then, Jesus calls out and welcomes those who are willing to come to Him. God will reveal His will to those who do so.
- 14a. The wise and prudent are those who are wise in their own eyes. The babes are the simple and humble.
- 14b. Humility is necessary for faith in the Lord. God opposes the proud but blesses the humble (Prov 3:34). By revealing His will to the simple, God also manifests His wisdom and glory (1Cor 1:18-25).
15. Jesus is the manifestation of God and is God Himself (Jn 14:9) We can only know and accept God if we accept Jesus Christ (Jn 1:18).
- 16a. They are the "sick" and the "sinners" (9:12,13), those who are poor in spirit, those who mourn, and those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (5:3,4,6). They labor and are heavy laden because they have found themselves spiritually broken and cannot help themselves through their own efforts.
- 16b. We must listen to the voice of Jesus, humbly accept His words, and change ourselves to conform to His will.
- 17a. It is the cross that every follower of Jesus must carry (10:38). It refers to the sufferings that we will go through for His sake.
- 17b. It is easy because it is His yoke. He will always be with us and help us. He will also fulfill God's righteousness in us (19:23-26; Rom 8:3-4).

- 17c. When we take up Jesus' yoke and learn from Him, not only will He put away our burden of sin, He will also help us be at peace with God through our changed behavior and attitude. Conformity to God's way brings rest to our soul.
18. Gentleness leads to submission, and lowliness leads to repentance and obedience. We need to be "babes" who humbly accept and practice God's will.

Lesson 16

Observation

Outline

- Sabbath Conflicts (12:1-14)
 - Picking heads of grain (1-8)
 - Healing a man with a withered hand (9-14)
- Jesus the Chosen Servant (12:15-21)

Key Words/Phrases

Sabbath, lawful, temple, mercy, Lord of the Sabbath, chosen, justice, Gentiles, will not quarrel nor cry out, bruised reed, smoking flax, trust.

Segment Analysis

- 1a. David was not condemned for eating the showbread because of his urgent need. The priests were not condemned because the service in the temple required that they do work on the Sabbath. In the same way, the disciples were innocent because their actions were out of their physical need. The disciples plucked the grains not for their own enjoyment but because of their hunger while following the Lord. So their actions were justifiable.
- 1b. He made the Sabbath and is therefore greater than the Sabbath. As the Lord of the Sabbath He is the one we should honor over and above the Sabbath itself.
2. Nowhere in the passage does it say the Lord had abolished the Sabbath or that He changed it to Sunday. He did not come to destroy the Law or the Prophets but to fulfill it (5:17). New Testament believers must still obey the Ten Commandments (19:17; Lk 23:55,56; 1Cor 7:19; 1Jn 5:2,3; Rev 14:12). The Lord defended the disciples on the basis of "I desire mercy." The issue was not whether to keep the Sabbath but the true spirit of Sabbath-keeping.

Matthew

3. Keeping the Sabbath and doing good works are both required by God's law. The accusers hoped to pose the question as a dilemma so that whichever Jesus' answer might be, they might charge Him with defying God's law.
4. The law is a shadow and finds its full meaning in Christ. We cannot obey the law for its own sake without honoring the Lord Jesus and doing what pleases Him.
God is compassionate. He wants us to show the same compassion when we obey His law. Without mercy, keeping God's law becomes meaningless.
5. We may do work if it is out of immediate necessity or for the sake of the ministry and good deeds.
- 7a. By condemning Jesus, they probably hoped to demonstrate their own righteousness. It was also quite likely that they tried to remove Jesus because of their jealousy (cf. Mk 15:10).
- 7b. Our zeal in keeping God's law may sometimes turn into an opportunity to justify ourselves or to condemn others. We may even become bitter toward those who are truly following God's law. "Keeping the law" to the point of wanting to murder someone has certainly gone too far from God's will. We need to constantly check our motives when carrying out God's commands and remove any self-centered thoughts and attitudes.
9. He was the beloved Son whom God had anointed with His Spirit (3:16,17; 17:5; Lk 4:1,18). His proclamation of God's kingdom would have universal influence. He did not resist evil-doers with violence (1Pet 2:23), but withdrew from His accusers. He was gentle and lowly in heart (11:29). He healed the sick, both physical and spiritual, and was full of compassion for the weak and needy (9:12,13,36).
10. Spreading the truth of God's kingdom may be slow and difficult. But if we do so in a gentle and humble manner and with a desire to please God, the Lord will accomplish His great work. Preaching the truth should not involve violent actions or bitter attitudes. What marks the true servant of God is having the heart of God—a heart of mercy and compassion.

Lesson 17

Observation

Outline

The Healing and the Reaction (12:22-24)

Jesus' Reply (12:25-37)

- The divided kingdom (25-28)
- The strong man's house (29)
- Blasphemy against the Spirit (30-32)
- Nature and fruit (33-37)
- Sign and Judgment (12:38-42)
- Return of the Evil Spirit (12:43-45)
- Doing the Father's Will (12:46-50)

Key Words/Phrases

Son of David, kingdom, divided, bind the strong man, blasphemy against the Spirit, tree/fruit, heart/mouth, good/evil, evil and adulterous generation, justified/condemned, sign, repented, greater than, the will of my Father in heaven.

General Analysis

1. Isaiah's prophecy mentioned that God would put His Spirit on Jesus. In 28 Jesus said that He drove out the demons by the Spirit of God. For this reason, blasphemy against the Spirit cannot be forgiven (32).
Isaiah also prophesied that God would bring His justice to the Gentiles and that in His name the gentiles would trust. In 38-42, Jesus cited the examples of the Ninevites and the Queen of the South, both Gentiles, to warn the wicked generation. "He will not quarrel nor cry out" was also fulfilled in Jesus' refusal to show His accusers a miraculous sign.

Segment Analysis

1. The Pharisees' reaction stemmed from their evil hearts (34,35). Since out of their jealousy they had already been looking for ways to accuse Jesus, this was just another opportunity for them to slander Him. They were blind to the power and grace of God.
- 2a. Jesus could not have cast out the demons by Beelzebub because Satan also knew the importance of unity and would not cast out members of his own kingdom.
- 2b. Pharisee's "sons" might have referred to their disciples or the Jews in general. Some people during that time also tried to cast out demons (Acts 19:13). If Jesus' great power came from the prince of demons, then by whose power did they cast out demons? If they claimed to cast out demons by God's power, then on what basis could they accuse Jesus' power as Satanic?
- 2c. It would take someone stronger than Satan to bind him and release those under his power. That someone is Jesus, who cast out Satan by God's power.

Matthew

3. God's kingdom is marked by the power of God's Spirit (1Cor 4:20). The forces of evil are absent in God's kingdom. So the healing ministry of the Lord Jesus was a demonstration that He had come to establish God's kingdom.
- 4a. They attributed the work of the Holy Spirit to the evil spirit.
- 4b. If anyone slanders Jesus based on Jesus' words alone, he could still repent and receive forgiveness. But if he remains callous and chooses to reject him even though he has seen the power of God's Spirit through the works of Jesus, then there is no forgiveness (cf Heb 10:26).
- 6a. It is greater than that of Satan's and it manifests God's kingdom.
- 6b. Our hearts determine what we do and say, whether good or bad.
- 6c. We will have to give account to God for the words we speak, even those words that we think are insignificant. Our words will either justify or condemn us. Words are so important because they reveal what is in our hearts.
- 7a. 16:1 says that they were asking for a sign from heaven. They wanted Jesus to prove that He was from God. Their demand once again showed their unbelief. The Lord had already demonstrated His divine power in His works, but they still demanded more "proof."
8. God's deliverance of Jonah from the belly of the fish was a sign that he was sent by God. In the same way, the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus would be a sign that He was the Christ.
9. Although they were not of God's chosen race, they responded to God's call. Today, if we as confessed Christians do not make an effort to receive Jesus' words like the Queen of the South and do not repent and change our ways like the men of Nineveh, these people will also rise up on the last day to judge us. Jesus is greater than Jonah and Solomon. If the men of Nineveh and the Queen of the South responded to Jonah and Solomon, how much more should we respond to the word and works of the Lord Jesus in our lives!
- 10a. Jesus compared His generation to the demon-possessed man. Just as the man had been released of demon possession, the people of Jesus' time had also experienced the great healing power of Christ. But if they did not accept the message of Jesus, their end would be much worse than the beginning. This truth also applies to anyone who has received God's grace (Heb 6:4-8).
- 10b. God has delivered us from sin and made us whole. We have also experienced God's grace and healing power. Now we need to accept the gospel message and respond to God's word.
11. Jesus was not speaking in terms of family relationships in this world. Neither did He deny his own earthly family. He regarded spiritual ties

with the believers as far more important than the earthly family. Those who do the will of the heavenly Father by accepting Jesus identify themselves as members of God's household.

Lesson 18

Observation

Outline

The Setting (13:1-2)

Four Kinds of Soil (13:3-9)

Understanding Parables (13:10-17)

Explanation of the Parable of Soils (13:18-23)

Key Words/Phrases

Spoke in parables, good ground, yield, hear, given, mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, seeing, understand.

General Analysis

1. Jesus spoke the first four parables to the multitudes by the sea (1,2). He then sent the multitudes away, went into the house, and spoke the remaining four parables to the disciples (36).
2. The 1st (soils) and 8th (scribe) parables, unlike the other six, did not begin with the words, "the kingdom of heaven is like...." Whereas the first parable is followed by an interlude (10-17), the last parable is preceded by one (51). Both parables are about hearing, understanding and acting on the word. The 2nd (wheat and tares) and the 7th (dragnet) parables are similar in that they both have to do with the final separation of good and evil. The 3rd (mustard seed) and 4th (leaven) parables can be considered as one unit because they parallel each other in their message, and the same is true for the 5th (treasure) and 6th (pearl) parables.

Segment Analysis

2. The gospel of the kingdom meets with various kinds of responses. The same message has no effect on some for one reason or another, while it bears fruit in others. The condition of a person's heart determines whether God's word will have effect on him and whether he is worthy of God's kingdom.
3. Just as a seed takes root in a good soil, God's word takes root in a receptive heart. We need to eagerly receive God's word (1Pet 2:2),

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meditate on it (Ps 119:97), keep it in our hearts (Ps 119:11), and put it into practice (Heb 5:14) so that it becomes an integral part of us.

4. When a person sets his mind on the desires of the flesh and the accumulation of riches, he easily wanders from the faith. Love for the world robs us of our love for God (1Tim 6:9,10; cf. 1Jn 2:15,16; Mt 6:19-24).
5. The fruit that God expects us to yield is having Christ-like characters. When we receive God's word and put it into practice, our conduct and lifestyle will naturally reflect God's divine qualities for the glory of God (Php 1:11; Col 1:6; Gal 5:22,23; Jn 15:8,16,17).
6. Everyone who hears of the message of the gospel must open his hearts to accept it. The Lord's solemn declaration beckons us to pay careful attention and accept the message of the gospel (Heb 2:1-3). We have been blessed with the opportunity to understand the gospel of salvation (Mt 13:16). So we must humbly receive it and act upon it. But those who do not respond to the Lord's beckoning will have no part in God's kingdom (11,13).
- 7a. The mystery is the gospel of salvation of Christ through which Gentiles and Israelites alike become heirs of God's kingdom (1Cor 2:7; Eph 3:6; Col 1:26,27). This message is a mystery because it was hidden for ages and is still hidden from the unbelievers.
- 7b. The mysteries are made known to believers (Col 1:26,27). In order for us to understand the word of the kingdom, we need God's choosing and revelation (Jn 6:65; 1Cor 2:10-11). But on our part, we need to have a sincere and humble heart in order to understand (Mt 11:25,26).
- 8a. Parables can illustrate spiritual things in a way that plain language cannot. Besides, the Lord Jesus used parables because some people chose to reject His message. The parables will mean nothing to them because of their calloused hearts. But for the believers, the parables served to reveal the mysteries of the kingdom (35). This is what it means when Jesus said, "For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him" (12). The use of parables does just that.
- 8b. God does not intend to exclude anyone from understanding the truth (1Tim 2:4). God's action of hardening is a result, not the cause, of people's rejection (Rom 1:18-28; Mt 11:20-26).
9. Understanding and agreeing with God's word on a superficial level without changing our hearts and our ways (Isa 29:13; Jer 32:33; Mt 21:28-30). Arrogance and self-conceit (Rev 3:17).
10. The prophets and righteous men of the past spoke about and tried to understand this message of salvation, and even angels longed to look

into these things (1Pet 1:10-12). But today we have understood and received this salvation, and it is indeed a great blessing (Eph 1:3-10).

Lesson 19

Observation

Outline

- Wheat and Tares (13:24-30)
- Mustard Seed (13:31-32)
- Leaven (13:33)
- Change of Setting (13:34-36)
- Explanation of Wheat and Tares (13:37-43)
- Hidden Treasure (13:44)
- Pearl of Great Price (13:45-46)
- Dragnet (13:47-50)
- Understanding the Parables (13:51)
- Householder (13:52)
- Conclusion (13:53)

Key Words/Phrases

Kingdom of heaven, wheat, tares, gather, mustard seed, leaven, righteous, hear, treasure, hidden, found, sells/buys, pearl of great price, dragnet, good/bad, householder, new and old.

Segment Analysis

1. The Son of Man, our Lord Jesus (37). He sowed the seed by coming to this world to preach the message of the kingdom and to lay down His life so we may be heirs of the kingdom (cf. Eph 2:11-19).
2. As seeds, the tares look the same as the wheat, but when they sprout and produce a crop, the difference shows. In the same way, although every professed Christian confesses Christ at his conversion, the life and conduct of the Christian is what marks him as a true believer (1Jn 2:3-6; Mt 7:15-27).
3. God does not mete out punishment because even the righteous can hardly withstand an immediate judgment (1Pet 4:18). God waits until the sin of the wicked reaches its full measure (cf. Gen 15:16). While God allows evil to remain in the world, it does not mean that judgment will not come on the wicked.

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4. It is God's exercise of His authority through the words and saving works of the Lord Jesus Christ (12:28). While the gospel of Jesus Christ spreads in the world, evil will still reside in the world, either in the form of outright rejection of the gospel or wicked deeds. But Christ will not judge those who reject Him and the evildoers until the time of the final separation (Jn 12:47,48).
5. Evil should not exist in the assembly of believers, although it does exist in the world (the field represents the world), as Paul makes clear in 1Cor 5:10. Although God does not bring about immediate judgment to those outside the church, wicked doers in the Christian community who claim to be believers must be ostracized in order to preserve the purity of the church (2Jn 9-11; Mt 18:15-17).
- 6a. If we carry forward the Lord's own interpretation from the previous parable, the birds would represent the wicked one (19; cf. Rev 18:2).
- 6b. In most cases, the Bible uses leaven as a symbol of sin, wickedness, or false teachings (Mt 16:6-12; Mk 8:15; 1Cor 5:6-8; Gal 5:9; Ex 12:15).
7. Like the mustard seed, the kingdom of heaven seems small and insignificant at the start. But it will become much more visible and seemingly large. Ironically, hidden in the appearance of expansion is the ever-present work of Satan.
8. Many expected that God's kingdom would come mightily and visibly, and that it will only come at the end of the age. But the Lord told them that the kingdom of heaven had already come, even though it had a humble appearance and wickedness still persisted. The final judgment and removal of evil will take place at the end of the age.
9. Parables serve to reveal what is hidden. Taken with 13-15, we learn that parables have a dual function of revealing and concealing. God's mysteries (gospel of salvation) are revealed to the humble but concealed to the hard-hearted (12; 11:25).
- 10a. It is worth far more than everything we own or can be proud of.
- 10b. Instead of holding on to our possessions, be they wealth, fame, or accomplishments, we must be willing to devote ourselves and everything we have to the Lord in order to receive the kingdom of heaven. This is not to say that we can earn salvation, but that every moment of our lives and everything we own should be used solely for living for Christ rather than for our own enjoyment or pride (Php 3:4-9).
11. In both parables, the good and the bad were allowed to coexist for the time being. But at the end comes the separation, when the wicked will be thrown into the furnace of fire and the righteous received into the kingdom.

- 12a. Teachers who have been “instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven.” In other words, those who have accepted the message and become Christ’s follower.
- 12a. A scribe who does not accept Jesus as Lord can only teach people about the old, i.e. the works of the law. But someone who believes in Christ is able to understand and bring out the full meaning of God’s law because Christ is the fulfillment of the law (Gal 3:23,24; Mt 5:17). As believers who have been instructed about the kingdom of heaven, it is our responsibility to preach the message of salvation and teach others to obey what Christ has commanded (Mt 28:18-20).

Lesson 20

Observation

Outline

- Rejected by His Own People (13:54-58)
- Herod’s Understanding of Jesus (14:1-2)
- Death of John the Baptist (14:3-12)
 - Imprisoning John and intention to kill him (3-5)
 - John beheaded by the request of Herodias’ daughter (6-11)
 - Burial of John’s body and report to Jesus (12)

Key Words/Phrases

His own, astonished, wisdom, mighty works, offended, feared.

Segment Analysis

- 1a. They only looked at Jesus’ humble origin and common background. They thought they knew Jesus, but they didn’t truly know Him. Instead of believing Jesus because of His wisdom and great power, they were blinded by their false expectation that a true prophet must come from an extraordinary background (cf. 11:1-6).
- 1c. Sometimes we take pride in the fact that we are zealous Christians, and that we know the Bible all too well and are close to the Lord. We may think that we have heard it all and seen it all. In our presumption, we may not pay as much attention to the admonitions and teachings of the Bible or have the eager desire to know him more (cf. Eph 1:17).
- 2a. They did not believe him to be the Messiah nor honor him as Lord.
- 2b. It would be of little value for the Lord to work in those who do not believe in him. All of God’s works, including miracles, become only

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spectacles if we do not receive them with faith. Miracles and signs help to strengthen our faith, but it is true faith in the Lord that saves. See Lesson 13, question 5.

3. He was probably in great fear. Perhaps he was afraid of retaliation or potential woe that might befall him because of his sinful act.
- 4a. He was a timid man. He always cared about what others think of him and tried to please everyone (3,5,9). He was also afraid to change himself even though he knew what he did was wrong.
- 4b. To overcome the weakness of trying to please everyone even when we know that doing so would involve a wrongful act, we must first realize that we have to ultimately answer to God, not to men (1Cor 4:3-5).
- 5a. Herod was living in sin. Instead of repenting and changing his ways, he and Herodias wanted to kill John so as to remove their feeling of guilt.
- 5b. People hate the light because their deeds are evil (Jn 3:19,20). Many people today refuse to come to Christ not because they do not understand the truth, but that they are unwilling to acknowledge their sin and leave their lives of sin.
6. In his pleasure, he made a hasty promise which he later regretted. Too much pleasure can take away our sobriety and make us unfit to make wise judgments (Prov 31:3,4; Eph 5:18; Lk 21:34). We must also be careful not to make vows too hastily or speak proud words when things are smooth; we may regret the consequences.
7. John the Baptist suffered and died for righteousness' sake (cf. 5:11,12). He was a man of courage who pointed out the wrongs of Herod even though he knew that Herod was a cruel ruler. As we preach the truth for Christ, we will often offend those who live in sin. But for the sake of accomplishing God's will and out of our love for others, we must continue to stand up against wickedness and speak for the Lord.

Lesson 21

Observation

Outline

Feeding the Multitudes (14:13-21)

Walking on Water (14:22-32)

Healing in Gennesaret (14:34-36)

Key Words/Phrases

By Himself, moved with compassion, looked up to heaven, faith, Son of God.

Segment Analysis

1. We know that Herod later on intended to kill Jesus (Lk 13:31). So it is quite possible that Jesus wanted to avoid Herod, having heard what Herod thought of Him (see Mt 14:1,2).
- 2a. These crowds followed Jesus on foot from the cities into this deserted place (13). Jesus was moved by the large number of people who were in great spiritual need and seeking healing (Mk 6:34).
- 2b. All that the Lord did for the multitudes, be it healing or preaching, came from a heart of compassion for the people, not an egotistic display of power or wisdom.
3. He probably wanted the disciples to realize their responsibility of ministering to the people (9:36-10:1). But feeding the great multitude was an impossible task. So the Lord might have also wanted to train them to turn to the Lord as their source of power when ministering to the people.
- 4a. Our Lord Jesus, who is full of compassion for us, is able to supply us with what we need even though our resources are limited. He will also enable us to provide for the needs of others (2Cor 9:10,11; Php 4:19).
5. “The actions—looking up to heaven, thanking God, and breaking the loaves—are normal for any head of a Jewish household” ^{6/342}. Here the Lord acted as the head of the household distributing food to his family. His action is also an acknowledgment of and an expression of thanks to the heavenly Father for His provisions.
- 6a. Jesus’ miracle was so great that the people wanted to make Him king by force (Jn 6:14,15). Such uproar would hinder His ministry and possibly get attention from the authorities. He wanted to be alone and pray (Mt 14:13,23; Mk 6:31). The disciples, who had set their hearts on being the greatest (Mk 9:34), may have lingered behind since their popularity at this point afforded an opportunity to become great.
- 6b. When we have accomplished something for God, we should withdraw from the crowd. Move on to the next task and do not linger in the past accomplishment.
7. The Bible does not mention the exact purpose of Jesus’ prayer. But in the midst of rising opposition as well as popularity, and in view of the work He had yet to do, Jesus withdrew Himself and prayed alone. He did so probably to stay in touch with God, be focused on His mission, and receive strength from above (cf. Lk 22:43).

The gospels on occasion record that the Lord would pray alone in a quiet place (Lk 6:12; 5:16, 9:18; Mt 26:36). It is not surprising because He Himself taught us to pray in our inner room rather than in public (Mt

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- 6:5,6). By praying alone, He could seek the Father's will and receive power to carry out His work.
8. We can see the struggle and panic of the disciples, including Peter's (24, 26, 30), in contrast to the Lord's calmness and power (25, 27, 32).
 9. His ability to walk on water in the midst of great waves demonstrated His authority over nature. He calmed the fears of the disciples (27). He commanded Peter, "come." He had power over the wind (32).
 - 10a. Peter often acted as the spokesman for the disciples and was quick to speak and act (e.g. Mt 16:16; 26:33; Mk 11:21; Jn 13:8,9; 18:10). In this story, his urge to go to Jesus was probably prompted by a sudden courage when he saw that it was the Lord and that the master was able to walk on water.
 - 10b. When he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid (30). When we look away from the power of God's promise and look instead at the overwhelming circumstances, we also lose courage and sink into despair. Faith means not doubting but trusting that the Lord will take care of us as He has promised.
 11.
 1. He does not linger to savor His past accomplishments but moves on.
 2. He is quick to encourage us and put our hearts to rest when we are afraid, and He does so gently.
 3. He is quick to deliver us when we cry out to Him in our trouble (Ps 34:17,18).
 12. This is the climax of the story. The Lord Jesus demonstrated that He was the Lord of heaven and earth and the Messiah. So the disciples came to Him, worshiped Him, and confessed His lordship. This should also be our response when we experience the work of Christ in our lives.
 - 13a. He reached out to all people by travelling from one place to another. He was accessible to the multitudes. He was the Great Physician.
 - 13b. It is our duty to bring all the people around us to Christ so that they may be saved. The people of Gennesaret also showed their humble faith by asking to only touch the hem of the Lord's garment. They were all made well because of their faith. We need to have the faith that if it is His will, God can help us even through the simplest means (cf. 8:8).

Lesson 22

Observation

Outline

Confrontation with the Scribes and Pharisees (15:1-9)

Teachings to the Multitudes on Defilement (15:10-11)

The Pharisee's Reaction and Jesus' Comment about Them (15:12-14)

Further Explanation on the Teachings to the Multitude (15:15-20)

Key Words/Phrases

Transgress, tradition, commandment of God, hypocrites, worship, heart, mouth, defile.

Segment Analysis

1. The confrontation with these religious leaders from Jerusalem anticipates the opposition from the religious establishment that will culminate in Jerusalem.
- 2a. They substituted God's commandments with rules made by men. By using gifts to God as an excuse for not honoring parents, they seemed to be devout but had actually done away with God's command.
- 2b. Condoning or endorsing homosexuality in the name of Christian love.
3. Despite the good intentions behind them, these traditions placed more emphasis on the outward observance than the meaning of God's commandments. These rules of men often misinterpreted and contradicted God's word (e.g. forbidding to heal on the Sabbath). As a result, many people used them as excuses to get away with not keeping God's word.
4. The passage does not condemn traditions in general. But the keeping of traditions becomes dangerous when the traditions become unbreakable rules to abide by or when they take the place of God's commandments. Observing religious traditions, including rules related to our conduct or worship, always poses a potential danger of hypocrisy and may fool us into thinking that we are close to God when in fact our hearts are far from Him. What is worst is when the traditions themselves are wrong (e.g. 5-6); if we observe them, we become breakers of God law.
- 5a. These worshippers did not have the desire to obey God and thought that God would be pleased with just superficial observance. Teaching and obeying the commands of men could also be an opportunity to receive men's praise (6:1,2,5,16). All of these intentions show disrespect for God.
- 5b. We may sometimes fool ourselves thinking that attending church service regularly guarantees a close relationship with God when we do not live to please God in our daily lives. Sometimes worldly values such as materialism, self-centeredness, or pleasure, may become the standards by which we think, behave or judge others by. They may surface among us even though we seem to be worshipping God (e.g. Jas 2:1-4; 1Cor 11:17-21).

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- 5c. Mouth and lips vs. heart. What God looks for in us is sincerity of heart and a genuine desire to obey God in our lives (Jn 4:24; Ps 51:16,17; Mic 6:6-8).
6. Jesus did not hesitate to point out their wrong. They were offended because they took pride in their position as teachers and in their traditions. Their offense all the more betrays their guilt because their reaction shows that Jesus had touched their sore spot (hypocrisy).
7. Whatever is not from the will of the heavenly Father cannot stand (Acts 5:38). The enemies of Christ, who were not of God but of the devil, were doomed for destruction, even though their opposition was strong.
8. They were spiritually blind in the sense that they could not see their spiritual poverty and distance from God. Even so, they still played the role as religious teachers, guiding people into the wrong path (23:15).
9. The Pharisees placed emphasis on what goes into the mouth (ceremonial washing before meals), which cannot defile men at all. In other words, ceremonial washing has no effect on spiritual cleanliness.
- 10a. Defilement of the heart, which leads to sinful acts (19).
- 10b. In keeping the traditions of the elders, the scribes and Pharisees had overlooked the necessity of inner cleanliness. In fact, their practice of religious traditions had become a facade that covered up their pride, jealousy, and anger. They cannot see such defilement in themselves because they have been blinded by the traditions.
11. We must always keep a “pure heart, good conscience and a sincere faith” (1Tim 1:5; Mt 5:8). Instead of deceiving ourselves with some outward observance, we should constantly be aware of our spiritual conditions and see if we are obeying God’s commandments from the heart.

Lesson 23

Observation

Outline

- More Healings (15:21-31)
 - The Canaanite Woman’s Daughter (21-28)
 - Great Multitudes (29-31)
- Feeding the Multitudes (15:32-39)

Key Words/Phrases

Mercy, Son of David, came, worshiped, great is your faith, marveled, glorified the God of Israel, all ate and were filled.

Segment Analysis

- 1a. The Lord's words in 24 indicate that His earthly mission was focused mainly on the chosen people of God to whom the promise of the Messiah had been given. Jesus did not intend to exclude the Gentiles in His salvation works because He Himself said that the gospel was to reach all nations (24:14; 28:16-20). But it was God's intention that salvation began with the Israelites and eventually encompass the Gentiles (Rom 1:16; Jn 4:22; Acts 1:8).
- 1b. It gives us a glimpse into the future, when salvation will also come to the Gentiles through faith (cf Rom 3:28-30; 10:11-13).
2. The Lord's words served as a test to the Canaanite woman, to see whether she was sincere in asking for mercy.
- 3a. They were probably becoming annoyed and impatient with the woman's unceasing cries. Perhaps they were more concerned for themselves than for the woman's desperate needs.
- 4a. She acknowledged Jesus' lordship by calling Him "Lord, Son of David" and by worshiping Him. She was persistent. She was humble.
5. Time and again in the gospels, the Lord Jesus cited examples of great faith on the part of the Gentiles as a basis of judgment on the chosen people for their unbelief (8:10-12; 11:20-24; Lk 4:24-27). In this example, the Lord withdrew to this pagan territory after He faced the oppositions from the scribes and Pharisees. In great contrast to the unbelieving scribes and Pharisees was the great faith of this Canaanite woman, who humbled herself to beg for mercy despite the Lord's harsh words. So it was not without reason that the Lord seemed to be difficult with this Gentile woman. What He did added to the sharp contrast between the unbeliever and the true believer, and all the more justified God's action of saving the Gentiles.
6. The woman first agreed that she was outside the covenant of God and did not deserve to have God's grace. She even acknowledged that she was like the "little dogs," a very disparaging remark indeed. When we ask for God's mercy, we need to acknowledge that we are not worthy, and that we do not deserve to receive anything from God. We only look to God to have compassion on us, knowing that His love is so great that His grace overflows and comes even to the undeserving (cf Ps 123:2).
7. We can see that through the Canaanite woman's faith on behalf of her daughter, the Lord answered the woman's request. It would be wrong, therefore, to deny the effect of infant baptism on the basis that infants' sins cannot be forgiven until they have the ability to confess their faith.
8. The healings of the Lord showed that He was the promised Messiah (Isa 35:3-6). Notice how the Lord's presence drew great multitudes to

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Himself. He was truly the King and Shepherd of Israel who would have great compassion and provide for the needs of His people.

9. The miracles of the Lord Jesus were the very deeds of God. He was indeed sent by God to bring salvation to His people, just as God had promised in His covenants to the Israelites. The people praised the God of Israel because Jesus had shown them that God did not forget His people but was still gracious to them (Lk 1:68-75).
10. Both miracles were the result of the Lord's compassion on the people. Unlike the miracle in chapter 14, where the disciples came and requested that the multitudes be sent away, here the Lord initiated in taking care of the people.
- 11a. As in the feeding of the five thousand, the disciples lacked the trust that the Lord would be able to do the impossible.
- 11b. The disciples had forgotten the great miracle that the Lord had performed not so long ago. Likewise, we are often forgetful of all the wonderful things God has done for us in the past. When we face difficulties, we doubt and give up hope. So we need to constantly count God's blessings in our lives, appreciating and storing in our hearts all of God's grace in its abundance (just like counting the large baskets of leftovers). Then our faith will be strengthened each time we experience God's mercy and love.

Lesson 24

Observation

Outline

Demand for A Sign (16:1-4)

Be Aware of the Leaven of Pharisees and Sadducees (16:5-12)

Peter's Confession of Christ (16:13-20)

First Prediction about Suffering, Death, and Resurrection (16:21-23)

Following Christ (16:24-28)

Key Words/Phrases

Sign, leaven of Pharisees and Sadducees, Christ, Son of the living God, church, rock, bind/loose, kingdom, mindful of the things of God, deny, take up his cross, follow me, gain/loss.

General Analysis

1. The Lord did not say much in response to the Pharisees and Sadducees because He knew of their evil intent. He called them "hypocrites." On

the other hand, although the Lord rebuked the disciples for their lack of faith, He still patiently dealt with their dullness and explained to them until they finally understood His teaching. This was because the disciples, though slow in learning, were not hard-hearted like the Pharisees and Sadducees. They were genuine followers of Christ to whom God has chosen to reveal His will (17).

- 2a. Both passages are about the identity of Jesus. The Pharisees and Sadducees wanted proof that Jesus was indeed from God. But Jesus refused to meet their demands. On the contrary, Jesus revealed his identity to the disciples plainly and foretold of his sufferings and glory.
We also see a contrast between the two passages. The first has to do with opposition in Jewish territory, whereas the second, which records Peter's confession, took place in Gentile territory. There is once again the hint that the Christ was rejected by his own people.
- 2b. 13-20 is about Jesus' identity. 21-28 is about Jesus' mission and the way of discipleship. As disciples of Christ, we need to truly know our Lord and what He came to do. Only then can we follow in His footsteps of suffering and ultimate glory.

Segment Analysis

- 1a. Their demand was a sign of their unbelief. Jesus had already shown that He was the Son of God through His works. But with their callous hearts, they wanted to put the burden of proof on Jesus. They thought that Jesus owed it to them to "prove" Himself, or else they would not believe Him.
- 1b. Sometimes we want God to "prove beyond a reasonable doubt" what He has already commanded in the Bible or has shown to us clearly (E.g. Balaam, Num 22). The reason for such demand is simply our reluctance to obey His word. But we have no right to ask God to show us a sign so as to convince us to believe and obey His words. Miracles and signs are meaningless and ineffective to those who do not believe (Lk 16:27-31).
- 2a. They refer to the works that Christ had done, which marked the time of the coming of God's kingdom.
- 2b. See 12:39-41, and Lesson 17, question 8.
3. In the Old Testament, God called Israel an adulteress people because they had forsaken God and gone after other gods. Likewise, the people of Jesus' time rejected Christ and persisted in their unbelief and sin.
4. The teachings of Pharisees and Sadducees refer to their unbelieving attitude and their demand for signs (1Cor 1:22).
5. They bring subtle influence on people who are not aware.
6. The disciples had little faith in the sense that they still did not trust the power of Jesus even after the two miracles of feeding the multitude.

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They were concerned with food when Jesus was speaking of something much more important than bread.

- 7a. The first was about people's understanding of Him, and the second is about the disciples' understanding of Him.
- 7b. Knowledge of who Jesus is is necessary for the followers of Christ so that they would not follow Him for the wrong reasons. This knowledge must also be a personal one so that the believer will remain true to the Lord without being affected by popular opinion.
8. He is the Messiah, the anointed of God (Acts 4:26-27). He is God who has become flesh (Jn 1:14; Heb 5:4-6).
- 9a. The Bible tells us that Jesus Christ is the foundation and cornerstone (1Cor 3:11; 1Pet 2:4-6). But Ephesians also says, "having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone" (Eph 2:20). There is no contradiction between the two. It is Christ who chose the apostles and built His church with the authority He has given them and the teachings He has entrusted to them (19). Peter, whose name means "rock," was chosen to represent the apostles and foundation of the church. But this does not mean that Peter was infallible or higher than the other believers, or that believers should build their faith on Him. The apostles were simply servants sent by God to build up the church (1Cor 3:9-11).
- 9b. The word "church" is derived from the Greek word for "call out from." The church is the assembly of God's people purchased by Christ's blood (Acts 20:28; Rev 5:9).
- 9c. "Gates" is symbolic of power, referring to fortifications (Gen 22:17; Ps 127:5). "Gates of Hades" means the power of death (Job 17:16; 38:17; Ps 9:13; 107:18; Isa 38:10). The church, purchased by Christ's blood, is victorious over everlasting death and will never be destroyed because Christ has overcome death (1Cor 15:55-57).
10. The keys of the kingdom refers to the gospel of salvation. By God's revelation, the apostles were given the keys to God's kingdom (cf. Lk 11:52). Christ has also given the authority to bind and loose, which has to do with retaining and forgiveness of sins (Jn 20:22,23). When the church preaches the gospel of the kingdom, those who obey the gospel will be loosed from the dominion of Satan (Acts 26:18). But for those who do not accept the message, their sins will remain (see Acts 18:6).
11. People at that time had a false expectation of what the Messiah would be. Jesus wanted the people to come to believe Him not because they expected Him to be a national hero, but through belief, repentance, and obedience. It is God's will that at this point in Jesus' ministry, Christ's identity be revealed only to the humble and faithful and not to the unbelieving and callous (11:25; 13:11-15). The disciples would proclaim

Christ only after the resurrection (17:9). Another possible reason is that widespread proclamation of his Messiahship might bring about intense opposition prematurely.

12. Jesus considered any hindrance to the will of the Father the work of Satan (4:8-10). Although Peter might have meant well, he had become a stumbling block. He spoke and acted according to the will of men rather than the will of God. Satan often uses the desires and thinking of men to obstruct God's work.
- 13a. Giving up of one's will and desires.
- 13b. The man condemned to crucifixion would be forced to take up his cross. This command means being ready to go through suffering and death for Christ. It involves putting to death the sinful nature (Rom 8:13; Gal 5:24; 6:14).
- 13c. Following the footsteps of Christ, doing what He would do (1Pet 2:21; Jn 12:26; 1Cor 11:1; 1Jn 2:6).
- 13d. The first "life" refers to things of the world, i.e. walking according to our desires (1Jn 2:15-17). The second "life" refers to spiritual, or eternal, life and the glory that we will receive (26,27). We cannot have eternal life unless we deny our own will and follow the will of God in our lives.
15. Out of many interpretations that have been offered, two are most plausible. The first interpretation states that the coming of the Son of Man in His kingdom refers to the transfiguration, which would take place six days after its prediction (17:1ff). During the transfiguration, the disciples witnessed Christ in His glory, and the subject of Christ's conversation with Moses and Elijah was the glory that will be achieved through suffering (Lk 9:31). The second interpretation, which is linked to the first, believes this prediction to be referring to the mighty work of the Holy Spirit in the church after Jesus' ascension. Christ exercised great authority in His church through powerful preaching, large numbers of conversions, and signs and miracles.

Lesson 25

Observation

Outline

The Transfiguration (17:1-8)

John the Baptist as Elijah (17:9-13)

Healing the Epileptic Child (17:14-21)

Second Prediction of Death and Resurrection (17:22-23)

Matthew

Temple Tax from A Fish (17:24-27)

Key Words/Phrases

Transfigured, beloved Son, hear Him, Jesus only, Elijah, faith, prayer and fasting.

Segment Analysis

1. Peter, James, and John. These three were the Lord's closest disciples, whom Jesus also brought along to the house of Jairus (Lk 8:51) and into Gethsemane (Mk 14:33). It is most likely that the Lord chose these three to be his closest company and to give them special training because they will be crucial witnesses and workers in the apostolic church after the Lord's resurrection.
2. Their appearance tells us who Jesus was. Both were great prophets and mighty workers in the Old Testament. Moses represented the Law and Elijah the Prophets, both of which Jesus fulfilled (Mt 5:17; 11:12-13). The transfiguration teaches us that Jesus, being greater than Moses and Elijah, was the one all the prophets had been waiting for.
3. He did not understand that it was the Lord Jesus that they must look to and "hear" (5,8). The appearance of Moses and Elijah was only to confirm that Jesus was the Christ and the beloved Son of God. Peter's desire to remain on the mountain was also out of place because the Lord did not intend to stay on the mountain. He had to continue His mission and suffer in order to achieve glory. Likewise, the disciples must also suffer for the kingdom before they could receive the glory in the future.
4. He is the beloved Son of God, who came to do the will of the Father. The Lord's ministry and ultimate sacrifice were truly pleasing to God (Jn 8:29; Heb 10:5-10). The words also recall Moses' prophecy about the Messiah (Deut 18:15). The Lord Jesus was sent from God; His words are the words of God. We will not escape if we ignore His solemn message (Heb 2:3-4). But if we hear His voice and obey Him, we will have life.
- 5a.
 - 1) To give the disciples a preview of the Son of Man in glory so that they know for certain that the followers of Christ will receive reward on that day (16:27). The experience had left a deep impression on the three apostles. Peter could still recall this experience in his old age when he witnessed to the believers about the coming of the Lord (2Pet 1:16-18).
 - 2) To confirm that Jesus was the Christ whom the prophets of the past had spoken about.
- 5b. As great and powerful as Moses and Elijah were, they were servants of Christ. Peter was reminded by the voice to look to the beloved Son, not the passing appearance of Moses and Elijah. Likewise, we must fix our

eyes on the Lord Jesus alone. All workers of God, however gifted they may be, are only to help us build up our faith in Jesus.

Furthermore, the disciples' glimpse into glory had to end and they must move on. Likewise, we cannot expect to always remain in temporary phenomena, such as seeing miracles, powerful preaching, or excitement during convocations. We must seek to be close to the Lord and follow Him to the end even when the future glory seems to be nowhere in sight.

- 6a. See Mal 4:5,6.
- 6b. He came in the spirit and power of Elijah, preaching repentance and turning people's hearts to the Lord (Lk 1:15-16).
7. He was disappointed and saddened by the unbelief of the people, including the disciples (cf. Mk 9:23).
8. With faith in the Lord, nothing is impossible.
9. Prayer and fasting demonstrate a person's faith in the Lord. It is an act of humility through which we entrust our requests to God (cf. Acts 14:23; Php 4:6).
10. Although sorrow would be a natural response, the disciples' reaction also shows that they still could not fully understand the necessity and significance of the suffering and death that the Lord must go through. They also did not know that the Lord would resurrect to bring salvation and life (Mk 9:10).
11. Just as the sons of earthly Kings are exempt from civil tax, the Lord, who is the Son of God, was exempt from the tax that God required from His people. The Lord's words implied that He is the King of kings, to whom belong all things.

As for the disciples' exemption from the temple tax, what the Lord said had another level of significance. The disciples were free from the obligations to the historical temple, because they were with one who was greater than the temple (12:5-8). But here the Lord is not teaching that we don't need to give offerings to God, for He Himself commanded giving to God what is God's (22:21). His comments were for the sake of emphasizing the fact that He was the Son and the Messiah.

12. Although the Lord Jesus was free from the obligation of the temple tax as required by the law, He still humbly submitted to the obligation since there was no need to raise any conflict over such issue. Likewise, we ought to control our freedom so as not to cause unnecessary offense in others, i.e. becoming a stumbling block (cf. 1Cor 8:9). Where concession does not violate God's commands, we should humble ourselves for others' sake.

Lesson 26

Observation

Outline

Being Like and Caring for the Little Ones (18:1-14)

 Becoming as Little Children (1-4)

 Not Offending the Little Ones (5-9)

 Not Despising the Little Ones (10-14)

A Brother Who Has Sinned (18:15-20)

Forgiving Our Brothers (18:21-35)

Key Words/Phrases

Greatest, kingdom of heaven, little children, humble, in My name, sin, offenses, brother, agree, seventy times seven.

General Analysis

1. Humility (4); Love for those who seem insignificant (5,6,10); Restoring those who sin (15); Forgiveness toward the offender (22,35). Taken as a whole, the Lord's discourse removes all notions of greatness in the worldly sense. Being great in God's kingdom requires humbling ourselves and denying any sense of pride over others (20:26,27).
2. 5, 6, 10-14.
3. The little ones in this passage refer to our brothers in Christ. We receive them, care for them, respect them, and forgive them for the sake of Christ because they are also members of Christ' body (5) and are cared for by the heavenly Father (10,14). When we show our love and concern to them, we do so directly on Christ (25:40).

Segment Analysis

1. They were comparing among themselves and wanted to be the greatest of all Jesus' followers. They wanted to have power and be served like the rulers of the world (cf Mk 9:33,34; Mt 20:25-28). But such earthly desire has no place in God's kingdom, whose citizens serve one another rather than rule over others.
2. Their humility (4), simplicity (11:25), and innocence (1Cor 14:20).
3. Humility. Just as it takes humility to become like little children and acknowledge our inadequacies, it also takes humble self-denial to receive someone who seems insignificant.

- 4a. When we cause a brother to stumble, we are doing the very thing that God is not pleased with (14) and we sin against Christ (1Cor 8:11,12). See also General Analysis, Question 3.
- 4b. Such offenses must come because the world is evil and is under the control of the evil one (“world” refers also to its evil desires; see 1Jn 2:15-17; 5:19). But it is a person’s choice that makes him a stumbling block and instrument of evil. So he would be responsible for the offense.
5. Since the sin of causing someone to stumble is so serious that it is punishable by everlasting fire, we must do everything it takes to avoid being a stumbling block. If we know that we have certain desires or weaknesses in us that would lead us to sin, we must deny ourselves of such desires and eradicate them, even if doing so causes much pain.
- 6a. Our brothers who have strayed and become lost spiritually.
- 6b. He takes care of the weak and does not give up. He cherishes every soul and would do everything to restore it from perishing. He rejoices when a lost one returns to Him.
7. Since our heavenly Father cherishes every soul, we should also do the same and do our best to restore the brother who has sinned.
- 8a. Verses 15-17.
- 8b. Restoring our brother with gentleness, patience, and love (cf. Gal 6:1; Jas 5:19,20).
9. From the context, we understand the word “you” as in “sins against you” to refer to the collective body of believers. Some manuscripts reads “if your brother sins, go...” So this paragraph does not speak of personal offense, but the offense that sin brings to the community of believers.
- 10a. We should point out their fault, not to disgrace them or set ourselves above them, but to restore them with love. We resort to exclusion only if all other means fail.
- 10b. The church has the authority to forgive as well as retain sins. Here the Lord Jesus acknowledges the decisions of the church (19). See also Lesson 24, Question 10.
11. The gathering of people who call on the Lord and acknowledge His authority—namely, the believers of Christ (cf. Acts 2:21; Rom 10:13; 1Cor 1:2).
13. We should always forgive, and not even keep count of how many times we have done so.
- 14a. He was too focused on his own petty loss and had forgotten the great mercy he had received. His attitude goes to show that he did not truly appreciate his master’s forgiveness.

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- 14b. We need to forgive unconditionally because our Father has forgiven us unconditionally and our forgiveness can never be compared to the forgiveness we have received. If we think about how much we have been indebted to God and how merciful He has been to us, we will no longer dwell on our brother's offenses. We also need to remember that Christ also loved him and laid down His life for him. Then out of our love for the Lord, we will forgive our brother for the sake of Christ (cf. 5; Col 3:12-14).
- 15a. Failure to forgive is a mockery on God's forgiveness. Not having compassion on our brothers, whom God loves, means not loving God.
- 15b. What God looks for is a heart of compassion (33). Without a heart of forgiveness, we would still harbor hatred, which easily turns into bitter words and actions (cf. 12:34,35). Only if we forgive from the heart can we truly forgive. Such forgiveness is a sign of humility, which marks the citizens of God's kingdom.

Lesson 27

Observation

Outline

- Beginning of the Judean Ministry (19:1,2)
- Discussion on Marriage and Divorce (19:3-12)
- Blessing Little Children (19:13-15)
- Wealth and the Kingdom of God (19:16-30)
 - The rich young man (16-22)
 - Grace and reward (23-30)

Key Words/Phrases

Divorce, at the beginning, adultery, accept, kingdom of heaven, little children.

Segment Analysis

1. The Pharisees were hoping that Jesus would either 1) condone divorce, which would bring Him into direct conflict with those who held that divorce was not permissible except for sexual sins, or 2) forbid divorce, which would bring Him into apparent contradiction with the Mosaic law.
2. Instead of focusing His teaching on the subject of divorce, the Lord placed emphasis on marriage. Only with the correct understanding of God's intended purpose in marriage can we understand the command against divorce.

- 3a. Marriage was in God's mind when He created human beings. That is why He created them male and female. Husband and wife are not two, but one. No one should separate the marriage union, because it is a divine institution.
- 3b. Divorce is against God's intended purpose. Except for sexual immorality, divorce and remarriage is adultery.
- 4a. According to God's command, man may not separate what God has joined together. In Moses' law, however, God did allow for the possibility of divorce, although the thrust of Deuteronomy 24:1-4 is on the prohibition against remarrying one's spouse after divorce, rather than the permission to divorce. The Pharisees and many others had misunderstood God's intended purpose of marriage and put more emphasis on what was permitted than what was commanded. So the Lord Jesus turned their attention to the origin of marriage and the command against divorce, and pointed out that the permission for divorce was only a result of the peoples' hardness of heart.
- 4b. Like the Pharisees, we may sometimes also try to find "loopholes" in God's word so as to justify our disobedience. We should learn to actively do God's will rather than find excuses for our reluctance. The Corinthian believers thought that since "everything was permissible," they could exercise their freedom even if it would hurt the conscience of another. But Paul taught them to always seek the good of others so as to build them up (1Cor 10:23-33).
5. Some choose to not marry in order to focus on the things of the Lord (cf 1Cor 7:32). But celibacy is not a requirement for entering the Kingdom of heaven. Those who have not been given the gift may choose to marry (1Cor 7:9).
- 6a. They probably either looked down on the children or thought that they were hindering the Lord's work.
- 6b. It is easy for us to "despise the little ones" or anyone who doesn't seem important (Mt 18:10). Perhaps in our zeal to serve God, we have neglected those around us who seem to be in the way of our service (e.g. the Priest and Levite in the story of the good Samaritan).
7. God is pleased with those who have the humility and innocence of children (18:3). The children were coming to Jesus to receive His blessings. This shows their humility. If we humbly acknowledge our need of God's help and sincerely want to be close to Him, He will gladly hear us.
8. The young man was probably hoping that Jesus would show him some secret path (good things) to eternal life. But the Lord Jesus reminded him that there is no other way to eternal life except through God alone and through obedience to God.

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9. Even though the Lord did not spell out the first four commandments, He implied them in 17 and 21. The Israelites had been worshippers of God, even though sometimes only on the surface, and they had been keeping the first four commandments very strictly. This is probably why the Lord started out with the ones that have to do with loving one's neighbor, so as to teach that our love for God is only made complete if we also have love for others. The young man thought that he had loved God and his neighbor. But as we will see in the next question, Jesus exposed the man's failure to love God by pointing out his unwillingness to love others. In doing so, He not only brought out the spirit of the commandments, but also established a close connection between the first four and the last six.
10. The young man believed that he had kept the commands to love others. But when told to sell his possessions and give them to the poor, his lack of love surfaced. Not only so, his riches hindered him from following the Lord. This showed that he loved his wealth more than he loved God.

The young man had superficially kept the commandments (such as refraining from murder, adultery, idolatry, blasphemy), but he had actually failed to keep the spirit of God's command—loving God and loving men. Once again, the Lord taught the necessity of obeying God from the heart as the law in the kingdom of heaven (cf. 5:17-6:18)
- 11a. We cannot love both God and wealth (6:24). Since it is hard for the rich to give up their possessions, it is difficult for them to love God.
- 11b. It is not the riches that make a person unfit for God's kingdom. If it is, then people such as Abraham or Job would not be in God's kingdom. What prevents people from entering God's kingdom is their love for their riches and their unwillingness to give them up for God.

Everyone, whether rich or poor, tends to cherish themselves and their desires. But being a disciple entails denying ourselves. Only if we forsake what is important to us (e.g. pride, lust, comfort) so as to accomplish God's will can we be true citizens of God's kingdom (cf. Php 3:4-8).
- 11c. We need to give up ownership of our possessions. In other words, we are simply managers of God's possessions. Whenever we see people in need, we should help them with what God has entrusted to us.
12. Salvation is possible because of God's grace, not our own efforts. Although with the requirements that the Lord had laid down, it seems impossible to enter God's kingdom, God will enable us if we trust Him with a simple faith (Eph 2:8-10).
13. Unlike the rich young man, the disciples had given up all that had been important to them in order to follow the Lord. In other words, they had met the requirement of discipleship. So Peter wanted to know what they

would receive as a result of giving up these things of the kingdom. The Lord's answer is in 28-29.

15. According to the context, "Many who are first will be last" (30a) refers to how difficult it is for the many who take pride in what they have to enter God's kingdom. "The last first" (30b) means that everyone who humbly gives up what they cherish and follows Christ will enter God's kingdom, even though they may seem insignificant or even foolish according to popular standards.

Lesson 28

Observation

Outline

Landowner, Laborers, and Wages (20:1-16)

Third Prediction about Suffering, Death, and Resurrection (20:17-19)

Being Great and Being Servant (20:20-28)

Healing the Two Blind Men (20:29-34)

Key Words/Phrases

Kingdom of heaven, whatever is right, last, first, many called, few chosen, cup, baptism, servant/slave, Son of David, compassion, touched, followed.

Segment Analysis

1. Many who are first will be last, and the last first.
- 2a. Either the new believers in Christ, who have done comparatively less, or the repentant sinners, who receive God's grace and forgiveness in "the eleventh hour" and therefore labor much less for the kingdom of God. By their humble acceptance of and trust in God's grace, they become first in the kingdom (in vs 4 and 7 we see that these laborers trusted that the landowner would do for them whatever was right).
- 2b. These are the ones who seem to have preeminence in the religious community, be they leaders or early converts. They have worked much for God, but because they have exalted themselves to be the first and took God's grace for granted (they were once unemployed but now hired by the landowner), they become the least in God's eyes. Some even reject the kingdom because of their pride in being the first.
3. Common sense tells us that whoever works less should be paid less.
- 4a. It represents the grace of God. Although in the parable the laborers seemed to have earned the wages, the fact that everyone received the

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same amount tells us that the wages were not earned. These unemployed laborers were promised the wages simply for agreeing to work in the vineyard, regardless of how much effort they would put in.

- 4b. We cannot claim any merit in our salvation, even if we work hard for the Lord, because we have received it as a free gift (Eph 2:8,9; Rom 3:27,28; Tit 3:4,5). From this parable, we learn the abounding grace of God. He does not show favoritism in the giving of grace (Acts 10:34). But this is not to suggest that it makes no difference how diligent we work for God, for the Bible teaches that everyone will be rewarded according to his labor (1Cor 3:8; 15:58).
5. The parable is not teaching that everyone will have the same reward, but that we are all saved by God's grace. Even the rewards that we will receive for our labor are made possible because of God's grace.
6. This final prediction is the longest and most detailed. It speaks of the trial by the Sanhedrin and the handing over to the Roman authorities. It also describes the kinds of suffering the Lord would endure.
7. To the disciples. The prediction served to teach them the mission of the Messiah and to prepare the disciples so that they might remember and believe when all these things have taken place (cf. Jn 14:29;16:4). But the disciples did not fully comprehend the meaning of the prediction even after the resurrection.
- 8a. To share in the glory and power of Christ and be the greatest in God's kingdom.
- 8b. She did not know that one must suffer in order to receive glory (Rom 8:17; 2Tim 2:12). She did not know that we must humbly receive God's grace according to His sovereign will (23). She did not know that being great means being slaves to others and laying down one's life for others (26-28).
9. The rest of the disciples were indignant because they also wanted to be great and did not want to "lose out" on being the greatest.
- 10a. The Old Testament Scripture uses the "cup" to refer to the judgment of God (Ps 75:8; Isa 51:17,18; Jer 25:15-28). The Lord Jesus Himself called His suffering and death "this cup" because God was about to pour out His wrath on the sacrificial Lamb (Mt 26:39).
- 10b. We must deny ourselves, take up His cross and follow Him (cf 16:24-25; Lesson 24, Question 13). We must humble ourselves (Php 2:5-8), deny our desires, suffer for the Lord (1Pet 4:1-2; Gal 5:24), and sacrifice ourselves for the sake of others (1Jn 3:16).
- 11a. It involves taking away our pride and wishes, and humbly doing what it takes to meet the needs of others. By right, Jesus could demand service from us because He is the King. But He chose to be a servant and even

gave His life for us in the way that a slave would die for His master. His selfless sacrifice compels us to do the same for our brothers.

12. Although they were blind, they knew that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of David. Their persistence and crying out despite the crowd's rebuke showed their great faith. They humbly asked for mercy. They followed the Lord after they received sight.
- 13a. Despite the important mission ahead of Him, He was willing to stop and care for the needs of two people whom others scorned. This was an act of great compassion (34). He said, "What do you want me to do for you?" These are the words of a servant ready to serve his master. Then He touched their eyes, showing that He cared enough to do something for them, even though He could have simply healed them with a word.

Lesson 29

Observation

Outline

- Entry into Jerusalem (21:1-11)
- Jesus at the Temple (21:12-17)
- Causing the Fig Tree to Wither (21:18-22)

Key Words/Phrases

King, lowly, hosanna, Son of David, highest, house of prayer, wonderful, praise, faith, believing.

General Analysis

1. The disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them (6). The multitude followed and cried out with shouts of praise (8,9). All the city was moved, saying "Who is this?" (10). The blind and the lame came to Him (14). The children praised Him (15). The chief priests and scribes were indignant (15). The disciples marveled (20).

Segment Analysis

1. The great multitude spread their clothes on the road and cut down branches and spread them on the road. They went before and followed Jesus, crying out songs of praise and prayer. The question by the entire city, "Who is this?" and the response from the multitude, "This is Jesus..." was like the magnificent voice of a choir singing in unison. The whole city of Jerusalem was stirred.

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2. It was the fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy. The owner of the donkey and the colt agreed to lend them to Jesus. The colt, which no one has sat on (Mk 11:2), was obedient instead of unruly. In unison, the great crowd welcomed and praised the King with great fervor.
- 3a. The donkey is a lowly animal, which a king wouldn't normally ride on.
- 3b. He is gentle and lowly in heart (11:29). He never displayed His power and authority just to receive people's applause. His gentleness and humility made Him accessible by all people, including the sick, the children, and the sinners. Likewise, He is not a God who is far removed from us, but is someone we can approach with confidence.
- 5a. 4.
- 5b. The sellers and buyers versus the blind and the lame. The chief priests and scribes versus the children. Although everyone was at the temple, not everyone pleased God. Although everyone "worshiped God," not everyone did so with the right attitude and intention.
- 6a. The term "den of thieves" is a quotation from Jer 7:11. The people worshiped God on the surface, but their deeds were evil. The buyers and sellers seemed to be engaged in worship, but they were evil either in their dealings or in their intention. Such practice profaned the temple of God, which God had established as a place where people of all nations could call on God's name.
- 6b. True worship involves upright conduct and a sincere heart.
7. "Have you never read?" Jesus exposed the ignorance of the chief priests and scribes in the Scriptures and in God's will. They were supposed to be the most knowledgeable and closest to God, but they were more ignorant than the children, who acknowledged Jesus as the Son of David. The lesson here is that God reveals His will to the simple and sincere but hides it from those who do not believe and are wise in their own eyes (11:25,26).
- 8a. Just as the fig tree showed signs of life but was actually barren, many worshippers of God (such as the buyers and sellers and the chief priests and scribes) were actually unbelieving and far from God. The prophet Jeremiah compared God's people to the unfruitful fig tree (Jer 8:13; 24:1-8). So the Lord's cursing of the fig tree could be symbolic of God's judgment on the unbelieving race (cf. Mt 21:43).
- 8b. Having the appearance of godliness but indulging in sin (2Tim 3:1-5). Hypocritically carrying out some religious duties but having no sincere desire to obey God's will (Mt 15:3-9). Using religion for self interest (1Tim 6:3-5). Preaching false doctrines in the name of Christ (2Cor 11:13,14; 2Jn 7).

- 9a. The phrase “whatever you ask in prayer” must be qualified if we were to look at other passages in the Bible. If our request is for the purpose of indulgence, we will not receive what we ask for (Jas 4:3-4). The apostle Paul also did not receive what he prayed for, because God had a better purpose in his life (2Cor 12:7-9).
- 9b. Faith involves believing without doubt that God exists and that He rewards those who seek Him (21; Heb 11:6). Faith means believing God’s promise even before its fulfillment (Heb 11:1). Faith also involves trusting God’s sovereign choice and that He will always do the best at the right time (Mt 26:39). So in whatever we ask, we need to first examine our motive and ask that God’s will be done. Then we will receive what we ask for (God’s will be done), even if God’s way turned out to be different from our expectations (e.g. Paul’s prayer concerning the thorn in his flesh; 2Cor 12:7-10).

Lesson 30

Observation

Outline

- Question of Authority (21:23-27)
- Parable of Two Sons (21:28-32)
- Parable of Tenants (21:33-46)
- Parable of Wedding Banquet (22:1-14)

Key Words/Phrases

Authority, do the will of his father, kingdom of God, believe, son, vineyard, bearing fruits, chief cornerstone, marriage, worthy, wedding garment, many called, few chosen.

General Analysis

- 1a. A vineyard and the wedding banquet for the king’s son.
- 1b. The son who did what the father commanded. Those who would render fruits to the landowner. Those who accepted the king’s invitation and dressed appropriately.
2. Twice (21:25-26; 45-46).

Segment Analysis

- 1a. Cleansing the temple (12-13), healing the blind and the lame in the temple (14), and teaching in the temple (23).
- 1b. They felt that Jesus posed a threat to their own authority.

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- 2a. John was Jesus' forerunner. Anyone who believed that John was from God would have believed that Jesus was the Messiah. Jesus did not need to answer their question because their refusal of John showed that they would also refuse Jesus, even though it was clear from what Jesus had done that His authority was from God.
- 2b. Their problem was their stubborn refusal to accept the one God has sent while trying to cover up their disbelief. They chose to reject God but did not want to lose their position as religious leaders. Such dilemma made them unable to answer Jesus' counter-question. In effect, Jesus made them answer their own question and at the same time pointed out their callousness.
- 3a. One promised to go but didn't. The other said no but went.
4. A better translation would read, "tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God—and you do not."^{6/450} Although the tax collectors and harlots had once refused to obey God, now they were repentant and humbly accepted Christ. The Pharisees and elders, on the other hand, displayed their piety but disobeyed God's will in their hearts and actions. Profession with the mouth does not guarantee entrance into God's kingdom (7:15-23).
5. Just as the second son only paid lip service, the religious leaders only professed to know God but did not believe those whom God had sent. Their lip service was for the purpose of receiving men's praise and honor. This is why they were afraid to answer the Lord's question in 24 and 25.
- 6a. God.
- 6b. Israel, or God's chosen nation.
- 6c. The religious leaders whom God had appointed to teach and care for His people.
- 6d. Prophets of God.
7. They had no respect for or fear of the landowner. In the same way, the religious leaders' rejection of God's servants and of His Son showed that they did not honor God in their hearts.
8. The people's answer justified God's punishment and passed judgment on themselves.
9. By living a life in keeping with our repentance and submission to God's will (3:8,10).
- 10a. Jesus is the stone. The world rejected Him, but God has set Him to be the chief cornerstone. Whoever wants to be saved must put their trust in Him (Acts 4:11,12). It is God's marvelous act to make use of what people

- rejected to save those who believe (1Cor 1:18,23). Whoever despises or rejects him does so to their own destruction.
- 10b. Their own evil behavior (Jn 3:19,20). Judging Jesus with human standards (Mt 13:54-57). Unwillingness to deny oneself and take up the cross (19:22; 13:20-22).
 11. They yielded to their own stubbornness and to popular opinion rather than to God's warning. Their actions also showed their timid hypocrisy.
 - 12a. The gospel of salvation is God's gracious invitation to us. He has prepared the best things for us in abundance. We should feel honored to be God's guest at His banquet.
 - 12b. After those who were invited refused to come, the king still patiently offered to them the abundance of his banquet as reason to come (4). Without respecting the king's command and invitation, they ignored him and even killed the servants. Likewise, many repeatedly turn down the honor of coming into God's kingdom and even persecute those who preach the gospel.
 13. Just as the garment was a requirement for attending the banquet, God also has His righteous requirements for those who wish to enter God's kingdom. Those who seem to agree to the gospel but do not perform God's will in their lives are not worthy of God's kingdom (7:21). More specifically, the garment can represent baptism, the sacrament through which we put on Christ (Gal 3:26,27). Anyone who claims to believe in Christ but refuses to put on Christ through baptism is not fit to enter God's kingdom (Jn 3:5).
 - 14a. The first invitation was to a selected group whereas the second was inclusive of all people. The first group represented the Jewish leaders and people who rejected Jesus, since they were first chosen. The second group represented everyone who came to accept Christ, both Jews and Gentiles regardless of their past conduct ("both bad and good").
 - 14b. Everyone whom the servants found were called. But only those who accepted the invitation and dressed in wedding garment were chosen.
 15. We should honor and accept God's gracious gift of salvation by setting aside our own priorities and humbly obeying the gospel. We must receive the righteousness of God through baptism and practice God's will in our lives.

Lesson 31

Observation

Outline

- Paying Taxes to Caesar (22:15-22)
- The Resurrection (22:23-33)
- The Great Commandments (22:34-40)
- Christ the Son of David (22:41-46)

Key Words/Phrases

Hypocrites, marveled, resurrection, astonished, commandment, Christ, Son of David.

Segment Analysis

1. Their flattering words, which led to the question that followed, pressured Jesus to answer their question. Essentially, they were saying, “Since you teach the truth and do not try to please men, you should be able to answer our question without being afraid of offending anyone.” On the surface, they appeared to respect Jesus’ integrity. In their hearts, they had devised a plot to entangle Him.
- 2a. He would have offended the majority of the Jews.
- 2b. He would have been charged with treason against Caesar.
- 3a. We still need to fulfill our obligations to earthly authorities while we devote ourselves to the service of God.
- 3b. Jesus first asked them a question about whose inscription it was on the coin. He used their response to answer their own question. Since the people enjoyed the benefits of the Roman rule, they ought to give to Caesar what was rightfully his. But contrary to what many Jews at the time believed, paying taxes to Caesar did not and should not conflict with their loyalty to God. While expecting the coming of the Messianic kingdom, the people of God still must fulfill their responsibilities to the governing authorities.
4. In a narrower sense, we need to supply for the work of God with tithes and offerings, which rightfully belong to God (Mal 3:8-10). In a broader sense, we should offer our entire being and life to God because He made us and have given us life (see Mt 22:37). Just as we have obligations to fulfill as citizens of an earthly nation, we who are citizens of the heavenly kingdom must all the more serve God with absolute dedication.
5. Unless the earthly government opposes the teachings of God, it is the duty of all Christians to submit to our governments. We do so not only

because we have enjoyed the governments protection and benefits, but also for the glory of God (Rom 13:1-7; 1Pet 2:13-17).

6. They hoped to prove that belief in resurrection is absurd.
- 7a. They were ignorant of the Scripture's reference to the resurrection of the dead (Isa 26:19; Dan 12:2; Job 19:25-27). So Jesus pointed out their ignorance by asking them in 31, "have you not read?"
- 7b. The Sadducees rejected God's word, thinking that it was irrational. They did not believe that God's promise will surely come to pass even if it seems impossible or illogical (19:26).
- 8a. God's self-identification as the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob showed that these people were alive to God even though they had died physically (Lk 20:38). God, who is eternal and who is faithful to His everlasting covenant, would not identify Himself as the God of the dead.
- 8b. The Sadducees believed that human beings cease to exist in body and spirit upon death, and along this line of reasoning, there is no resurrection. But if Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were all alive when they had already died physically, it means that there is spiritual life after death. This also means that resurrection, as promised by God in the Scripture, would be entirely possible.
9. As many Pharisees and teachers of the law who have tried had learned, it is very difficult to summarize the law or give one commandment more importance than another. So the question to Jesus was to test His ability as a teacher of the law and to find fault in His answer.
- 10a. These two commandments form the basis of all other commandments. Love is the spirit of the entire Scripture. Without these commandments, the other commandments become incoherent and meaningless.
- 10b. It is like the first in that it originates from the first and is directly tied to it. We can only truly love our neighbors if we first dedicate ourselves to God and let His love fill our hearts. On the other hand, the direct manifestation of our love for God is to love our neighbors as ourselves (1Jn 4:12,20; 5:2).
11. The Pharisees as well as the common people only thought of the Messiah as the Son of David who would be heir to David's throne. But the Lord Jesus, by citing Psalm 110, showed them that such understanding was insufficient. Christ was not just a descendent of David who would rule over Israel, but He was greater than David. In fact, He was God himself.

Lesson 32

Observation

Outline

Warnings to the Multitudes and Disciples (23:1-12)

Seven Woes (23:13-36)

Lament over Jerusalem (23:37-39)

Key Words/Phrases

They say, and do not do, servant, woe, kingdom of heaven, hypocrites, blind guides, condemnation, son of hell, fools and blind.

Segment Analysis

1. To sit in someone's seat means being a successor to the person. The scribes and Pharisees assumed Moses' authority in teaching the law to the people.
2. In John 9, the Pharisees showed no concern for the man who was healed. By forbidding healing on the Sabbath, they cared only about their authority rather than those in need. They made the Sabbath a burden by adding many regulations. Although these regulations had become a great burden, the Pharisees did not care to show any compassion or mercy (see Mt 23:23).
3. In wanting to exalt himself, a person who accepts these titles would want to maintain an image of righteousness. Such intention quickly turns into hypocrisy. Not only so, the desire of honor and men's praise makes a person eager for self-interest rather than obeying God. The religious leaders always opposed Jesus and God's will because their concern was their position in society and not their position in God's kingdom.
4. To be humble is not just declining the title of teacher. It has to do with our hearts. Humility means acknowledging God as the only one who is worthy of our honor (8,9). With this basic understanding and attitude, we would not expect praise and exaltation from men. We would also be willing to deny ourselves and serve others (11).
- 5a. 1) Shutting up the kingdom of heaven. 2) Devouring widows' houses and for a pretense making long prayers. 3) Winning converts but making them twice as much sons of hell. 4) Nullifying the binding effect of oaths. 5) Neglecting the most important aspects of the law. 6) Appearing righteous but full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. 7) Shedding the blood of righteous men.
- 5b. Hypocrisy is perhaps most hideous in that those who commit it do not even feel that their deeds are evil. They have become blind and their

conscience dulled. Not only so, they mislead many with their appearance of piety and stop them from entering God's kingdom. The Lord's strong charges serve to warn us about the severe punishment that would come on anyone who lives in hypocrisy.

- 6a. They refuse to accept Christ and forbid others to do so (Jn 9:22).
- 6b. Preachers of another gospel (Gal 1:6-9).
- 7a. The scribes and Pharisees taught the people that if someone swears by the temple but not the gold of the temple, or by the altar but not the gift on the altar, his oath would not be binding. Such teaching provided a way for people to lie while swearing. The deceitful heart behind the act of swearing is actually a disrespect for and mockery on God.
- 7b. Sometimes we may stress more on monetary donations or acts of service (just like the gold of the temple or the gifts on the altar) than on sincere love and obedience to God.
- 8a. The purpose of God's commands is so that we may have the heart and qualities of God. Superficial observance without a change of heart is meaningless. But the Pharisees and scribes neglected these more important aspects because matters such as justice, mercy, and faith, are not immediately visible to men, whereas acts such as offering could easily win them praise and respect.
- 8b. The Lord was emphasizing the spirit of the law, but he did not do away with the actions required by the law. So he said, "these you ought to have done without leaving the others undone." "The others" refer to the actions of keeping the law. In verse 3, he also commanded the people to do what the scribes and Pharisees taught according to the Scriptures.
9. People often pay attention to trivial matters without addressing more important or larger issues. E.g. washing hands before eating but unclean in thoughts; debating the details of how a chapel should be renovated but neglecting harmony and love.
10. Their very nature was evil, cunning, and dangerous.
11. The words and deeds of the righteous ones contradicted, revealed, and even condemned these evil-doers' wickedness.
12. Time and again God called out to His rebellious children to return to Him. He sent them prophets, wise men, and teachers to restore their faith. But the people were hard-hearted and did not heed His call.
13. When they realize that Jesus is the Christ and come to repentance (Zech 12:10; Rom 11:25-27).

Lesson 33

Observation

Outline

- The Disciples Coming to Jesus (24:1-3)
- Times of Great Distress (24:4-22)
- Warning against Deception (24:23-28)
- Coming of the Son of Man (24:29-31)
- Knowing that the Time Is Near (24:32-35)
- Hour of His Coming Unknown (24:36-44)
- Good Servant and Evil Servant (24:45-51)

Key Words/Phrases

Temple, sign, end, deceive, abomination of desolation, tribulation, coming of the Son of Man, know, do not know, watch, be ready, faithful and wise.

General Analysis

- 1a. 2, 15-20, possibly 21 also.
- 1b. 4-14, 21-28, 32-35
- 1c. 27, 29-31, 36-44, possibly 15-20 also (cf Lk 17:30-35).
- 2a. Persecutions (9-10). Deception of false prophets (11). Lawlessness (12).
3. Cosmic chaos (29). Sign in heaven (30). Great mourning (30) Son of Man coming on the clouds with power and great glory (30). Sending out of angels with a great sound of a trumpet to gather the elect (31). He will come at an unknown hour (36, 42, 44).
4. Take heed that no one deceives us (4). Do not be troubled (6). Endure to the end (13). Do not believe false alarms (23,26). Know that the end is near when seeing the signs (32-33). Watch (42). Be ready (44).

Segment Analysis

1. When will the temple be destroyed? What will be the sign of Christ's coming? What will be the sign of the end of the age?
2. They were impressed by the beauty of these magnificent structures (Mk 13:1; Lk 21:5).
- 3a. Rise of false prophets (5,11,24). Wars and rumors of wars (6,7a). Famines, pestilences, and earthquakes (7b). Persecution and hatred (9-10). Lawlessness leading to decrease in love (12).
- 3b. The preaching of the gospel in all the world (14).

4. The gospel will be a witness to the whole world (14). All peoples will have a chance to hear the gospel and repent before the final judgment comes. The gospel, which proclaims the final judgment, serves as warning to all (Rom 2:16). For those who refuse the gospel, their unbelief will be the reason for their condemnation (2Thess 1:7,8).
5. Armies will take the city of Jerusalem and kill its inhabitants (Lk 21:20).
- 6a. They will claim to be the Christ and draw many followers (5,11). They will show great signs and wonders (24).
- 6b. We should discern whether their doctrines and conduct conform to the teachings of the apostles (Gal 1:6-9; 1Jn 4:1-6).
7. The coming of Christ will be visible throughout the world. He will not be in the desert or in the inner rooms (26).
8. Jesus is quoting a proverb (cf Job 39:30). If the “for” in 28 is linked to 26 and 27, then it would mean that just as it is impossible for vultures to miss the carcass, it would be impossible for anyone to not see the coming of Christ. But if 28 is a continuation of 21 and 22 and refers to the period of great tribulation, it may mean that a great number of people worldwide will die during this period (cf Lk 17:37).
- 9a. The period of great distress predicted in 4-28.
- 9b. The end of all things and the coming of Christ.
10. He is stressing the certainty of His predictions. Against the drastic changes and final chaos that will take place, Christ’s words will stand firm through the ages. So we can always remind ourselves of Christ’s promises and warnings about the end time as we eagerly wait for his coming.
11. We should be ready at all times. If someone who knows when the thief will come would prepare for that hour, how much more should we be ready since we do not know the hour?
12. The people of Noah’s generation ignored Noah’s warning. The flood came suddenly and destroyed them all. We must be watchful and not lose sight of Christ’s coming. Our hearts must be sober and not be entangled by the cares and pleasures of this world (Lk 21:34-36).
13. He will come suddenly when people do not expect Him. While everyone still carries out their daily routines, some will be taken (probably referring to the gathering in 31) while others left behind.
- 14a. He was faithful in carrying out the duties that the master had entrusted him. He was wise because he was able to manage the entire house and was always ready for the master’s return.
- 14b. Being ready does not mean being idle. God in His grace has given each of us gifts to help build up the church. It is our responsibility to minister

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the gift to others so that everyone in God's house may enjoy the manifold grace of God and be ready for Christ's return (1Pet 4:7-11; Heb 10:24,25).

15. He made the false assumption that the master will delay in his return. But false assumption is the very thing that Jesus warns us against. Since we do not know the day nor the hour, we must be ready at all times.

Lesson 34

Observation

Outline

- Ten Virgins (25:1-13)
- Servants with Talents (25:14-30)
- Sheep and Goats (25:31-46)

Key Words/Phrases

Kingdom, virgins, bridegroom, wise, foolish, oil, watch, servants, talents, gained, good and faithful, wicked and lazy, sheep, goats, one of the least of these, everlasting punishment, eternal life.

Segment Analysis

1. It continues the theme of being watchful. Compare 25:13 and 24:42,44.
2. When Christ returns, He will receive His bride, the church (Rev 19:7; 21:2)
- 3a. They all took lamps. They all slumbered and slept. They all arose and trimmed their lamps.
- 3b. The wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.
- 4a. Whether the oil represents the Holy Spirit or good deeds, we should learn from the wise virgins by preparing ourselves spiritually. We need to abide in Christ by living righteous lives (1Jn 2:28; cf Rev 16:15). Only then will the bridegroom acknowledge and welcome us (cf. Mt 25:12).
- 4b. We cannot wait until Christ comes to start preparing ourselves because that would be too late. We also cannot rely on someone else, such as our spouse, parents, or minister, to enter God's kingdom.
5. If we indulge in our desires in this life rather than be spiritually sober, we are actually choosing to distance ourselves from God. That is why the bridegroom said to the foolish virgins, "I do not know you." They confessed the Lord with their mouths, but in their hearts and conduct they were far from God (Jas 4:4,5).

6. We must put them to use to help and build up others.
- 7a. This is the principle on which God's requirement is based, "For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more" (Lk 12:48). God expects us to give our best according to what we have received (2Cor 8:12). So we should each fulfill our responsibilities without comparing with the work of others.
- 7b. The servant's blame on the master all the more proved his wickedness and laziness. He used the excuse that the master would make unreasonable demands and expected him to give beyond his capacity. As we can see in the previous question, this was far from the truth. The master's concession in 26 does not mean that he agreed with the servant. He was telling the servant that even if he was a hard man, the servant could have at least given the talent to the bank.
8. If we do not put our God-given talents to work, we may eventually lose these talents and come under the punishment of our master.
9. God is fair because He does not require from us what we have not received. He is gracious because He considers us worthy and has entrusted to us talents of great value. In the parable, the faithful servants were given the authority to rule over many things because they had been faithful over few things. Likewise, the reward we receive from God will be much greater than our efforts deserve.
10. The third section does not begin with "the kingdom of heaven is like." This is because the prediction in 31 and 32a is not an analogy but will occur exactly as Jesus predicted. The parable only starts with 32b "as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats."
11. Humility and love. The sheep were humble in that they served the least of the brethren (40; cf 18:4,5).
12. The word "least" here is probably used according to human standards. These least of the brethren would be those whom the people of the world look down on. But the King calls them "my brethren." In God's kingdom, even the least significant member (i.e. by worldly standards) is honorable.
14. The righteous were not aware that they were doing these things to the Lord because of their humility in believing themselves to be "unworthy servants" who were only fulfilling their duties (Lk 17:10). The ignorance of the wicked showed that they had looked down on the little ones, not realizing that they were the King's brethren.

We should serve all our brothers regardless of their social or economic standing. While doing so, there is no need to keep record of our good work.

Lesson 35

Observation

Outline

- Prediction and Plot (26:1-5)
- Anointing at Bethany (26:6-13)
- Plan of Betrayal (26:14-16)
- Preparation for Passover (26:17-19)
- Prediction of Betrayal (26:20-25)
- Institution of Holy Communion (26:26-30)
- Prediction of Scattering and Denial (26:31-35)

Key Words/Phrases

Son of Man, good work, Passover, broke, body, blood of the new covenant, remission of sins, kingdom, stumble.

General Analysis

1. He made numerous predictions about His death and burial, even down to the exact day and the form of execution (2,11,12). He commanded the disciples to ask a man for the use of his house for the Passover meal. Everything turned out to be just as He had commanded (18, 19; cf. Lk 22:8-13). He knew that Judas was going to betray Him (21,23,25). He knew that the disciples would stumble and even deny Him (31-34). He knew that he would rise from the dead (32). From His predictions and foreknowledge we know that Jesus was God, who had complete control over the situation. Even so, He offered up Himself willingly in order to redeem us.

Segment Analysis

1. The Passover was a foreshadow of the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of God's people. Jesus was the sacrificial Lamb that God had prepared for us (1Cor 5:7).
2. Even though it was the chief priests, scribes, and elders who plotted Jesus' death, all these things happened under God's sovereign will.
- 3a. They cared more about the oil than about the Lord.
- 3b. They didn't think the Lord deserved such costly offering. They were also unaware of how great a price the Lord was about to pay to redeem the sins of the world.

4. The woman offered her gift without a word; the disciples had nothing to offer except their complaint. The woman was probably aware of the events that lay ahead of the Lord whereas the disciples were not. The woman exalted the Lord as one who was worthy of the best; the disciples placed less value on their master than on the price of the oil.
5. It was done at the right time (“Me you do not have always”). Matthew also made special mention that the oil was very costly. The woman’s offering was beautiful not because the oil was expensive, but because she considered the Lord worthy to receive her best.
6. God does not take our offerings lightly. Even though others may criticize us for our service, God takes note of our every deed of love for him and gives lasting value to the work we do today (cf 1Cor 15:58).
7. Judas, probably speaking for the other disciples, complained about the woman’s offering. He might have wished that he could have some of the money (Jn 12:4-6). His greed, and perhaps also his anger, drove him to sell his master.
- 8a. The woman honored Christ by giving Him the best. Judas, instead of giving anything to the Lord, sold the Lord for a small profit..
- 8b. By choosing some material gains or temporary pleasure over obeying the Lord.
- 9a. So that his conscience may be stricken and repent immediately.
- 9b. Had Jesus pointed at Judas directly, Judas would have probably hardened his heart right away because of the sudden exposure and embarrassment. By speaking to the disciples without mentioning who it was, Jesus warned everyone the seriousness of the sin of betrayal while giving Judas a chance to repent privately.
10. While it was God’s sovereign will that Christ be delivered up to be crucified, and in His foreknowledge He had predicted the betrayal, God did not *make* Judas do what he did, for God does not cause anyone to sin (cf Jas 1:13-15).
- 11a. The Lord said, “This is my body,” and “This is my blood.” The communion is not symbolic of, but is in fact, Christ’s body and blood.
- 11b. In Jer 31:31-34, the Lord promised a new covenant with His people. The Israelites had failed to obey God. But God in His mercy offered His children the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Jesus Christ (Eph 1:7; Rev 1:5).
12. We partake of the communion in remembrance of Christ and to proclaim His death (Lk 22:19; 1Cor 11:24-26). We must remember how Christ poured out His blood for the forgiveness of our sins (Mt 26:28). We are also to look forward to His coming (29; 1Cor 11:26).

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- 13a. He had a strong determination to sacrifice for the Lord, even though his will was stronger than his flesh. At this point, Peter showed that he was very self-confident. In his own judgment, he was stronger than and more resolute than any other disciple.

Lesson 36

Observation

Outline

- Prayer in Gethsemane (26:36-46)
- Jesus Arrested (26:47-56)
- Trial, Sentence, and Mocking (26:57-68)
- Peter's Denial (26:69-75)

Key Words/Phrases

Sorrowful, distressed, even to death, watch, not as I will, but as You will, watch and pray, Son of Man, forsook, fled, followed at a distance, Christ, Son of God, denied, wept bitterly.

General Analysis

1. The disciples could not keep watch with Him in the garden (40,43,45). All the disciples forsook Him and fled (56). Peter followed at a distance (58). The entire council was against Him and no one spoke for Him (59). Peter utterly denied Him three times (69-74).

Segment Analysis

- 1a. The disciples were all confident at first (33, 35). When Jesus was praying, they fell asleep. Jesus faced His captors calmly and peacefully, but one of the followers fought them with the sword (50, 51). Jesus stayed, but all the disciples fled (56). Jesus, on the other hand, remained silent while being tried and tortured. But Peter, who was the loudest of the disciples in declaring his loyalty, openly denied his master in the face of danger and even swore that he did not know Jesus (74).
- 1b. Before the prayer, He was sorrowful and deeply distressed, even to death (37,38). He went into the depth of the garden, fell on His face and prayed. In His prayer, He asked to let the cup pass from Him if it were possible. But He still asked that the Father's will be done. Thus He prayed three times. The book of Hebrews describes His prayer as one with "vehement cries and tears" (Heb 5:7). After the prayer, He said with

courage and determination, “Rise, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand” (46). He was no longer in distress or sorrow.

- 2a. His struggle was with the weakness of His flesh (cf 41). According to His will, He wished that the cup be passed from Him, but in His spirit He wanted to submit to the Father’s will. Through His three prayers, He had completely denied His will. Then He received strength from above, which enabled Him to face the sufferings ahead (Lk 22:43).
- 2b. Our prayer should not be limited to telling God what we want. Instead of insisting on our wishes and desires, we need to learn submission through prayer. Because submission is a difficult lesson, we need to pray persistently and earnestly the way Jesus prayed. If we pray fervently with the purpose to conform our will to God’s, God will strengthen us to accomplish His will.
- 3a. To keep watch with Him. The Lord brought along his three closest disciples probably to train them to know how crucial prayer is. Not only so, the disciples’ watchfulness would have been a great encouragement to Him in the hour of trial.
- 3b. They were probably very tired (43). But the fact that they couldn’t keep awake when critical danger was ahead of them showed that they did not know how urgent the situation was. Perhaps their over-confidence also had a part in their slumber. They thought they were ready for anything. But just as the Lord had said, their spirit was indeed willing, but their flesh was weak. Without the courage that comes from prayer, they all forsook their master and fled.
- 4a. Peter, who had learned his lesson through failure, told us that to watch means to be clear-minded and self-controlled (1Pet 4:7 NIV). Rather than be drunken with pleasure or blinded by our ambitions, we need to always be aware of where we are spiritually and on the look out for temptation (1Pet 2:11). This kind of spiritual awareness comes about through an attitude to suffer (1Pet 4:1,2) and humble self-examination (1Cor 10:11,12).
- 4b. If we are spiritually alert and always call on God, God will give us the wisdom and strength to withstand trials and temptations. Prayer with faith helps us resist the devil and protects us from harm (Eph 6:10,11,18; Jas 4:7; 1Pet 5:8,9).
- 4c. Without watchful prayer, we would not be able to do what we know is right. Our hearts would be “weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life” (Lk 21:34). So we should never be confident with just knowing right from wrong or with a strong determination. We need God to strengthen our inner being (Eph 3:16).
6. The multitudes expected Jesus to defend Himself with sword and thought that they could capture Him with swords and clubs. They did

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not know that He was a king of peace and would not resort to earthly weapons. Their large number also showed their timidity. Why did they need all these people and weapons when Jesus had only a few followers? Why did they not seize Him when He was teaching in public?

8. The follower who used the sword seemed to be helping the Lord. But the Lord rebuked him because he was using his own ways to try to please God. In our relationship with others, including fellow Christians, we may sometimes feel justified to rebuke or punish those who are against us because we feel that we are on God's side. But James tells us that our anger cannot accomplish God's will (Jas 1:19,20). When we do things out of indignation, we are actually led by our selfish desires. Such motive and ungodly deeds cannot please God.
9. Being helpless is one thing, but having the power to destroy the enemies without choosing to do so is quite another. Jesus, the Lord of hosts, could have easily crushed His captors. But He had self-control. He had decided to submit to the Father when He prayed in the garden. He resisted the temptation of exercising His authority and humbly bowed to God's will.
- 11a. Both the council and the witnesses already had the intention to kill Jesus (cf 27:1; Lk 22:67,68). Having a court session and calling upon witnesses was no more than a formality, if not an attempt to appear fair to the public. They also seemed to be zealous by putting Jesus to death with the charge of blasphemy. But they never pondered whether Jesus' claim was indeed true.
- 11b. Their violent behavior and mocking (67,68).
- 12a. He entrusted Himself to God's will. Although He could have retaliated or threatened them, He remained quiet and bore all the insult (1Pet 2:23).
- 12b. cf. Heb 12:1-4. If Christ, who was sinless, suffered without complaint, we should also endure hardships and trust that God has His good purpose in our sufferings.
- 13b. He must have loved his master so much that he felt great remorse for his failure.

Lesson 37

Observation

Outline

Delivering to Pontius Pilate (27:1-2)

Judas' Remorse and Death (27:3-10)

Questioning by Pilate (27:11-14)

Release of Barabbas and Condemnation of Jesus (27:15-26)

The Soldiers' Mocking (27:27-31)

The Crucifixion and Insults (27:32-44)

Death and Miraculous Signs (27:45-56)

Burial by Joseph of Arimathea (27:57-61)

Council with Pilate to Secure the Tomb (27:62-66)

Key Words/Phrases

Plotted, delivered, innocent, blood, potter's field, King of the Jews, Christ, mocked, Son of God, forsaken, yielded up His spirit.

General Analysis

1. They plotted against Him and delivered Him to Pilate (1,2). They accused Him (12). They persuaded the multitudes (20).
2. He was falsely accused (12). He was scourged (26). He was forced to wear a crown of thorns, mocked, spat on, and struck (27-31). He was crucified (35). He was ridiculed and reviled (39-44). He was hung on the cross for hours (45). He was forsaken (46).

Segment Analysis

- 1a. Although he received the money he lusted for, he came to his conscience and was seized with remorse. He went to the chief priests and elders whom he had helped, but they did not want to have anything to do with him. He died in despair and loneliness.
- 1b. Sin looks appealing before we commit it. But after offering us temporary enjoyment, it betrays us and leaves us empty and hurt.
2. The chief priests and elders had accused Jesus of proclaiming Himself a king (Lk 23:2). Under the Roman law, such claim was a crime deserving death.
- 3a. 1) His conscience (24). 2) Either listening to the people's demands or expecting an uprising. 3) The warning from his wife (19).
The multitude's demand finally won, although Pilate made sure to declare his innocence.
4. The multitude had condemned themselves by declaring their own guilt (25).
5. We are freed from our death sentence because Christ has died in our place.
6. People who are usually under others' command are often tempted to bully those who are weaker than them. The soldiers, thinking that Jesus

Matthew

was at their mercy and powerless to defend Himself, went all out in their mocking and abuse.

7. He did not have soldiers to fight for Him. He was greatly humiliated. Although He had the power to retaliate, He did not even utter any threat. This King, unlike all others, chose to suffer and lay down His life for His people.
- 8a. 1) Those who passed by (39). 2) Chief priests, scribes, and elders (41). 3) The robbers who were crucified with Him (44).
- 8b. The challenge that Satan tempted Jesus with (“if you are the son of God”) now surfaced again in a different form. Satan’s temptation had failed the first time. This time, the chief priests, scribes, and elders seemed to act as Satan’s agent, insulting the Son of God and challenging Him to come down from the cross. Satan probably thought that He had won the final victory.
- 8c. The people would never have expected that their king would die such a cruel death. They thought that when the Messiah comes, He would fight for them and deliver them from their oppressors. Because of their disappointment in Jesus, whom they once thought was the Messiah, they despised and insulted Him.
9. Those who have tasted the grace of God but choose to turn away from the truth are actually crucifying the Lord once again and putting Him to open shame (Heb 6:6). Their act would be comparable to those who hurled insults at Jesus because they despise the salvation of the Lord.
- 10a. There was darkness over all the land (45). The veil of the temple was torn in two (51a). The earth quaked, the rock split, and the graves were opened. Many saints were raised (51b,52).
- 10b. The darkness probably represented God’s rejection (cf 46). The tearing of the veil in the temple from top to bottom is symbolic of the reconciliation between God and men. Because of Christ’s atonement, we can now come to God directly without the mediation of priests (Heb 4:16; 6:19). The rising of the saints was evidence that Christ, the firstfruits of resurrection, had conquered death and released believers from its bondage (1Cor 15:20-22).
- 11a. Instead of calling God “my Father,” He now called Him, “my God.” It is possible that He did so because since He was our sins, He could not assume the role of the beloved Son but must suffer God’s rejection in the same way a sinner would.
- 11b. God has put on Him the iniquity of us all (Isa 53:4-6, 10, 12).
12. He was buried with the rich. See Isa 53:9.
13. Unlike the multitudes, they did not despise the Lord. Although they may not have understood the Lord’s prediction about His resurrection, they

lingered below the cross and at the tomb. Just as they had faithfully ministered to the Lord's needs during His preaching (55), they now attended to His death and burial.

- 14a. They were afraid that the people would believe the disciples and become their followers. Once again, their popularity was at stake. They were always more concerned about themselves than for the truth.
- 14b. Whether the guards were temple guards or Roman soldiers, it would have been impossible for the timid disciples to go through these armed men, roll away the stone that had been sealed, and steal the Lord's body. The Pharisee's precaution would later turn out to be an indisputable proof that the Lord had resurrected.

Lesson 38

Observation

Outline

- The Angel's Descent and Announcement (28:1-8)
- Jesus' Appearance (28:9-10)
- Report and Bribery (28:11-15)
- The Great Commission (28:16-20)

Key Words/Phrases

He is risen as He said, fear, joy, rejoice, worshiped, authority, go, make disciples, all, baptizing in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching, I am with you.

General Analysis

1. Jerusalem and Galilee.
- 2a. We are justified by the resurrection of Jesus Christ (Rom 4:25). Without the resurrection of Christ, we would have no hope of salvation (1Cor 15:17-19). But because Christ has resurrected, we know that God has overcome and given us victory over sin and death (1Cor 15:57; Col 2:11-12).
- 2b. Knowing that Christ has risen from the dead, we must live a new life of righteousness (Rom 6:8-13). We should not live for ourselves but for our Lord (2Cor 5:15) and work for Him with diligence, knowing that our labor is not in vain (1Cor 15:58).

Segment Analysis

1. So that the women and the other disciples may witness for themselves the empty tomb (6).
2. The women as well as the disciples were in great sorrow and despair. Their mind was still on the death of Christ even though He had already resurrected (Lk 24:5). But Jesus told them to rejoice because He had brought them hope and salvation.
3. They were blind to the truth; their hearts were hardened. They were still worried about their credibility to the people when they should have realized that they had killed the Son of God.
- 4a. 1) The chief priests and elders were so callous that they were willing to do whatever it took to keep the truth from the people and thus preserve their authority. 2) Without a substantial bribery, it would have been impossible to keep the soldiers quiet because they had personally witnessed the great miracles.
- 5a. Their story would make them guilty of sleeping on duty.
- 5b. 1) Sleeping on duty was something to be ashamed of. Why would the guards proclaim their shame instead of hiding it, unless, of course, they had been bribed? 2) Had they indeed been sleeping, how did they know that the disciples had stolen the body? 3) How could the disciples roll away such a large stone up an incline without waking up anyone? 4) If one of the guards had woke up to see the disciples stealing the body, why didn't he wake up the other guards? 5) If the disciples had indeed stolen the body, why didn't anyone search for or find the body?
6. The word "all" is emphasized: all authority, all nations, all things that I have commanded you, all the time (always). Jesus, the King of kings, now has complete authority over all creation. All of His commands are to be obeyed. He lives forever and will be with the believers always until He comes again.
7. During Jesus' ministry, Satan challenged his authority as the Son of God (4:3,6). But through His death on the cross, He triumphed over Satan (Col 2:15). Having been exalted to the highest, all authorities have become subject to Him (Php 2:9-11). By Jesus authority, those who believe in Him will not be condemned but have victory over sin and death (Rom 8:34; 1Cor 15:57). We as believers no longer live under the control of sin but reign in life through Christ (Rom 5:17, 6:14).
8. Because Christ has been exalted, we may believe in Him and become His disciple to have eternal life. Because He has received authority, we may receive the forgiveness of sins through baptism (Acts 2:32-39; Jn 20:21-23). Because He is the Lord of all things, we must obey His

commands. Because He has risen and lives forever, He is able to promise continual abiding with us (Jn 16:33).

- 9a. We need to preach the gospel of the kingdom as a witness to all nations (24:14). As we proclaim the word of salvation, people may hear the message and put their faith in Christ to be saved (Rom 10:13-15,17).
- 9b. A disciple is one who is baptized and observes all that Christ has commanded. Baptism is for the forgiveness of sins and for putting on Christ (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Gal 3:27). Obedience to Christ's command shows our faith in His words and our submission to His authority.
10. Through faith and baptism in Christ, we are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise regardless of our race or social status (Gal 3:26-29). All who walk in Abraham's step of faith are blessed with the promise of forgiveness and justification (Rom 4:16-25).
- 11a. Jesus (Jn 17:11). There is only one name, the name of Jesus, by which we can be saved (Acts 4:12). Jesus is the Father (Isa 9:6), the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Gal 4:6). Knowing that the name was referring to Jesus' name, the apostles baptized in the name of Jesus (Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5). The reason for the description of the name has to do with the authority Jesus had received. He was not just a historical figure, but the eternal God who was, who is, and who is to come (Rev 1:8). Just as He had been with His chosen people in the past, He will be with the believers to the end of the age.
- 11b. No. If it were just a formula to be recited, the disciples would have recited the exact words of Father, Son and Holy Spirit instead of baptizing in the name of the Lord Jesus (see also the previous question). "In the name of" is more than recitation, but also indicates the authority and power of the risen Christ (Php 2:10-11). It is in Jesus that we can have the forgiveness of sins during baptism (Col 1:14). Because it is into Christ that we are baptized (Gal 3:27), the baptismal candidate must believe the Lord Jesus as his Lord and Savior and determine to live for Christ all his life.
- 12b. His continual presence gives us hope, comfort, and strength as we carry out the mission of preaching the gospel and teaching the disciples. He does not leave us alone to our tasks (Jn 14:18). Because He has overcome the world and lives in us through the Holy Spirit, we have nothing to fear (Jn 16:33). Just as the believers of the apostolic age became witnesses to the world through the power of the Holy Spirit, we will also be able accomplish the Lord's great commission if we seek the power from the Lord (Acts 1:8).

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