

9/8/24

Sermon – Stay Focused

Scripture – Mathew 24 bits and 25:1-13

Main Message – Don't become tired, bored, lackadaisical, deceived, confused, or anything other than keeping your eyes on Jesus

There will come a day when Jesus will return. It is a common theme in the Bible and is easier to identify in the New Testament than in the old. Sadly, there are many who only say it is a figure of speech, or a concept of some sort, rather than the actual physical return of Jesus. This would be one of those deceptions to help keep you asleep. Jesus warned us time and time again, but one of the most poignant descriptions is in the Parable of Ten Virgins.

Read Mathew 25-1-13

Well, these virgins represent those who are betrothed to the bridegroom. Today we would call them Christians. Some stayed focused. Some fell asleep. Only those who stayed focused and didn't fall asleep were welcomed to the wedding feast. This isn't the enemies of God, but those who claim to believe, but just didn't stay focused and drifted away for whatever reason.

Now this Parable came right before the one we did last week on the Lord who left for a long time to return and evaluate his servant's dedication. Recall last week's message. Some didn't do anything with what they were charged with. They were cast out, just like the virgins who did not have enough oil in their lamps.

Why did Jesus give his disciples these parables? The best way is to go to the prior chapter and look. It all makes perfect sense when you read it all together, but I will only hit the high points to make this point abundantly clear.

The disciples desperately wanted knowledge in chapter 24 and the very first thing Jesus says clearly is this in vs. 4-5. Take heed that no man deceives you, for many will come in my name, Saying, I am Christ and shall deceive many. Continuing near the end of the chapter from vs 42 – 51.

Jesus is saying, do as I command and don't drift away and fall asleep. It is interesting that many consider the parables difficult. It is simply a picture image of often time what Jesus has just said to drive the point home. It is easier to remember this image of 10 virgins than the 50 vs containing all manner of things in chapter 24.

So what does falling asleep really mean. Here are a few ways. He gave the parables to demonstrate.

Being Deceived by "religious authority" Vs 24:5 and vs.11.... *many will come in my name.*

Losing Heart by not recognizing God's timeline 24:6 ... *it's a troubled world in which we live.*

Failing the test of persecution – Mathew 24:9-10... *afflicted and betrayed is the day's meal.*

Love grown cold – Mathew 24:12 ... *The faithful don't fall in step with the world's sin.*

Not enduring to the end. Mathew 24:13. *AKA giving up*

You see, those who are listening, paying attention, being diligent take seriously these warnings. I share them with you to inspire you to continue through every test and trial and why? Because I love you and will risk telling you the truth because Jesus told us this very special statement from the book of Mark chapter 13 vs. 23. **But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.**