



KIAMA ANGLICAN CHURCHES



Bible Studies - Term 1, 2024

Studies 7 - 8

Matthew 22:15 - 28:20

Famous Last Words

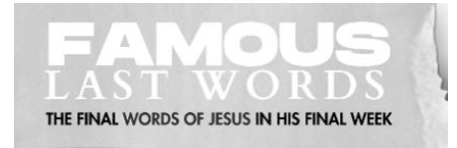
The final words of Jesus in his final week

A Sermon and Bible Study Series
on the end of Matthew's Gospel

The Preaching Plan			
Sunday		Matthew	Sermon Title
January	28	22:15-22	Government and God
February	4	22:23-33	God of the Living
	11	22:34-40	Greatest Commandments
	18	22:41-46	David's Son, David's Lord
	25	<i>A one-off sermon,</i>	<i>not part of this series.</i>
March	3	23:1-39	You Hypocrites!
	10	24:1-44	Keep Watch
	17	24:42 - 25:46	Be Faithful and Wise
<i>Palm Sunday</i>	24	26:1-16	Prediction, Plot, Perfume (and Palms)
<i>Good Friday</i>	29	26:17 - 27:66	My God, My God!
<i>Easter</i>	31	28:1-15	Do Not Be Afraid
April	7	28:16-20	Go and Make Disciples

Study 7 - Matthew 24:42 - 25:46

Be Faithful and Wise



Getting Started

In this study we hear a number of short parables from Jesus.

What is a parable?

Do you have a favourite?

1. The Parable of the Homeowner and the Thief

Read Matthew 24:42-44

This is where we finished up in the last study - with the 'unexpectedness' of the end of the age and the return of Jesus. (See also 24:36-41.) The call was to 'keep watch' (24:42) *and be prepared* (24:44).

As Jesus continues, the theme of readiness for his return is still prominent, though now we are given some clues as to *how* we are to keep watch and be ready. Perhaps it is summed up by the words of verse 45 which give us the title of this study: *Be Faithful and Wise*.

Note: You may wish to focus on just a couple of the remaining sections in this long passage.

2. The Parable of Two Kinds of Servants

Read Matthew 24:45-51

What is it that tests the character of the servants in the parable?

What do the actions of each servant reveal about their character?

In the parable, who do the good servant and the wicked servant represent?

How does the way we think about the return of Jesus impact the way we live now?

If we were to give a main point for this parable, it could be, '*Be Responsible.*' Note that it is not our efforts at being responsible that make us ready for the return of Jesus, rather our faithful responsibility is the external evidence of our faith in Jesus.

3. The Parable of the Ten Virgins

Read Matthew 25:1-13

The scene calls to mind a typical traditional Jewish wedding. The groom would leave his parents' house with a group of friends and go to the home of his bride where the wedding ceremony was performed. Then there would be a procession to the wedding banquet, usually at the bridegroom's home. The ten virgins are bridesmaids who are not yet married. Unlike today's weddings, the custom was for the bridegroom to come at an unexpected time.

How is God portrayed in these Old Testament verses?

Isaiah 54:4-6, 62:4-5; Jeremiah 3:14, 31:31-32; Hosea 2:19.

What are the implications of how Jesus portrays himself in Matthew 9:15 (and less explicitly here in Matthew 25)?

Read Revelation 19:6-9 for more wedding imagery.

What is it that makes the wise virgins wise?

What is it that make the foolish virgins foolish?

The main point here is '*Be Ready.*'

Why do we need to always be ready (verse 13)?

How can we be ready?

4. The Parable of the Eight Talents

Read Matthew 25:14-30

This section is the focus of the sermon on this wider passage on Sunday 17 March,

At the time of Jesus, a talent was a large sum of money – about twenty years of wages for a labourer. It is eight talents that the master distributes to his servants. Our English translations often use ‘bags of gold’ or ‘bags of silver’ or ‘thousands of dollars.’ Our English word ‘talent,’ referring to natural abilities, is derived from this parable.

What do the talents in the parable represent?

Who do the servants represent?

What do the good and faithful servants do right?

What does the wicked servant do wrong?

What do we learn about what it means for us to *Be Productive* in our Christian lives?

How could you make better use of your talents (in all sense of the word)?

5. The Judgement to Come (Sheep and Goats)

Read Matthew 25:31-46

This judgement scene brings what is often called ‘The Olivet Discourse’ (see 24:3) to a close, announcing that we must *Be Accountable* for what we do in this life while wait for the return of Jesus.

Back in November this passage was part of the Generous Justice Series. If you were around for those sermons and studies you might like to ask yourself, ‘What am I doing differently as a result of that series?’

How are you caring for the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, and the prisoner? What more could you do?

The call to action is big one but it is not the means of gaining salvation. Rather our growing action in the world around us is a sign that saving faith (faith in the death of Jesus for us) is present.

Conclusion

In each section what are the two (and only two) types of people?

What happens to each group when Jesus returns?

For those of us who trust in Jesus, this chapter should give us great joy, and spur us on to living for Him.

Pray that we will grow in living out a life, being faithful and wise, in response to all that Jesus has done for us as we wait for his return.

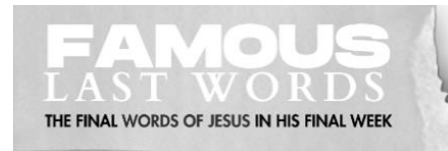
This chapter should also weigh heavily on us as we consider the eternal destiny of those who have not responded to the good news of Jesus.

Pray that we will use our talents (in all senses of the word) so others will also be ready.

“We must be ready meet with our Master and Lord, whether at the end of life or at the end of this age. Yet we are all called to account for what we have done with our lives. Live as though Jesus is coming back today, plan as though he is not coming back for a hundred years.” M.J. Wilkins

Study 8 - Matthew 26:1-16

Prediction, Plot, Perfume



Getting Started

Think about the most expensive gift you've given. Think about the most expensive gift you have received. Now repeat – but for the cheapest gift in both cases.

Does the dollar value of gifts we give and receive matter?

Read Matthew 26:1-16

1. The Plot Against Jesus (v1-5)

What does Jesus predict in verse 2.

This is the fourth time he has done so. See Matthew 16:21; 17:22-23; 20:17-19

What has been the attitude of the Jewish leaders to Jesus in the earlier studies in this series, and back further, to his entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday? (see 21:14-16, 23, 45-46; 22:15, 23, 35, 46)

What is the attitude of the chief priests and elders now? (26:3-5)

Why do they want to arrest Jesus secretly? What does this say about their character?

What is the festival they are referring to?

2. Jesus Anointed at Bethany (v6-13)

How would you have felt watching someone pour a year's worth of wages of perfume on someone's head?

What does the disciples' response tell you about their level of understanding of who Jesus is?

How does Jesus respond to the disciples? What is the significance of the woman's actions?

Although Jesus highlights a unique part of what the woman does (verse 12), how might we do a beautiful, costly thing for Jesus?

It is an extravagant response to Jesus, but is it too extravagant? What about the poor? (See verse 9-11)

Jesus is not dismissive of the poor as he quotes from Deuteronomy 15:11. Read the whole of that verse. What is the call there?

To the gathered disciples it appears Jesus is worth less than a year's wages. If it's not to crass to put it this way, 'What is Jesus worth to you?'

How is that reflected in what you do with your money, your possessions, your time, your energy and your skills?

How is that reflected in being 'open-handed to the poor and needy'?

How does this relate to Matthew 22:34-40 (which we looked at in study 3)?

3. Judas Agrees to Betray Judas (v14-16)

The scene changes. What is Jesus worth to Judas? (verse 15)

None of the gospels tell us why Judas betrayed Jesus. What do you think might have motivated him?

John's parallel account (John 12:4-6) gives us a hint at what might be a possible reason.

What does Jesus say about his betrayer just a few verses past what we read? See Matthew 26:20-25.

Conclusion

In this study we have seen a number of responses to Jesus. Only one could be called a right response. How are you responding to Jesus?

Michael J Wilkins says of the woman, 'Her example sets a high precedent for all subsequent disciples of Jesus.'

Pray that we will grow in following that precedent.

