

SOME FATAL MISTAKES ON THE WAY TO ETERNITY

Matthew 19:16-22

Introduction:

- A. Mistake is defined as making a wrong choice.**
- B. Fatal means deadly.**
- C. Eternity refers to unmeasured duration, after time no longer exists.**
- D. Solomon wrote, “He (God) hath set eternity in their heart. Some may not admit it, but every human being who is of sound mind thinks of life after death.**
- E. Illustration – Brother McNeill was about to take an electric pump off a well. He asked me if the electricity was turned off. I replied, “I think so.” He answered, “We want to be sure, because electricity doesn’t give you an opportunity to talk about making a mistake.**

I. THIS YOUNG MAN WAS MISTAKEN ABOUT THE IDENTITY OF JESUS CHRIST.

- A. He called Jesus, Good Master.**
- B. He had a high regard for Jesus, but did not accept Him for who He really is – God incarnate in human flesh. Jesus is God.**
- C. Jesus knew the man’s heart; He knew that he did not believe that Jesus is God.**
- D. “There is none good but God.” Thus, don’t call me good if you do not accept me as God.**
- E. Here is the greatest error of the present religious world; the majority does not accept Jesus as being God. Many believe in God, but reject the truth of Who Jesus really is.**
- F. Those who reject the virgin birth see Jesus as just another good man.**
- G. To reject Jesus as being God is a fatal mistake.**

II. THIS MAN WAS MISTAKEN ABOUT HOW HE RELATES TO GOD.

- A. What good thing can I do in this physical body?**
- B. He viewed himself as alive unto God and able to do physical things to make himself acceptable for eternal life.**
- C. God is Spirit and man can only relate to God in the spiritual realm.**

- D. Jesus told the woman at the well, “God is Spirit and he that worships Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.”**
- E. Works of the flesh are only acceptable to God when they are prompted by a regenerated spirit – a spirit that knows that I can do nothing of my self; but I can do all things through Christ Who strengthens me.**
- F. Many are those who make the same fatal mistake as this young man. – Eternal life can come through some physical relation with God.**

III. THIS MAN WAS MISTAKEN ABOUT HIMSELF.

- A. “What good thing can I do?”**
- B. He saw his hope for eternal life in something he could do.**
- C. He did not know that he was dead in trespasses and sin – dead to God – separated from God.**
- D. He saw himself as a keeper of the law of God – all these things have I done since my youth. What lack I yet?**
- E. This man, like multitudes in our time, rejects God’s word which declares that all of our works are as filthy rags in God’s sight.**
- F. He as do multitudes reject the Word of God which declares, “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”**
- G. Also, he rejected the Bible teaching “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us.**
- H. People continue to make this fatal mistake about themselves.**

IV. HE MADE THE MISTAKE ABOUT JESUS’ PURPOSE FOR GIVING THESE INSTRUCTIONS.

- A. Jesus instructed him to go sell what he had and give it to the poor.**
- B. Jesus was not concerned with this man’s possessions. He was concerned with the man’s attitude concerning his possessions.**
- C. Jesus has no problem with His people having great wealth. He does have a problem when His people do not share their wealth with those in need.**
- D. To understand the Lord’s purpose in telling the young man to sell all he had and give it to the poor; we must understand why the law was given.**

- E. Paul wrote, “Whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law that every mouth might be stopped and the whole world become guilty before God.”**
- F. This man was guilty of breaking the last of the Ten Commandments “Thou shalt not covet.” And the second of the two great commandments. “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”**
- G. This is the same commandment that brought Paul to salvation. Romans 7:7-9 “I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. And, I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died.”**
- H. That was Jesus’ purpose in instructing the young man to sell what he had and give it to the poor.**
- I. His answer to this charge proved his guilt.**
- J. He made a fatal mistake in walking away from Jesus.**

V. HE MADE A FATAL MISTAKE IN HIS PRIORITIES.

- A. He went away sorrowful because he had great possessions.**
- B. He came to Jesus with a great interest in eternal life -- life After death. – life that would leave behind all these possessions.**
- C. But the thought of living in this short life on earth without his possessions caused him to make the fatal mistake of walking away from eternal life.**
- D. The world is full of people making this same fatal mistake.**

CONCLUSIONS:

- A. Have you ever felt the inner hungering of the need for eternal life? The need to be saved from sin? The desire to know that when you die you will depart this life to be with God for eternity?**
- B. Jesus is the One, the only One who can give you that life.**

**A DESIRE EXPRESSED
OR WHAT'S IN IT FOR US?**

Scripture: Matthew 19:27-30

Introduction:

- A. Peter and the rest of the disciples had witnessed the conversation between Jesus and the rich young ruler.**
- B. They had seen him choose earthly riches over eternal life and walk away lost.**
- C. Peter's response seems quite natural. "We have forsaken all and followed you – what then shall we have therefore?"**

I. LEARN THAT IT IS NOT WRONG FOR GOD'S PEOPLE TO BE CONCERNED OVER REWARDS FOR SACRIFICE AND SERVICE.

- A. Jesus did not rebuke Peter for asking – He gave him an answer.**
- B. Such concern can work for the advantage of both God and man.**

II. LEARN THAT JESUS CONFIRMS THE REGENERATION OF ALL THINGS. V. 28

- A. His own coming back to earth again.**
- B. His sitting on the throne of His glory.**
- C. The restoration of Israel as a nation.**
- D. The rule of the glorified apostles over Israel.**
- E. The return of the physical creation to its endemic glory.**

III. LEARN THAT JESUS CLEARLY ESTABLISHES THIS AS A TIME OF REWARDING. V.29

- A. Matthew 16:27 *For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.***
- B. Israel shall be rewarded with her land and her capital city.**
- C. Those who have forsaken all and followed Him – 100 fold.**
- D. Those who have not followed Him – eternal life only.**

IV. LEARN THAT OUR LORD'S REWARDING SHALL BE A TIME OF SURPRISE. V. 30

- A. Many that are last shall be first.**
- B. Many that are first shall be last.**
- C. Rewarding will be according to God's record, not ours**

CONCLUSION:

- A. These things are all deal with promises of God. Their fulfillment depends on God's faithfulness.**
- B. Let us remember that God is faithful – and right – and always on time.**

THE ELEVENTH HOUR CALL

Matthew 20:1-16

Introduction:

- A. This parable must be kept in context to get a true understanding.
 - 1. It was spoken to illustrate the Lord's answer to Peter's question – *What shall we have therefore?*
 - 2. Jesus had spoken to the rich young ruler about treasure in heaven for those who follow Him; and how hard it would be for a rich man to be saved.
 - 3. Peter then said, *Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee. What shall we have therefore?*
- B. This parable was spoken to help His disciples see how wrong it is for His people to concern themselves with rewards.
- C. The parable deals with the present time. *For the kingdom of heaven IS like-----.*
- D. Every parable was spoken to deal with one primary theme. The theme of this parable is not the rewarding but the attitude of the people toward a future rewarding.
- E. It seems that His purpose was the “I've done my part, now you do yours” or a judgmental attitude toward the work of others.

I. LEARN THAT THE LORD IS SOVEREIGN.

- A. v. 15 *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?*
- B. His disciples needed to learn that He, Jesus, is God, and the Creator of all things. Col. 1:16 states “*all things were created BY Him and FOR Him.*”
- C. As illustrated in this parable – God calls to service whomever He chooses and He call whenever He chooses.
- D. Such a lesson learned by His people today would change many lives. We are prone to want to do the calling and also punch the clock for others.

II. LEARN THAT GOD DOES NO WRONG.

- A. v. 13 *Friend, I do thee no wrong...*
- B. v. 14 *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?*
- C. Men may question God's dealing with others, but let us remember that God makes His callings and dealings with all men on the basis of His knowing the future.

D. It has been said many times “God is too wise to make a mistake and too good to do wrong.”

III. LEARN THAT IT IS EVIL TO QUESTION THE LORD.

A. v. 15 *Is thine eye evil, because I am good.*

B. The question is asked and the implied answer is, “Yes, to question the goodness of the Lord is to possess an evil eye – an eye that causes one to think evil.

IV. LEARN THAT ATTITUDE REVEALS MOTIVE FOR WORK.

A. Salvation did not change our carnal nature; thus we are prone to have evil, jealous thoughts over recognition given others. And such thoughts are sometimes displayed in grumbling and murmuring.

B. Such a spirit reveals a wrong motive for work even though we may be very busy.

C. The right spirit delivers a labor of love.

1. Love for God . and just happy He has chosen to use me in His service.

2. Love for others .. just happy they were called and that They arrived in time to help. In time to win a few in the 11th hour.

D. The right spirit is not concerned with who gets the credit, just that the works gets done.

E. W.M. Taylor said, “Motive gives character to work.”

V. LEARN THAT REWARDING IS BASED ON FAITHFULNESS.

A. vs. 9, 10 Evidently each of these was faithful in his labor and each of them received the same pay.

B. Paul wrote, *Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.* (1 Cor. 4:2)

C. We try to fit God into our mold of thinking.

D. God is far above that. He will not be lowered to the mercenary level of earth’s way.

E. He who knows our potentials and our motives; our temptations and our problems will reward in keeping with His will.

F. Since He requires of a steward that he be faithful, He will reward according to faithfulness.

CONCLUSIONS:

- A. Each of us should ask self, Am I truly a disciple and a steward of Jesus Christ?**
- B. Have I answered His call to service?**
- C. Am I being faithful in what He has called me to do?**

THE URGENCY OF GOSPEL REPETITION

Scripture: Matthew 20:17-19

Introduction:

- A. Repetition means to repeat over and over again.**
- B. Urgency means to give immediate attention.**
- C. Gospel is the good news how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures and how He was buried and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.**
- D. As drawn from these definitions, my title means that we should give our immediate attention to telling people over and over again that Jesus loves them and that He died to pay their sin debt and was buried and rose again the third for their salvation.**
- E. Let us note some reasons why it is of up most importance for us to tell people over and over again the blessed gospel of Jesus Christ.**

I. WE SHOULD BECAUSE OF THE ATTENTION JESUS GAVE IT.

- A. Matthew 20:17-19 Our text verses record Jesus telling the gospel.**
- B. Matthew 17:22, 23 also record Jesus telling the gospel message.**
- C. Matthew 16:21 also record Jesus telling the gospel message.**
- D. Matthew 12:38-42 record Jesus telling the gospel message.**
- E. The message was spoken to the lost scribes and Pharisees; but the last three were spoken to His disciples one of which was still lost.**
- F. Jesus certainly understood the urgency of repeating the gospel message to the lost and to His disciples – His church.**

II. WE SHOULD URGENTLY REPEAT THE GOSPEL MESSAGE BECAUSE OF THE NATURE OF THE HUMAN MIND.

- A. The human mind is slow to accept that which is new.**
- B. The human mind is reluctant to accept that which is distasteful such as spiritual death and blood redemption.**
- C. The human mind is deadest against change.**

III. WE SHOULD URGENTLY REPEAT THE GOSPEL MESSAGE BECAUSE IT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH.

- A. Man is by nature dead in trespasses and sin – separated from God.**
- B. The gospel message opens the only way to life – You hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sin.**

IV. WE SHOULD URGENTLY REPEAT THE GOSPEL MESSAGE BECAUSE OF THE ETERNAL CONSEQUENCES THAT ARE INVOLVED.

- A. To believe the gospel message is life – eternal life – and heaven for your eternal home.**
- B. To ignore the gospel is death – eternal death – and hell as your eternal prison.**

V. WE SHOULD URGENTLY REPEAT THE GOSPEL MESSAGE BECAUSE OF THE FRAILTY OF THE HUMAN FAMILY.

- A. People who are alive must hear the gospel message; they must repent of their sin and believe the gospel to be saved.**
- B. But life is like water spilled on the ground, which can not be gathered again.**
- C. Life is like a vapor that appears for a little time and vanishes away.**
- D. All flesh is as grass and all the glory of man as the flower; the grass withereth and the flower falleth away.**
- E. Since no one knows when life shall end, it is urgent for us to tell people the saving gospel message over and over again. Just as Jesus did.**

CONCLUSION:

- A. Dear members of this the body of Christ at Long Branch, we are all duty bound to live our lives in obedience to His commands.**
- B. We are obligated to tell people the saving gospel message over and over again.**
- C. And we are also obligated to live lives prove to others that the gospel message does indeed make a difference in the choices we make and the way we live.**

THE DANGER OF PRESUMPTUOUS BOASTING

Scripture: Matthew 20:20-28

Introduction:

- A. Boasting means to talk about abilities in a manner showing too much pride and satisfaction; to brag.**
- B. Presumptuous means too bold or forward; taking too much for granted; to show overconfidence in self.**
- C. Danger simply means something that may cause injury, damage, loss or pain.**
- D. Peter had just asked the Lord, “What shall we have therefore?”**
- E. Jesus had answered and concluded His answer with, “But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.”**
- F. Jesus then spoke a parable to illustrate His teaching – The labourers who were last to be hired were paid first and as much as was paid those who were hired first, worked the longest and was paid last.**
- G. Jesus had just spoken again how He would go up to Jerusalem and be crucified and buried and rise again the third day.**
- H. Then, following all this, the presumptuous attitude of boasting by His disciples, all of them, clouds the sunshine of the gospel message.**

I. LEARN THAT THE BEST OF GOD’S REGENERATED PEOPLE ARE PRONE TO LET THE FLESH MOTIVATE OUR LIVES.

Vs. 20, 21, 24

- A. If the mother of James and John had really been listening to the teachings of the Lord, they would never have presumed to ask the Lord for this favored position.**
- B. If the other ten had accepted the teachings Jesus had just spoken and illustrated, they would not have moved with indignation against the other two.**
- C. All twelve were permitting the carnal, selfish flesh nature to seek a place of honor above others.**
- D. We should with all honesty inventory our motives of service – our attitudes – our desires.**
- E. Do we serve the Lord without thought of reward? Are we willing for someone else to take the lead? Are we willing for someone else to get the credit for work done? Is our greatest concern just so the work gets done?**

F. God grant us the grace to put self interest aside and serve just for the sake of the cause of Christ.

II. LEARN HOW IGNORANT WE ARE OF BOTH THE THINGS OF GOD AND OURSELVES. V. 22

- A. “Ye know not what ye ask.” “We are able.” They did not know what they had asked – They knew not the contents of the cup Jesus would drink; nor did they know their own weaknesses soon to be exposed by all.**
- B. How true this is with us, God’s people today. As much as we know about God, we still know very little about Him and His workings.**
- C. Let us all be very careful not to presume too much of our ability and our works.**
- D. If we boast, let it be in Jesus. I can of mine on self do nothing; but I can do all things through Christ Who strengtheneth me.**

III. LEARN THAT OUR PLACE IN GLORY HAS ALREADY BEEN DETERMINED BY THE HEAVENLY FATHER.

- A. v. 23 “it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.”**
- B. Note the “is prepared” declares that the preparation has already been made – settled in eternity.**
- C. The preparation was not made on the basis of God’s will without regarding each individual and his work.**
- D. The preparation was made on the basis of God’s foreknowledge – what He knew each of us would do. And on this basis, our place in His eternal kingdom is already prepared for each of us.**
- E. Some would say – if this is true, if all has already been fixed, there is no need for me to knock myself out trying to live for Christ.**
- F. God, who knows all – the end from the beginning –, knew you would think and act that way. Thus your place is prepared accordingly.**

**IV. LEARN THAT TRUE GREATNESS IS SEEN IN SELF
ABASEMENT AND SERVICE DEDICATED TO GOD.**

A. vs. 25-28

B. The Lord Jesus Christ expects His disciples in every age to rise above the ways of the world – with its “chiefs and Indians” system.

C. Jesus set the example (v.28) “Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

D. V. 26 “It shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister.”

E. V. 27 “And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:”

F. We are lifted up even as we lower ourselves to serve – the way up is down.

G. A person who is too big to do little things, is too little to do big things.

H. A person, whose motive in service is rewards, serves self and not God and the service is its only reward.

CONCLUSIONS:

A. It is very easy, too easy, for us to think more highly of self than we ought.

B. Let each of us remember that God is due all the honor and the glory for whatever we may do in His service.

C. It is dangerous to do otherwise.

SOME THING JESUS KNEW AND TAUGHT ABOUT THE GOSPEL

Matthew 20:28

Introduction:

- A. The gospel is defined by inspiration as *How Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures and how that He was buried and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.***
- B. This one statement by the Lord Jesus Christ reveals much that instructs us in the plans and purpose of God in providing salvation for lost humanity.**

I. LEARN THAT JESUS TAUGHT HIS ETERNAL EXISTENCE.

- A. “The Son of man CAME. He had to exist in order to come.**
- B. Luke recorded Jesus saying *The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.* Luke 19:10**
- C. John recorded Jesus as saying *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.* John 8:58**
- D. John also recorded the garden prayer of our Lord just before He was arrested and crucified. In it He said *O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with the before the world was.* John 17:5**

II. LEARN THAT JESUS TAUGHT THAT HIS DEATH WAS HIS OWN ACT.

- A. “*to give his life*”**
- B. Hebrews 9:14 teaches this truth *How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?***
- C. Hebrews 9:26 also teaches this truth. *But now in the end of the world: hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.***
- D. 1 Timothy 2:5,6 also teaches that the death of Jesus was his own act. *For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all..***

III. LEAN THAT JESUS TAUGHT THAT HIS DEATH WAS HIS PRIMARY PURPOSE FOR COMING INTO THE WORLD.

- A. The Son of man CAME TO GIVE HIS LIFE.**
- B. John 3:14 *And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so MUST the Son of man be lifted up:***

- C. John 8:28 records Jesus saying *when ye have lifted up the Son of man, then ye shall know that I am he.*
- D. John 12:30-33 also reveals the purpose of Jesus Christ for coming into the world. *Jesus answered and said, .. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.*
- E. Revelation 13:8 ties down the truth of this teaching where Jesus is spoken of as *the Lamb slain from the foundation of he world.*

IV. LEARN THAT JESUS TAUGHT THAT HIS DEATH WAS A RANSOM.

- A. *to give his life a ransom*
- B. A ransom is a price paid for the release of captives – kidnapped.
- C. The Bible declares that he wages of sin is death; thus the ransom required for our release from sin is the death of another in our place.
- D. Luke 4:18 records our Lord reading a passage from Isaiah 61 to explain His reason for coming into the world. *He, God he Father, hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.*
- E. 1 Timothy 2:5, 6 teaches that the death of Jesus was the paying of the ransom for our release from the captivity of sin. He gave himself a ransom for all.

V. LEARN THAT JESUS TAUGHT THAT HIS RANSOM WAS SUFFICIENT FOR ALL PEOPLE FOR ALL TIME.

- A. *to give his life a ransom FOR MANY*
- B. Jesus taught this in John 3:14, 15 *so must the Son of man be lifted up that WHOSOEVER believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*
- C. Again Paul wrote by inspiration that Jesus *gave himself a ransom for ALL*
- D. Then in 2 Corinthians 5:14,15 Paul wrote *if one died for ALL, then were all dead and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.*

CONCLUSIONS:

- A. My, My, what great truths are contained in this short statement made by Jesus Christ.**
- B. Do you believe it? Do you believe that it was all don for you?**
- C. Have you accepted this payment for your sin debt, God has and He will save you if you accept it for yourself by repentance and faith.**

DISCIPLESHIP AND MERCY

Scripture: Matthew 20:29-34

Introduction:

- A. Jesus has just spent much time in instructing His disciples on the attitude and actions He expected of them.**
- B. He has ended these by saying *Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.***
- C. Paul expressed it this way *Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.***
- D. Let us note some lessons concerning true discipleship and mercy.**

I. LEARN THAT GREAT MULTITUDES CAN HAVE A NEGATIVE INFLUENCE ON DISCIPLRSHIP. Vs. 29, 31

- A. These were so caught up in the excitement of following Jesus that they neglected the primary purpose of discipleship.**
- B. Such an attitude becomes a hindrance to the need of those outside the multitude.**
- C. The Leader, Jesus, was not affected by this, but the disciples were.**
- D. Some disciples like to be a part of a large multitudes because they can “kinda” get lost in the crowd and if they are absent from some function, nobody misses them.**

II. LEARN THAT WHEREVER WE GO THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO NEED JESUS AND HIS BLESSINGS. V. 30

- A. Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem to fulfill His primary purpose for coming to earth – the offering of His life to pay the sin debt of the world of lost sinners.**
- B. As He passed by two blind men cried out for mercy. They were in need.**
- C. We all need to be reminded that as we move about from day to day we come in contact with people who need Jesus. The world is full of people in need both spiritually and physically.**

III. LEARN THAT NO APPOINTMENT IS SO IMPORTANT THAT WE NEGLECT TO MINISTER TO THE NEEDS OF OTHERS.

Vs. 32-34

- A. The most important appointment ever placed on any man was placed on the Man, Christ Jesus.**
- B. While His disciples tried to hush the cries of the two men in need, Jesus took time to inquire of their needs and then extend healing mercy to them.**
- C. Is not Jesus the example for all of His disciples?**
- D. We should work to follow His example – take time to minister to those who are hurting both spiritually and physically.**

IV. LEARN THAT THE PLEA FOR MERCY IS THE KEY THAT UNLOCKS THE RICHES OF GOD'S GRACE.

A. vs. 30, 31

- B. The plea for mercy reveals a confession of recognized need. V. 30**
- C. The plea for mercy reveals a confession of the inability to help self.**
- D. The plea for mercy reveals a belief that the One called upon is able to help. V. 33 *Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David.***
- E. The plea for mercy reveals a total dependence in the One on whom we call.**

V. LEARN THAT THE LORD ALWAYS HEARS AND BLESSES THE PLEA FOR MERCY.

A. vs. 32-34

- B. The Lord heard. No cry for mercy ever falls on deaf ears. God hears all.**
- C. The Lord stood still. Every cry for mercy will cause God to stop and inquire of the person calling.**
- D. The Lord asked. The Lord is interested in hearing those in need confessing their desired blessing.**
- E. The Lord blessed. No person who has cried out from a troubled soul for mercy has been disappointed. *Whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Romans 10:13***

VI. LEARN THAT THE WORK OF THE LORD IS IMMEDIATE AND COMPLETE.

A. vs. 33, 34

B. Jesus touched their eyes and immediately their eyes received sight.

C. There was no waiting, no sight getting better and better every minute.

D. The work of the Lord in salvation of lost souls who cry out for mercy is immediate and perfect.

E. Salvation is a new birth, a birth from above. There is no such thing as a partial birth and none are still born.

F. The experience of salvation is a birth – a new birth that produces a babe in Christ who needs to grow and mature in the Lord.

VII. LEARN THAT THOSE BLESSED OF THE LORD FOLLOW HIM.

A. v. 34 *and they followed him.*

B. Following Jesus is as natural as breathing for the newly saved person. And one who does not follow Jesus is subject to serious questioning concerning his salvation.

C. The woman at the well was saved and very soon thereafter she left her water pot and went into the city to tell people about Jesus.

D. Saul was on his way to Damascus to persecute Christians, he was saved and immediately asked Jesus *What will you have me to do?*

CONCLUSIONS:

A. If any one present has never cried out to the Lord to have mercy on your eternity bound soul, there will never be a better time than for you to do so now. Take note of your need to be saved, confess your need to Jesus and ask Him to have mercy on you.

B. We who are saved need very much to learn the lessons of discipleship set forth in these verses. Let us not get so busy that we do not minister to those in need.

A LITMUS TEST OF DISCIPLESHIP

Matthew 21:1-11

Introduction:

- A. This Scripture is a record of an activity of Jesus during the last week of His ministry just before He was crucified.
- B. He has in the last few days spoken of His soon coming crucifixion to His disciples a number of times and twice in the past few hours.
- C. His disciples have continued to concern themselves more with their place in His coming kingdom than they were in awful price Jesus was about to pay for their salvation.
- D. Let us remember that the term “disciple” means a follower. It can be one who truly follows or one who simply claims to follow Him.
- E. Litmus paper is used to test the acidity of a liquid. Red means acid; blue means base. White means neutral.

I. LEARN THAT JESUS DEDICATED HIS LIFE TO FULFILLING HIS FATHER’S WILL.

- A. Verses 4, 5. The Father’s will had been determined in eternity past and recorded for man’s benefit on the pages of the Holy Bible.
 - 1. In one sense Jesus was the disciple of the Father.
 - 2. He said, “I came to do the will of the Father.”
 - 3. Verse 5 is a rewording of Zechariah 9:9 *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass; and upon a colt the foal of an ass.*
- B. Is this not a call to discipleship to all who claim Jesus as Savior and Lord of their lives?
 - 1. Should we not, as did Jesus, dedicate our lives to fulfilling His will in our lives?
 - 2. Verses 1 and 2 and then verse 6 set the pattern for us. *Then sent Jesus two disciples, Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them to me. And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them.*

II. LEARN THAT JESUS CHRIST POSSESSES PERFECT KNOWLEDGE OF ALL THINGS. Vs. 1-7

A. Jesus knew where the donkey was tied; He knew that she had a colt by her side that had never been ridden; He knew that the owner would ask why the disciples had untied her; He knew that the owner would grant them permission to take the animals.

B. How sobering are the lessons to be learned from this.

- 1. Jesus knows all about each of us – each hour of each day of our lives – where we are and what we are doing.**
- 2. Jesus has need of us; each one of us and all we possess.**
- 3. We should willingly release ourselves to His service.**
- 4. As disciples, we should do as Jesus has commanded us.**
- 5. We should rejoice because we know Him.**
- 6. We should confess Him before all who ask.**

III. LEARN HOW IMPORTANT IT IS FOR THE LORD'S SACRIFICE TO BE DISPLAYED TO THE WHOLE WORLD.

A. Until the time of this lesson, Jesus had seemingly ministered in the shadows.

- 1. He had at times just removed Himself from the crowds.**
- 2. He would tell those healed to not speak of His work.**
- 3. When the multitudes came and tried to force Him to be their king, He spoke strong words of truth that drove them away.**

B. Now the time has come to fulfill His primary purpose for coming into the world – to give His life a ransom for many.

C. This sacrifice must be witnessed by as many as possible so that the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ might reach to the ends of the world.

D. Verses 8-11 reveal the multitudes present to be a part of His being publicly acclaimed as the Son of David and coming in the name of the Lord --- and Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

E. This very great multitude was present to worship on the Feast of the Passover and the Feast of unleavened bread and fifty days later the Feast of Pentecost.

F. Let each of us give heed to this greatest of all needs – the world of lost people need to hear the message of salvation – Jesus saves, Jesus saves.

IV. LEARN HOW FICKLED ARE THE MAJORITY OF HIS DISCIPLES.

- A. Verses 8-11 speak of multitudes, a very great multitude, and the multitude all proclaiming the greatness of Jesus.**
- B. In just a few short days, very likely only two days, these same people will stand in silence and watch Him ridiculed, abused, mocked and crucified.**
- C. Today, there are millions of people who claim to be disciples of Jesus Christ, but:**
 - 1. when the opportunity to stand up for Christ, where are they?**
 - 2. when the opportunity to be counted for Christ, their pew is empty.**
 - 3. when some opportunity to speak for Christ, they are silent.**

CONCLUSIONS:

- A. Is there any person present who has never repented of your sin and trusted Jesus to save you, please know that He loves you and wants to save you. He will save you right now.**
- B. Fellow disciple – confessed follower of Jesus, If your discipleship were put to the litmus test right now, would it show up true blue or would it stand wanting?**

GOD-ORDAINED RELIGIONS ON TRIAL

Scripture: Matthew 21:12-17

Introduction:

- A. The time element of this Scripture reading was the early part of the last week of our Lord's earthly ministry – just a few days before His crucifixion.**
- B. He has spoken to His disciples about His soon coming death and their need to be busy in the work into which God had called them.**
- C. They in turn are vying for places of honor in His coming kingdom.**
- D. Jesus has been welcomed into Jerusalem by great multitudes made up of people who have come from many nations to observe the feasts of the Passover and Pentecost.**
- E. After arriving in Jerusalem, Jesus enters the temple of God.**
- F. Religion is any system of belief, worship or conduct.**
- G. God-ordained religion is a belief, worship or conduct ordained by God Himself.**
- H. To be on trial means that the religion is being tested to see if the belief, the worship and the conduct of a person is fulfilling God's purpose.**

I. LEARN THAT OUR LORD IS MUCH DISPLEASED WITH THOSE WHO MISUSE THE HOUSE OF GOD. Vs. 12, 13

- A. This is the second time Jesus has expressed His displeasure in the misuse of the temple of God.**
 - 1. John 2:13-16 and Matthew 21:12, 13.**
 - 2. In each case Jesus drove the guilty parties out, disrupted their business and pronounced them guilty of misusing their place of service.**
- B. The house of God in this age of God's dealing with man is two-fold – the physical house where we meet to worship and the membership of this church is referred to as the house of God.**
 - 1. Hebrews 3:6 Paul spoke of Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we.**
 - 2. In a number of places the Bible refers to a church as a household of faith.**

3. Paul wrote to Timothy to instruct him on how he should behave himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

C. Sad it is when any member of one of the Lord's churches misuses his place of honor.

D. But it is an abomination before God when religious leaders misuse their position of respect and take advantage of those over which God has given them charge.

II. LEARN HOW PERSONAL PREJUDICES CAN ADVERSLEY AFFECT THE LIVES OF GODS PEOPLE.

A. Verse 15 – The God-ordained leaders of the God-ordained religion of that time “were sore displeased.”

B. At whom were they displeased? Jesus – that uneducated, upstart Galilean from Nazareth. It was not so much what He did, but who He was that caused the problem.

C. We people of God need to be careful not to permit personal feelings and sometimes life long prejudices to keep us from doing the work God has given us to do.

III. LEARN THAT PERFECT PRAISE COMES FROM THOSE WHOSE MINDS HAVE NOT BEEN POISONED BY THE WISDOM OF THE WORLD. Vs. 15, 16

A. The chief priests and the scribes were highly educated people who spent their lives in educating their minds. These had no time for Jesus and His teachings.

B. Paul spoke of such people as ever learning but not able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

C. 1 Corinthians 1:17-21 describes them and their kind.

D. Children, little children praised and Jesus pointed out that God's Word verified this as perfect praise. V. 16 Have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfect praise. Psalm 8:2

IV. LEARN HOW IGNORANT RELIGIOUS LEADERS CAN BE IN THE SCRIPTURES. V.16

A. These were men who had spent their lives in religious matters; in copying Scriptures, in reading Scriptures and in teaching Scriptures, yet Jesus asked, “have ye never read?”

B. Jesus commanded them, Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.”

C. The religious leaders of that day knew much religious dogma and practice; but they did not know Jesus Christ in free pardon of sin.

D. This is the very sad commentary on the Christian religions in our present time.

- 1. God's plan of salvation for lost sinful humanity has been so butchered that it is a wonder any person ever gets saved.**
- 2. Church membership, baptism, good works are all taught by religious leaders as necessary for salvation.**

V. LEARN THAT OUR LORD FINDS HIS EARTHLY FELLOWSHIP WITH THE HUMBLE SURROUNDINGS OF COMMON GOD FEARING PEOPLE. Verse 17

A. Jesus left THEM – the presence of the religious leaders of that day. He needed rest; He needed comforting companionship.

B. Jesus went into Bethany – the home of Martha, Mary and Lazarus. He lodged THERE.

C. Today, the Lord is here present in our midst – where we love Him; where we believe Him; where we do not question His Person nor His authority.

D. I feel quite certain that Jesus does not meet in this special way where His Word is questioned; where His gospel is destroyed by the additions and deletions from its saving message.

CONCLUSIONS:

A. These preached points have placed our religion on trial – not this church body only; but the personal religion of each person present.

B. In your own mind, do you think your religion passed the test?

C. Are there some changes I should make? Will I make them?

THE DIVINE FRUIT INSPECTOR

Matthew 21:18-20

Introduction:

- A. The time element of this Scripture lesson is during the early part of the week in which Jesus was crucified on Wednesday.**
- B. It is the day after Jesus had cleansed the temple of the money changers and those who bought and sold.**
- C. The Chief Priests and scribes had been sorely displeased – angry – with Jesus.**
- D. Jesus had left them and gone to Bethany where He spent the night.**
- E. Our text records what took place the following morning as He was returning to Jerusalem.**
- F. Let us learn some lessons concerning the Lord Jesus Christ and His creation.**

I. LEARN THAT JESUS WAS FULLY QUALIFIED TO INSPECT THE FRUIT OF HIS CREATION. V. 18. 19

- A. As the man Jesus, He hungered just like you and I hunger.**
 - 1. Jesus also grew weary -- He grew sleepy -- He wept.**
 - 2. Hebrews 2:14-17 *Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil: And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren---***
 - 3. Hebrews 4:15 declares that Jesus was tempted in all points like we are, yet without sin.**
- B. As God, Jesus spoke the creation into existence.**
 - 1. Genesis chapter one records the work of creation in the words “Let there be” and “Let be.”**
 - 2. John 1:1-3 declares *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made.***

C. Since Jesus is both God and man, He is fully qualified to judge the fruit of His own creation.

II. LEARN THAT FRUIT BEARING IS THE LORD'S PURPOSE IN ALL CREATION.

A. Genesis chapter one contains the root teaching of this truth.

- 1. The phrase “after his kind” or “after their kind.”**
- 2. God placed a seed in every living creation to reproduce after his kind.**
- 3. This seed is what feeds the world.**

B. Israel was God's choice to bear His witness to the world of lost sinners and all who repented of their sin and trusted the promised Messiah were saved. Those saved made up the fruit God expected from Israel.

C. In this church age, the Lord's churches are commissioned to go into all the world and make disciples, and baptize them and teach them to observe all things He has commanded.

- 1. Each local church is joined to the Lord for the purpose of bringing forth fruit.**
- 2. 2 Corinthians 11:2; Romans 7:4**

D. Individual children of God are created in Christ Jesus for the purpose of bearing the fruit of good works. Ephesians 2:10

III. LEARN THAT OUR LORD PERSONALLY INSPECTS THE FRUIT OF HIS CREATION. V.19

A. Jesus did not send a disciple to look for fruit on the fig tree, He Himself went to look for fruit.

B. Jesus had just the day before checked the fruit of the nation of Israel and found them without fruit.

- 1. Matthew 21:12-16**
- 2. In the twilight of this same day Jesus spoke “*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.*”**

C.Revelation chapters 2 and 3 reveal our Lord checking the fruit of the seven churches of Asia.

- 1. He recorded what He found for our learning and as a warning.**
- 2. Most of the Epistles were written to the churches to call their attention to problems that hindered fruit bearing. And to offer advice on how to bear fruit.**
- 3. These messages should cause us to realize that Christ, the Head of each church, is looking at our church and checking us for fruit expected of us.**

D.Brothers and sisters in the Lord, the all seeing eye of our blessed Lord is on each of us. He saved us for service. He expects us to serve. He expects us to bear the fruit of the Spirit that our lives may count for good in turning others to Jesus.

- 1. Galatians 5:22, 23 names some fruit that Jesus is looking for in each of us. *The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.***
- 2. Ephesians 5:8-10 *For ye were sometimes darkness, BUT, now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth) proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.***
- 3. Romans also speaks of the fruit the Lord expects of each of us. Chapter 1:13 Paul spoke of a desire to visit Rome that he might have some fruit among them.**
- 4. Romans 7:4 records Paul's charge to the individuals who made up that church to bear fruit -- that is souls saved because of their personal efforts.**

IV. LEARN THAT OUR LORD CAN DEAL SEVERELY WHERE THERE IS PROFESSION BUT NO FRUIT. V.19

- A.When the Lord found leaves, but no fruit, He cursed it and it withered away.**
- B.When the Lord found profession and no fruit on the nation of Israel, He spoke the curse recorded in Matthew 23:37-39.**
- C.When the many churches to whom the Spirit spoke of trouble that needed to be corrected did not correct these errors, they ceased to exist.**

D. Many individuals used of God in Bible times were found to be short of fruit or found to be producing rotten fruit were dealt with very severely.

- 1. Aaron**
- 2. Moses**
- 3. David**
- 4. Ananias and his wife Sapphira**

CONCLUSIONS:

- A. Let each of us fully understand that our church and each of us belong to the Lord Jesus Christ.**
- B. Let us fully understand that Jesus expects each of us to bear fruit – the fruit of the Spirit and the winning of the lost to Him.**
- C. Let us know that Jesus is well aware of our lives and wherein we fail to fulfill His will in our lives, He may deal with us very severely.**

THE ENEMY WITHIN

Scripture: Matthew 21:23-32

Introduction:

- A. The time of this scriptural record is the early part of the week in which Jesus was crucified beginning on the seventh day of the week – our Saturday before the crucifixion on Wednesday.**
- B. Jesus had entered Jerusalem riding on the back of a donkey. There was present a huge crowd of Jews who had gathered from about 16 different nations to celebrate the feast of the Passover and Pentecost. These had welcomed Him by spreading their garments and tree branches in the way and shouting Hosanna in the highest.**
- C. The whole city of Jerusalem was moved and asked “Who is this?”**
- D. The multitude responded by saying “This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.**
- E. Jesus entered the temple and cleansed it and healed the blind and the lame.**
- F. The Chief priests and scribes were angered by His work.**
- G. Jesus left them and went to Bethany where He spent the night.**

- H. The next morning He hungered and went to a fully leaved out fig tree to get fruit. He found no fruit and spoke a curse that caused it to wither away.**
- I. He returned to the temple and as He entered He was confronted by the Chief priests and elders who said, “By what authority doest thou these things? And who gave thee this authority?”**

I. LEARN THAT THE GREATEST ENEMY TO TRUTH ARISES FROM WITHIN.

A. What is truth?

- 1. In Jesus’ garden prayer He said to the Father, Thy Word is truth.**
- 2. Earlier, He had said, I am the Truth.**
- 3. When questioned by Pilate, Jesus said, “To this end came I into the world that I should bear witness to the truth.”**

B. The Jews were the people chosen of God to bear witness to the world of the saving grace of the Lamb of God that would come to take upon Himself the sin of the world and die to pay man’s sin debt.

C. The Jews had so corrupted the way of truth that even those in charge of the sacrifices displaying the gospel way, the Chief priests and elders, did not recognize the Truth as He walked and ministered before them. Vs. 23 and 15

D. God was at that time taking the kingdom of heaven work from the Jews and giving it to His church which was already organized. To this church, Jesus committed the work of evangelizing the world of lost people.

E. The huge Christian community that exists in our time all came from this small church which numbered about 120 faithful.

F. Within the first two centuries the plain plan of salvation Jesus left with His church was so faulted that the majority left the truth and became what is now known as the Roman Catholic Church.

II. LEARN THAT THE ENEMY WITHIN WILL CHALLENGE THE TRUTH.

- A. Vs. 23 and 15 record the leaders of the God ordained religion of that time challenging Jesus -- God incarnate in human flesh.**
- B. Since the beginning of this Church Age, the recognized leaders in the broad scope of Christianity have challenge the truth of the simple gospel message preached by true churches of the Lord Jesus Christ.**
 - 1. It was just such a challenge that brought into existence the huge Roman Catholic Church with her faulted plan of salvation which included church membership, infant baptism, sprinkling for baptism, falling from grace.**
 - 2. Protestant churches have all splintered off from the Catholic Church and continue to teach most of these faulted requirements for salvation.**
 - 3. Sad to say, the huge Southern Baptist Convention has voted to identify themselves as Protestants.**
 - 4. These all challenge the TRUTH with their teachings and practices and challenge our TRUE CHURCHES in many ways.**

III. LEARN THE GODLY WAY TO DEAL WITH THE CHALLENGES FROM THE ENEMIES WITHIN.

- A. How did Jesus deal with this challenge?**
 - 1. He asked a leading question; the answer of which would expose their error and hopefully cause them to face up to their need for salvation.**
 - 2. When they refused to answer, Jesus spoke the parable of the two sons; asked them a question to which they gave the correct answer.**
 - 3. Then the Lord pointed out their need to repent of their sin and believe on Him for salvation.**
- B. We should follow His plan for dealing with challenges that come to us.**
 - 1. Ask leading questions, “Do you know Jesus?” – “If you should die suddenly, do you know that you would go to heaven?”**
 - 2. Then point out as Jesus did the necessity for repentance and trusting faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation.**

CONCLUSIONS:

- A. The truth of this message is as broad as life itself.**
- B. In our great nation, the enemy is within us.**
- C. In our associated work, the enemy is within us.**
- D. In every local church, the enemy is within.**
- E. In our personal lives, the enemy is within.**
- F. Let us recognize this truth and do all we can to meet the challenge of truth in each area of life.**

THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD

Scripture: Matthew 21:33-46

Introduction:

- A. The Kingdom of God as used in verse 43 refers to Heaven's government over Heaven's special business on earth.**
- B. God did not create man and place him on the earth to live unto himself; neither did God leave man without a purpose and without a plan by which to accomplish that purpose.**
- C. To insure progress in an orderly and God-honoring manner, God made provisions by which man would be governed.**
- D. Life without laws and a government to execute laws is anarchy.**
- E. The Kingdom of God of which Jesus spoke refers to the government over God's kingdom business on earth and specifically to whom God chooses to execute His law on earth.**
- F. To help us understand what is involved in this parable, let us look at the government of the United States of America.**
 - 1. There are three branches of government – Legislative, Executive and Judicial.**
 - 2. The legislative branch made up of the two houses of the Congress makes laws.**
 - 3. The executive branch made up of the president and his cabinet executes laws.**
 - 4. The judicial branch made up of the court system determines whether the laws made are constitutional and whether they are executed constitutionally.**

- G. The kingdom of God was so designed by God Himself.**
 - 1. God makes the laws.**
 - 2. God appoints executives to execute His laws. The nation of Israel had been His appointed executive since He led them out of Egypt and placed them in Canaan. Our present lesson deals with God changing executives and giving the work to His church, now each local New Testament Church.**
 - 3. God judges each executive. Revelation 2 and 3.**
- H. In every age of man's existence on earth, God has provided an executive to execute His law on earth. Each has failed; each has been judged; each has been replaced.**
- I. Our present lesson deals with God's rejection of Israel and His replacing her with a new executive.**
- J. Let us note the players in this parable:**
 - 1. God the Father is the householder.**
 - 2. God's kingdom work on earth is the vineyard.**
 - 3. The husbandman is Israel.**
 - 4. The servants sent are the prophets of Old Testament time.**
 - 5. The Son is the Lord Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son.**
 - 6. The church established by Jesus is the new husbandman.**
 - 7. The fruits are souls saved and new churches established.**

I. LEARN THAT ISRAEL WAS HEAVEN'S EXECUTIVE ON EARTH.

- A. God had chosen Israel as His executive and had separated her unto Himself.**
- B. God had given Israel His law and left her to execute it according to His will and instructions.**

II. LEARN THAT ISRAEL HAD FAILED GOD.

- A. The greater part of the Old Testament is a record of Israel's failures.**
 - 1. How she committed spiritual adultery**
 - 2. How she killed the prophets**
 - 3. How she corrupted God's law by her interpretation.**
- B. How she has rejected His Son.**

III. LEARN THAT GOD DID TAKE HIS KINGDOM FROM ISRAEL AND GAVE IT TO HIS CHURCH.

A. Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8

B. The law of God was delivered to New Testament Churches -- Heaven's new executive.

C. While each saved person has heaven's command to share the saving gospel with lost humanity, no other organization operates under Heaven's authority.

CONCLUSION:

A. Let us consider how great it is to be a member of one of our Lord's New Testament Churches – a part of Heaven's executive here on earth.

B. Let us also consider the importance of living up to what God expects of His executive.

C. May this help each of us to reassess our attitudes concerning how we view this high position into which God has placed us?

THE ROCK OF AGES

Scripture: Matthew 21:42-44

Introduction:

- A. The words rock and stone are interchangeable.
 - 1. Stone is a piece of rock; the matter of which rock is composed.
 - 2. Rock is a large mass of stone.
 - 3. Anything like or suggesting a rock as in strength or stability.
 - 4. A person whose characteristics express strength and stability – one on whom you can depend
- B. Ages refer to times.
 - 1. The Bible speaks of the fullness of times.
 - 2. Also of ages to come. Ephesians 2:7; 3:21 and Colossians 1:26.
- C. Our subject is then defined as a person whose characteristics express strength and stability; a person on whom you can depend for needed help in every age and at any time.

I. LEARN WHO IS THE ROCK OF AGES.

- A. Deuteronomy 32:4 tells us that God is the Rock.
- B. 2 Samuel 22:2 declares that the Lord is the Rock.
- C. Psalm 18:2 also declares that the Lord is the Rock.
- D. Exodus 17:6 God commanded Moses to smite the Rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. In 1 Corinthians Paul referred to this and declared that Rock was Christ.
- D. Thus, we learn that the Rock of Ages is God, Himself, in the Person of His virgin born Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

II. LEARN HOW THE ROCK OF AGES RELATES TO MAN.

- A. How did He relate to Israel?
 - 1. He was first her Deliverer and Sustainer in the wilderness journey.
 - 2. But He became her stumbling stone as noted in the lesson text.
- B. How did He relate to His church?
 - 1. Matthew 16:18 He is the Rock on which the church is built.

2. He is the Head of the Corner. Matthew 21:42
 3. He is her strength, her guide, her hope.
- C. How does He relate to world powers?
1. Daniel 2:34, 44 “in the days of these kings” the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom – these kingdoms shall be destroyed.
 2. Revelation 19:11-16 reveals that Jesus shall come and put down all kingdoms of this world and set up His own.
- D. How does He relate to each individual? V. 44
1. He will either be your salvation or your destroyer.
 2. Whoso will fall, prostrate himself, on the Stone, on Jesus Christ shall receive forgiveness of sin and salvation.
 3. But, on whomsoever the Rock of Ages falls, he shall be ground to powder – remain in his sins, lost and on the road to hell.

CONCLUSIONS:

- A. Have you ever come before the Lord Jesus Christ with deep concern and sorrow of heart for your sin?
- B. Have you ever mentally fell before Him asking Him to have mercy on your hell bound soul?
- C. Now in this life, you can fall on Him and find comfort; should you fail to do this, He will one day fall on you in judgment.

THE MARRIAGE THAT NO ONE WANTED TO ATTEND

Scripture: Matthew 22:1-14

Introduction:

- A. Jesus has recently declared He would build His church upon the great Rock – that is on Himself.**
- B. From that time Jesus began to tell His disciples (His church) how He must go to Jerusalem and be crucified.**
- C. He has now come to Jerusalem one week before the Passover on which He will offer Himself as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.**
- D. He has entered the temple and cleansed it of the filth brought on by the corrupted services of Judaism.**
- E. The Chief Priests and scribes expressed their displeasure.**
- F. The day following hunger caused Him to seek food from a fig tree that gave promise of food by its foliage. He cursed it and it immediately died.**
- G. The Chief Priest and elders now challenged Him, asking who gave Him authority to act as He had.**
- H. Jesus then spoke the parable of the two sons as used it to charge the Chief Priests and elders of being like the fig tree, claiming to serve God, yet not doing so, professing to be saved, but still lost.**
- I. Jesus then spoke the parable of the householder and used its message to declare that God was taking His Kingdom work from the Jews and giving it to another people -- His church.**
- J. Immediately following Jesus spoke the parable of the marriage feast, a feast that no one wanted to attend.**

I. LEARN SOME BIBLE TRUTH THAT ARE NECESSARY FOR UNDERSTANDING THE LORD'S PURPOSE IN SPEAKING THIS PARABLE.

- A. God's primary purpose for marriage is reproduction.**
- B. God many times used natural things as symbolize spiritual truths. Such is the case with this parable.**
- C. In the Old Testament God referred to Himself as the husband of Israel. Isaiah 54:5; Jeremiah 3:14; 31:32. Through Israel God produced the huge nation of Israel.**
- D. Now that God has divorced Himself from His adulterous wife, He chooses to rear up a new people through a marriage between His Son and a new wife.**

E. Two Scripture references will be used to make this clear.

- 1. 2 Corinthians 11:2 Almost all English translations of this verse incorrectly render the Greek word “harmos” as espoused. This Greek word is only used one other time in the whole of the New Testament. In Hebrews 4:12 the word is correctly translated “joints.”**
- 2. Paul really told the church at Corinth, I have married you to one husband.” Of course he was speaking of marriage as symbolic, not as natural.**
- 3. In Romans 7:4 Paul told the church at Rome that they were dead to the law by the body of Christ: that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.**
- 4. These two Scriptures clearly teach that Jesus is symbolically married to each New Testament church.**

II. LEARN THAT THE GOD OF HEAVEN MADE A MARRIAGE FOR HIS SON.

- A. Of course, this is symbolic language, but it is true that the Son of God did in type take the church to be His bride.**
- B. The Father did bid guests to attend the wedding and none wanted to come**

GANGING UP AGAINST GOD

Matthew 22:15-22

Introduction:

- A. Jesus has come to Jerusalem to fulfill the will of the Father to die as the Passover Lamb to take away the sin of the world.**
- B. He confronted the Pharisees, the scribes, the elders, the Chief Priests in cleansing the temple. These leaders of Judaism have challenged Him.**
- C. Jesus has charged them with failure to repent and believe on Him. He has spoken the parable of the Householder which revealed that God was taking His kingdom work from Israel and giving it to another people.**
- D. Jesus then spoke the parable of the Marriage Feast made by the King for His Son who was taking unto himself his bride.**
- E. Our present Scriptural lesson reveals the officials of Judaism seeking help outside the spiritual realm – a political party.**
- F. Jesus is God dwelling in a human body. The Jewish leaders bring in help in the form of a political party as they contrive the defeat of Jesus.**
- G. This action gave rise to the title of my message -- Ganging up on God. Ganging is a verb which is defined as “to attack as a gang.**

I. LEARN THAT THE RELIGIOUS ENEMY WITHIN GANGS UP WITH SECULAR GOVERNMENT IN AN ATTEMPT TO DEFEAT GOD AND TRUTH.

- A. The Picture as seen in that time.**
 - 1. The leaders of Judaism were the Chief Priests, the Pharisees, the scribes, and the elders.**
 - 2. The Herodians constituted a secular political party in sympathy with King Herod who was appointed by Caesar.**
 - 3. These wedded their powers in an attempt to destroy the power of God and truth.**

B. Let us note the parallel in our own country today (2007).

- 1. The many false religions claiming to speak for God and truth deny the truth of the virgin birth, the literal bodily resurrection of Jesus.**
- 2. The legislature passes laws designed to defeat God and truth; secular schools teach evolution to the young and colleges and universities are hot beds of anti-God teachings and demonstrations.**
- 3. Secular minded judges enforce laws designed to defeat God and truth.**
- 4. The Secular entertainment world has created an environment that is anti-God and anti-truth.**
- 5. All of these have ganged up in an attempt to defeat God and truth.**

II. LEARN OF THE SUBTILE, HYPOCRITICAL APPROACH THIS GANG USES IN AN ATTEMPT TO DISCREDIT GOD AND TRUTH.

- A. Verse 16 – They address Him as “Master.” Then they try to set Him up by saying, “We know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men.” We esteem you very highly; we know you tell only the truth.**
- B. Verse 17 – Therefore on the basis of our high evaluation of your person and knowledge, “Tell us Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar or not?”**
- C. They thought He would answer “Yes” or “No.” Either way He would have been in trouble.**
- D. “Yes” would have compromised His claim of being from heaven.**
- E. “No” would have charged Him with treason against Caesar.**
- F. We may never be faced with so complex an attempt to compromise our stand for truth, but many tests will come.**
- G. In the last days before Jesus returns, all of God’s true people on earth shall be forced to make the choice to stand for truth when confronted with the decision to take the mark of the beast.**

III. LEARN THAT THE GANG IS NO MATCH FOR THE WISDOM OF GOD AND TRUTH.

- A. Verse 18 Jesus perceived their wickedness and demonstrated His wisdom in defeating them at their own game.**
- B. Verses 20, 21 Whose image and superscription is on the coin?**
- C. They answered, “Caesar’s.”**
- D. “Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s: and unto God the things that are God’s.”**
- E. This left them speechless – defeated -- they departed defeated one more time.**
- F. Let us keep this victory in mind and seek the wisdom of God to help us in time of trouble.**

CONCLUSION:

- A. Never be surprised by the attack of failed religions and the secular government.**
- B. Let us never enter into combat without seeking wisdom from God.**

WHOSE IMAGE DO YOU WEAR?

Matthew 22:15-22

Introduction:

- A. In His last week on earth as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, the whole world has been ganging up on Him.**
- B. The leaders of Judaism and the Herodians have asked Him if it were lawful to pay tribute to Caesar or not.**
- C. Jesus has asked for tribute money, money marked by Caesar's picture and name.**
- D. Jesus asked them whose image was on the coin and they answered, Caesar's.**
- E. Jesus then said, "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's."**
- F. Let us study the last part of that answer in the light of the Word of God – Whose image is imprinted on each of us?**

I. WHAT IS THE IMAGE STAMPED UPON EACH OF US AND WHAT IS THE EXPECTED OBLIGATION?

- A. Genesis 1:27 clearly declares that we were made in the image of God.**
 - 1. Not a physical image, because God has no physical form. Jesus declared, "God is Spirit – God the Father is Spirit; God the Son is Spirit; God the Spirit is Spirit.**
 - 2. God is intelligent Spirit able to think and to reason and to make rational decisions based on His own knowledge of all things.**
 - 3. Man is the only creature stamped with that image -- Man can think and reason and make decisions based on attained information. This is what "being made in the Image of God" means.**
- B. What does God expect of man made in His image? What is man obligated to do because he made in the image of God?**
 - 1. Man is expected and obligated to OBEY his Creator -- his God.**
 - 2. Genesis 2:15, 17 reveals that the first Adam was given a command and God expected Adam to obey Him – Adam was obligated to keep God's command.**
 - 3. Man was created in the image of God and placed on earth to honor God in full obedience to God's commands.**

II. LET US NOTE THE DEFAACEMENT OF THE IMAGE AND THE WRONG USE OF THE COIN.

A. The defacement of the image

- 1. Think of some coin produced by the United States Mint – new and fresh.**
- 2. Now think of that same coin that someone has bored holes in or scratched the surface.**
- 3. The image which God gave man has been effaced beginning with Adam and passed on to each generation from father to child.**
- 4. We are left with the ability to receive information and to reason and to make decisions.**

B. The wrong use of the coin.

- 1. Our lives are lived day by day with very little attention given to God and His will in our lives.**
- 2. We make decisions concerning our everyday lives with very little concern about God's will -- What God wants us to do.**
- 3. We yield to the passions and lusts of the flesh with little concern over what God thinks about what we do.**
- 4. We plan our lives and use our time and our talents and our energies and our property with very little thought of what God's will is in these decisions.**

C. To put it not so lightly, Our lives are much like a dollar bill that has gone through a shredder.

III. LET US REJOICE IN THE RESTORATION AND PERFECTING OF THE DEFACED COIN.

A. This work is not the work of man.

- 1. It is as impossible for a man to restore and perfect himself as it would be for a shredded dollar bill to make itself whole crisp and new again.**
- 2. This work can only be done by the Creator Himself.**

B. How can fallen man whose original image has been so effaced that there is little resemblance to the original be made better than new?

- 1. A mediator must be provided – One who can intercede on behalf of fallen man and move to bring God and man into the harmony enjoyed in the Garden before the fall.**

2. Because man was created in the image of God; it is possible for God to be like man.
3. Thus, God sent the divine Christ to take upon Himself a human body that through Him the restoration and perfection of fallen man might be accomplished.
4. Jesus is called the second Adam. He was in all points made like man; NOT sinful man, BUT like the first Adam in his created state.
5. Jesus Christ “Who is the image of the invisible God” (Col. 1:15) took upon Himself the sin of the world and died to pay our sin debt. And In Him we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins. (Col. 1:14)
6. Col. 1:21, 22 And you, that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your own mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight.
7. This is all accomplished through the new birth. The inner, new born man is a partaker of the divine nature and is imprinted with the image of God.
8. The restoration and perfection is not yet complete; BUT it will be in the perfecting of the whole man which will be accomplished in the resurrection of the body.
Read 1 Corinthians 15:51-57

CONCLUSIONS:

- A. Now, let each of us ask self –Whose image do I bear?
- B. Have you ever accepted the truth that by nature you bear a defaced image?
- C. Have you ever considered the truth that Jesus Christ took upon Himself your sin and died to pay your sin debt?
- D. Have you ever confessed your sin to God and asked Him to forgive you and trusted Jesus to save your hell bound soul?
- E. Are you now doing your best to render unto God that which is God’s – that is your life and all you possess?

THE HANGING OF THE LAW

Scripture: Matthew 22:34-40

Introduction:

- A. Keep in mind that Jesus has come to Jerusalem for the last time during His earthly ministry.
- B. He has cleansed the temple. Matt. 21:1-17
- C. He has looked for fruit on a fig tree which was fully leafed out; He found none and said “let no fruit grow on thee hence forever.” The tree withered away. This was symbolic of Judaism failing God’s purpose for that religion.
- D. The Chief priests and the elders of the people challenged Jesus’ authority to do these things.
- E. Jesus rebuked them and concluded His rebuke by declaring that the publicans and the harlots would go into the kingdom of God before them because they had not repented that they might believe.
- F. Jesus then spoke the Parable of the Householder in which Jesus told them that the kingdom of God would be taken from them and given to another people – which is His church.
- G. Jesus proceeded to speak of a certain king making a marriage for his Son – which no doubt referred to Jesus taking unto Himself the church as His bride – wife.
- H. Then the Pharisees ganged up with a political party called the Herodians in an attempt to defeat Jesus.
- I. Then the Sadducees tried to defeat Him.
- J. Now come the Pharisees again who put forth a lawyer who will attempt to cause Jesus to set priorities in keeping the Law of God thus saying that some commandments were of less importance than others.

I. LEARN THAT JESUS GIVES THE DIVINE INTERPRETATION OF THE LAW AND IN A SENSE BUILDS A GALLOWS ON WHICH TO HANG THE LAW.

- A. The Pharisees were strong on law keeping as they interpenetrated it.
- B. Jesus stated, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*

- C. The Lord covered three areas of love expected of each of us; 1) Love for God (v. 37); 2) Love for each other (v.39); 3) and love for self (as thy self v.39)**
- D. Love for others and for self are bound up in our love for God vs. 37, 38.**
- 1. We are commanded to love God with ALL our heart and soul and mind. Where then is there any room to love others and self?**
 - 2. To love others is to love God Matthew 25:34-41; 1 John 4:20, 21. To fail to love others is to prove we do not love God.**
 - 3. Concerning love for self – To put the true good of one’s eternity bound soul above the comfort and interest of our earth bound self is to love God.**
- E. Real love expressed by a person MUST begin with love for SELF.**
- 1. This may sound strange to you, but please hear me out.**
 - 2. Verse 38 does not mean first in time, but first in importance.**
 - 3. True love is that quality that causes a person to place the good of God and his neighbor above his own interest and comfort.**
 - 4. A lost person does not love God nor his neighbor. He can not; it is not within his power.**
 - 5. A lost person does not love himself; he must first hate himself; hate what he is and what he does to God.**
 - 6. He must ask God’s forgiveness and trust the saving of his soul to Jesus Christ.**
 - 7. In doing this, he displays love for his eternity bound soul; and after being born of the Spirit of God, it is possible for him to truly love God and his neighbor as he loves himself.**

II. LEARN THAT OUR LORD HANGED THE LAW ON THE GALLOWES OF LOVE.

A. The Law has failed God's purpose for its existence because of the Jews failed interpretation of it.

1. Romans 3:19, 20

2. The Jews were so wrong, they were accusing Jesus of breaking the law.

B. Also, the law was given for a specified time

1. Until the Seed should come to whom the promise was made. Galatians 3:19

2. Galatians 3:16 declared this Seed to be Christ.

C. Colossians 2:13, 14 reveal the hanging of the law on the gallows of love. *And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances (law) that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it (law) out of the way, NAILING IT TO HIS CROSS.*

CONCLUSIONS:

A. Have you ever in LOVE for your hell bound soul repented of your sin and trusted Jesus to save you?

B. If you haven't, you do not have true love for God and for others; you simply have a simple conditional, puppy love.

C. We who are saved need to spend our lives in demonstrating our love for God and for others.

THE TABLES ARE TURNED

Matthew 22:41-46

Introduction:

- A. All the attacks against Jesus which we have been studying occurred in the last week before Jesus was crucified.
- B. All attacks have been by the leaders of God-ordained religion of that time.
- C. In all of these engagements, the Jewish leaders have been on the offence. Jesus won each encounter; but the Jews continued the attack.
- D. Now, the tables are turned, Jesus takes the offensive.
- E. To fully understand what took place, we must acquaint ourselves with those who forged the attack against Jesus – Pharisees, scribes, Chief Priests, elders of the people.

I. LEARN SOME THINGS THE ANTAGONISTS KNEW AND LOOKED FOR.

- A. They knew that God had promised to restore their land to them and that He would send His Anointed One (Messiah/ Hebrew – Christ/Greek) to rule over them.
- B. They also knew that their Messiah would be of the seed of David and that He would come out of the town of Bethlehem.
 - 1. John 7:40-42 reveals this as true. *Some said, this is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?*
 - 2. Matthew 2:4-6 records the Chief Priests and scribes THIRTY years before declaring the Scriptures to teach this. No doubt some of the same leaders who now attack Jesus.

II. LEARN WHAT THESE ANTAGONISTS HAD SEEN AND HEARD CONCERNING JESUS CHRIST.

- A. They had witnessed Jesus working multitudes of miracles, enough to convince any reasonable person. John 3:1,2 Nicodemus came to Jesus and said, *Rabbi, we know that thou art come from God: for no man can do these miracles that that thou doest, except God be with him.*

- B. They had heard Jesus declare “I am the living bread which came down from heaven.” (John 6:51) AND “I am the light of the world.” (John 8:12)**
- C. Jesus declared Himself to be God in the flesh. John 8:24, 28, 58.**
- D. In the light of all this, the Pharisees had mounted their attack against Jesus.**

III. LEARN THAT JESUS TURNED THE TABLES BY ASKING A SIMPLE QUESTION THAT ENTRAPED THEM.

- A. What think ye of THE Christ. The definite article rules out all but the Christ promised by God to the Jews.**
- B. Whose Son is He?**
- C. When they answered, DAVID, the trap was sprung.**

IV. LEARN THAT JESUS USED THE SCRIPTURE TO STOP THE MOUTH OF HIS ANTAGONISTS

- A. Jesus spoke a quote from a Psalm of David (110:1) *The Lord said unto my Lord sit there at my right hand, until I make their enemies thy foot stool.***
- B. Then He asked them, If David then called him Lord, how is he his son?**
- C. V.46 reveals them leaving in defeat.**

V. LET US TAKE NOTE OF A POSSIBLE VICTORY IN DEFEAT.

- A. Acts 2 records the great sermon Peter preached on the great day of Pentecost.**
- B. Verses 29-32 reveals the answer to the questing that stopped the mouth of those who had attacked Jesus. THE Christ was both God and man, God in the spirit and man in the flesh.**
- C. Verses 37 and 38 record the possible victory. Many of those who had gone down in defeat before Christ could have been among the 3,000 who were saved that day.**

CONCLUSIONS:

- A. Let us recommit ourselves to a study of the Scriptures from which all truth comes.**
- B. Is there one person present who has never in humble repentance asked Jesus to save your hell bound soul? If so, trust Him now, He will save you.**

UNMASKING RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Matthew 23

Introduction:

- A. In every age of man's existence our righteous God has ordained a religious system by which sinful man can approach Him in righteousness.**
- B. It is important to take note of the time element of this lesson.**
 - 1. The Law Covenant had been in effect for more than a thousand years. The Law was soon to be nailed to the cross and replaced with The New Covenant -- a new and better way.**
 - 2. But at this time the Law was still in effect and under the leadership of official Israel – the scribes and Pharisees and Chief priests and elders of the people.**
 - 3. Jesus was observing the Law and fulfilling it and He expected His disciples to observe it and do as it required.**
- C. Jesus, The Christ, has been under attack by these religious leaders since beginning His earthly ministry. The attacks have increased and intensified in this last week before He will be crucified on Wednesday – the Passover.**
- D. In our last lesson we learned that these leaders had come to know that they were no match for The Christ. They would ask Him no more questions.**
- E. Now, Jesus takes time to publicly unmask these religious leaders and warn His disciples and the multitude against them.**

I. JESUS FIRST CONDEMNS SOME PERSONAL NONDOCTRINAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THESE RELIGIOUS LEADERS.

- A. V. 3 - They say and do not.**
- B. V. 4 - They bind heavy burdens on the people which they refuse to bear.**
- C. V. 5. – Their works are done to be seen of men.**
- D. Vs. 6-12- They love to sit in high places and to be called Rabbi, Master, Father. They exalt themselves.**

II. JESUS THEN CONDEMNS THEIR WORKS.

- A. Vs. 13-33 Eight times Jesus addresses these religious leaders as “hypocrites.”**
 - 1. v. 13--“ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men”**

2. v. 14-- “ye devour widows’ houses, and for pretence make long prayer”
3. v. 15 – “ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.”
4. vs. 16-22 --ye make much to do about oaths (promises to God), some were binding and some were not.
5. vs. 23, 24 – they made much to do over paying tithes and omitted judgment, mercy, and faith.
6. vs. 25, 26 – they concerned themselves with their outside cleansing and paid little attention to their inner lives.
7. vs. 27, 28 – ye are like whited sepulchers, beautiful on the outside, yet full of dead men’s bones.
8. vs. 29-32 – you try to cover your sin by building tombs for the prophets and garnishing the sepulchers of the righteous, but to no avail. You are guilty and guilt can not be covered by your works.

III. JESUS NOW REMOVES THE MASK COMPLETELY.

A.v. 33 Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

1. With the mask removed, they are identified as yet lost and on their road to hell.
2. Is not this a repeat of the Lord’s teaching in Matthew 7:21-23? In that day many shall say unto me ---.

B.vs. 34-39 – Jesus prophecies their continued destructive deception even to the time of their own destruction.

CONCLUSION:

- A.** We should never let bad leaders turn us against God and His truth.
- B.** Hypocrisy is bad, but no person should let it keep him from confessing Jesus Christ as Savior.
- C.** Thank God for leaders in Christianity who still preach and teach and live the truth of God.

PREVIEW OF END TIME

Matthew 24

Introduction:

- A. Jesus has just completing the unmasking of the leaders of Judaism – Pharisees, scribes, Chief Priests, elders of the people.**
- B. He and His disciples have departed the temple. They call His attention to the beauty of the buildings of the temple.**
- C. Jesus responds by saying, “There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”**
- D. The disciples then ask Him three questions: When shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world (age).**
- E. This chapter contains our Lord’s answer to these three questions. Thus, the whole chapter deals with prophecy -- some of which has now been fulfilled and some has not, but all will be.**
- F. Let us note some precautions we should observe.**
 - 1. Do not take a dogmatic position – My interpretation is right.**
 - 2. Remember that much Old Testament prophecy reveals the future without regard to time, only the truth. Isaiah 9:6, 7; Isaiah 61:1, 2**
 - 3. Few sections of Scripture have challenged a correct interpretation as much as this chapter.**
 - 4. Like Revelation, it can only be understood by accepting the reasoned position that two or more things happen at the same time in different locations.**

I. LET US HEED OUR LORD’S WARNING.

- A. V. 4 Take heed that no man deceive you.**
- B. V. 5 Many shall come in my name, saying, I am the Christ; and shall deceive many.**
- C. V. 11 Many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.**
- D. Vs. 23-26**

II. IT SEEMS THAT JESUS BEGINS HIS ANSWERS WITH THE THIRD QUESTION IN VIEW.

- A. Vs. 6-8 “the end is not yet.” These are the beginning of sorrows (Odin) is the Greek word for birth pains. They begin and grow more severe until birth.**
- B. V. 13 “endure to end shall be delivered”**

C.V. 14 “then shall the end come” Only after the gospel has been preached unto all nations.

III. NOW, IT SEEMS THAT JESUS GIVES ATTENTION TO ANSWERING THE FIRST QUESTION.

A.Vs. 15-21 These appear to refer to the fall of the Jewish nation and the destruction of the temple buildings.

B. Verse 21 may refer to both the first and third questions. The tribulation must in part refer to the tribulation the great of Revelation 7. “no, nor ever shall be” This language sets forth that no tribulation shall ever be greater than this one; thus the tribulation the great must be in view.

IV. JESUS ANSWERS THE QUESTION CONCERNING THE SIGNS OF HIS COMING.

A. Verse 27 declares that His coming will not be in secret. The whole world will see Him. The day of His coming is secret, but His coming is not.

B. Verses 28-30 reveal signs followed by the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

C. Verses 32-34 call us to view a fact of nature that teaches that the coming of the Lord is even at the door. Luke wrote, “When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.” Luke 22:28. This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. (The generation which sees all these things fulfilled)

D. Verses 37-41 reveal that people will be concerned ONLY with life on the earth – until all shall be taken away.

V. JESUS REVEALS WHEN HE WILL GATHER HIS PEOPLE UNTO HIMSELF.

A. Verse 31 reveals the gathering.

B. It appears that the gathering follows close on the heels of the signs named in verses 29 and 30.

VI. JESUS DECLARED THE CERTAINTY OF THESE THINGS IN VERSE 35.

VII. JESUS DECLARES THAT THE TIME IS LOCKED UP IN THE MIND OF THE FATHER. VERSE 36

VIII. LEARN WHAT IS THE ATTITUDE WE SHOULD HAVE CONCERNING THESE TRUTHS.

A. Verse 42 – be watchful.

B. Verse 44 – Be ready.

IX. LEARN THE CONCLUSION TO THE MATTER.

A. Blessings and rewards for the faithful.

B. Punishment for the unfaithful

WHEN THE BRIDEGROOM COMES

Matthew 25:1-13

Introduction:

- A. Chapter 24:3 is a record of the Lord's disciples asking Him three questions.**
- B. Most of His answer concerned the last two questions – what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the age.**
- C. The last part of chapter 24 deals with the general attitude of the world toward God, His Christ and things spiritual.**
- D. Beginning with verse 45 Jesus spoke of His servants -- the wise and the evil. The wise are those who are true servants (saved people); the evil are those who claim to be His servants, but are not (lost people claiming to work for God).**
- E. Chapter 25 begins with the word "then" which clearly indicates that Jesus is still answering the questions His disciples had asked Him.**
- F. Various interpretations have been placed on these verses, some of which must be ruled out.**
 - 1. Some say all virgins stand for all the saved. Not possible – some had no oil which is symbolic of the Holy Spirit.**
 - 2. Some say faithful and unfaithful saved. Not possible – foolish had no oil – no Holy Spirit.**
 - 3. Some say the saved in true churches. Not possible – there are many saved in false churches.**
 - 4. Some say true and false churches with the wise making up the bride in glory. Not possible – all these virgins were the friends of the bridegroom. The bride was inside.**
- G. Our Lord spoke many Kingdom Parables designed to reveal different aspects of His kingdom work. In some He gave the true interpretation by which He set the pattern for us to follow in all parable interpretations.**
- H. We must remember that the term "Kingdom of Heaven" refers to God's kingdom business on earth. All churches, groups and/or people who claim to speak for God during this age are included in the lessons Jesus teaches in this parable.**

I. LEARN THAT THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN SHALL CONTINUE AS A MIXTURE OF SAVED AND LOST UNTIL JESUS COMES AGAIN.

- A. The ten virgins represent the saved and the lost in the huge expression of God's kingdom work on earth.**
- B. This harmonizes with the interpretation Jesus placed on other Kingdom parables.**
 - 1. Wheat and Tares – Mathew 3:24-30; 36-43.**
 - 2. Dragnet – Mathew 13:47-50**
- C. The ten virgins of this parable likewise reveal both saved and lost in the visible expression of the Kingdom of heaven up to the coming of the Lord.**

II. LEARN THAT CHRISTIAN PROFESSION IS NOT SUFFICIENT FOR ACCEPTANCE BEFORE GOD.

- A. Take note of the ten virgins:**
 - 1. All were called virgins.**
 - 2. All slumbered and slept.**
 - 3. All rose and trimmed their lamps.**
 - 4. All had the same outward appearance.**
 - 5. Inner oil (indwelling Holy Spirit) was the only difference.**
- B. There are many who call themselves Christian and who have every outward expression of the kingdom of heaven and have every appearance of being saved – BUT like the five foolish virgins, they have not the Holy Spirit dwelling within.**
- C. These shall be left on the outside cut off from the Lord and shall hear Him say, “I know you not.”**
- D. Jesus spoke of this same time in Matthew 7:21-23. In that day speaks of the day under consideration in Matthew 25:1-13.**

III. LEARN THAT THE TIME TO MAKE READY TO MEET THE LORD IS BEFORE HE COMES.

A. Verse 13 – Jesus called on people to “Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.”

B. To watch is to be ready.

C. All Scripture urges us to act in the present.

- 1. Today is the time – you can not do anything tomorrow; all you do is done today.**
- 2. Now is the time – you can not do anything in the future, Every decision and every action is done in the present time -- now.**

D. No person is promised tomorrow. Preparation for eternity must be made NOW.

CONCLUSION:

A. Let each of us ask self, “Have I made preparations for the coming of the Lord?” “Have I truly been born of the Spirit of the Lord?” “Do I have the oil of the Holy Spirit dwelling within me?”

B. If we can not with certainty answer “Yes” to these questions, NOW is the best time to make things right with the Lord.

C. Repentance toward God and trusting faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only way.

WHEN THE TALENTS ARE CALLED IN

Matthew 25:14-30

Introduction:

- A.** Chapter 25 began with “Then shall the Kingdom of heaven be like.” This established the time as the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- B.** Our present lesson begins with “For *the kingdom of heaven is* as a man traveling into a far country. The word “For” ties the teaching of this parable to the same time element – the second coming of Jesus.
- C.** The beginning of chapter 26 begins with “And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings.”
- D.** All that Jesus said in chapters 24 and 25 were spoken in answer to the questions His disciples had asked Him – 24:3.
- E.** Also, keep in mind that the Bible is its own best commentary. Any interpretation **MUST** harmonize with clear Bible teaching in other places.

I. LEARN THAT ALL PEOPLE BELONG TO THE LORD.

- A.** The “servants” belong to the Lord and the “goods” belong to the Lord -- “His own servants and his goods.”
- B.** Psalm 24:1 declares this to be true. *The earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.*

II. LEARN THAT THIS PARABLE GROUPS ALL PEOPLE INTO TWO GENERAL GROUPS.

- A.** The good and the wicked; the saved and the lost.
- B.** Verses 24 and 26 clearly establish the one talent servant as a lost person.
- C.** The language he used could never be used by a saved person.
- D.** The word “hard” comes from the Greek word *skleros* is always a term of reproach indicating harsh, inhuman character.
- E.** **ONLY** a person who has never tasted the sweetness of forgiven sins would ever speak such words about the Lord – only lost people would speak such charges against Jesus Christ.

III. LEARN THAT THE LORD HAS GIVEN TALENTS TO EACH SERVANT ACCORDING TO EACH PERSON'S ABILITY.

- A. Since the language of verses 24 and 26 leave no doubt concerning the spiritual condition of the one talent person, the one talent is the care of his own soul. Salvation comes before service.**
- B. After salvation, the Lord gives to each child of God according to his ability. Verse 15 to *every man according to his several ability*.**
- C. To one he gave 5; to another he gave two, to another he gave one.**

IV. LEARN THAT ACCOUNTABILITY AND REWARDING SHALL BE ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS. Verse 19-27

- A. Each servant shall be called before the Lord separately to give an account of his use of the God-given talents.**
- B. Verses 20, 21 The five talent servant was judged and rewarded and entered into the joy of the Lord.**
- C. Verses 22, 23 The two talent servant was judged and entered into the joy of the Lord.**
- D. Verses 24-30 The one talent, unprofitable servant was judged and cast into hell fire and brimstone.
 - 1. Had he cared for his first talent and been saved, he would have been given more.**
 - 2. Matthew 7:21-23 harmonizes with this interpretation. Dedicated service without salvation counts for nothing in God's sight****

CONCLUSION;

- A. We should all accept the truth that we belong to the Lord.**
- B. We should all accept the truth that Jesus left us here for a purpose – to serve Him.**
- C. Let each of us make sure we have taken care of the first talent the Lord gave us – by repenting of our sin and trusting the salvation of our soul to Jesus.**
- D. Let each saved person take note of the importance of using our God-given talents wisely that we may hear our Lord say, “enter into the joy of thy Lord.”**

