

## Matthew Week 17 Happy Thanksgiving! Oct 10, 2021

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### Matthew Week 17

**Definitions matter:** if God IS Love than God defines Himself. God defines LOVE not the culture or our feelings.

- Love God – with ALL your heart, soul & strength
- Love God – means Obey God

**Our Mission statement:** Love God, Love People, Be Discipled, Make Disciples

**Question...** “what is spilling out of you?”

### The Great Commandment through Matthew 23-25:

- **Mt 23:1-36 Seven Woes to the Scribes and Pharisees**
  - **Matthew 23:2-4 (ESV)** “The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses’ seat, so do and observe whatever they tell you, but not the works they do. For they preach, but do not practice. They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on people’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to move them with their finger.
  - Jesus goes on to charge the religious leaders of the day with a few other things:
    - They weren’t willing to help people
    - They taught about God but didn’t obey God
    - They preached dead religion rather than KNOWING God
    - They did ministry as an outward show... but inwardly were greedy, self-centered, seeking their own glory and the pleasures of this world over seeking God’s glory and his kingdom
    - They taught about certain aspects of the Law such as tithing to the temple, often distorted, but neglected the weightier matters of Justice, mercy, faithfulness to God
  - **SUMMARY:** Jesus judged them because they failed to LOVE GOD, OBEY GOD & LOVE PEOPLE – they knew the right answers but they served themselves over God & others.
- **Mt 23:37-39 Lament over Jerusalem**
  - **Matthew 23:37-39 (ESV)** “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’”
  - **SUMMARY:** you see Jesus’ heart! To BE WITH HIS PEOPLE. But he charges them guilty of killing the prophets He sent to them... and says they were UNWILLING (DISOBEDIENT) in coming to Him. They were FAILING to LOVE GOD & OBEY GOD.
- **Mt 24:1-35 Signs of the End of the Age**

- **Matthew 24:4-14 (ESV)** And Jesus answered them, “See that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and they will lead many astray. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are but the beginning of the birth pains. “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name’s sake. And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.
- **SUMMARY:** WARNING & ENCOURAGEMENT to not be distracted by the world and sin around us – but to stay true to LOVE & SERVING GOD alone and LOVING PEOPLE – despite REJECTION and even unto DEATH.
  
- **Mt 24:36-51 No one knows the day or hour**
  - **Matthew 24:36-51 (ESV)** For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man... Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming... Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. “Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions. But if that wicked servant says to himself, ‘My master is delayed,’ and begins to beat his fellow servants and eats and drinks with drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know and will cut him in pieces and put him with the hypocrites. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.
  - **SUMMARY:** Jesus warns that we should STAY AWAKE and be ready – how does he define that? He does so by giving a negative example that demonstrates NOT being ready... and it includes LIVING FOR SELF & MISTREATING OTHERS or, FAILING TO LOVE GOD & LOVE PEOPLE.
  
- **Mt 25:1-13 The ten virgins**
  - Five brought extra oil, Five did not. They ALL fell asleep while waiting. We are NOT told explicitly what that oil is... works? Faith? What we are told is what it cost them and what Jesus charged them with... Jesus said it kept them from entering the Wedding Feast and said it was because “He did not KNOW THEM.”
  - **1 John 2:3-6 (ESV)** And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar
  - **SUMMARY:** Jesus warns that failure to KNOW/LOVE HIM & OBEY HIM could cost you entrance to Heaven.

- **Mt 25:14-30 The parable of the talents**
  - 5, 2, 1 talents. Two servants went to work and their work was accepted. The other servant refused to do anything and was not accepted.
  - **SUMMARY:** Jesus warns that obedience – not perfect – but movement in the right direction is expected.
  
- **Mt 25:31-46 The final Judgement: The sheep & goats**
  - **Matthew 25:31-46 (ESV)** “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’ “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ Then they also will answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?’ Then he will answer them, saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”
  - **SUMMARY:** Jesus WARNS & ENCOURAGES! He gives us firsthand knowledge of what he will be looking for when we stand before him... and here he brilliantly ties the Great Command together by showing that LOVE FOR GOD IS FIRST & is SHOWN in how we LOVE PEOPLE & TREAT THE LEAST OF THESE.

**The theme of today has been:** Knowing the right answers is not enough. Even if you can answer correctly. If you fail to LOVE GOD and by extension, love the least of these. You have missed the point.

#### A. **The Great Commandment TODAY**

Where does this leave us? how do we apply this to ourselves TODAY as we are facing challenges such as Covid.

#### **Focus FIRST on what is MOST important**

The MOST important: The Testimony of Jesus in our lives and how that is being displayed to the world around us through our focus on LIVING the Great Commandment and FULFILLING the Great Commission.

This MUST be the foundation of our lives. Everything else needs to be built on and should reflect this.

### **1 Corinthians 13:1-7 (ESV)**

...And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Even if we sacrifice our lives for our beliefs in what is right or wrong – if we fail at LOVE – we FAIL. Even if we end up being 100% RIGHT – if we have not LOVE – we are NOTHING.

**WHEN the Testimony of Jesus is the MOST important thing begin to:**

#### **1. PRAY like Jesus PRAYED:**

- a. **Question:** Do you lead people into PRAYER or GOSSIP? Does your prayer life reflect your desire to Love God and see His Kingdom come on the earth?

#### **2. PRIORITIZE like Jesus PRIORITIZED – DISCIPLE OTHERS**

- a. **2 Peter 3:9 (ESV)** The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.
- b. **Matthew 24:14 (ESV)** And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.
- c. **Question:** Do your priorities show Jesus' priorities? Or, your priorities? Do people leave encounters with you wanting more of Jesus? Do you look for ways to show people who Jesus is or do you just focus more on issues that are important to you?

#### **3. LOVE like Jesus LOVED:**

- a. **STOP:** think about the “come just as you are LOVE of Jesus”... think of how he has corrected, directed, encouraged you... even when you DID NOT DESERVE IT.
- b. **Question:** If you asked the last person you disagreed with, either in person, social media, or zoom, how they felt after their interaction with you. Would they say, respected, cared for, seen and heard? Or, judged, bitter and upset? Did they leave feeling Jesus' “come just as you are love”?

#### **4. SUFFER like Jesus SUFFERED:**

- a. Are we willing to suffer? To lose our freedoms? Comforts? For the sake of others and the Kingdom of Heaven?
- b. **HINT:** you will know how willing you are by looking at how you spend your time & money 😊. Those are some of the BEST indicators of how willing you are to suffer for others.
- c. **Matthew 26:39 (ESV)** And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as

you will.” “my father if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, but NOT as I will but as YOU will”

- d. **He obeyed through suffering and continued loving others!** He continued to pray for and encourage those around him. E.g. the disciples and those persecuting him
- e. **Question:** Is your life marked by a desire to DO God’s Will? If you would ask those closest to you, would they agree/disagree? Are you willing to suffer for Christ? Does your life already show this?

**Question:** what is spilling out of you? What is spilling out of us?

**Let’s commit to:** pray over gossip, put Christ’s Kingdom over ours, love the least of these in word & action, shine bright for Jesus when we suffer

**Matthew 6:33 (ESV)**

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

**Week 17: Passage of the Week: Matthew 23-26**

**MAP Challenge Jesus’ call to those who follow him:**

**M** - memorize – Matthew 22:38-39

**A** – application – the next Covid conversation you are in (will happen this week). Look for a way to encourage the person you are speaking with and if the opportunity presents, see if you can steer the conversation to pray for them or others.

**P** – pray – pray for the church to grow in loving God & loving the least of these and to shine brightly the testimony of Jesus with our whole lives. Pray also for someone you know who is struggling.

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