

**CALVARY PANDAN BIBLE-
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**
[Adapted from Bethel Bible-
Presbyterian Church, 10 Downing
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DHW BIBLE CLASS

LESSON 34

THE LIFE OF CHRIST

INTRODUCTION

We continue with Jesus' Olivet Discourse. The disciples had asked Him when would the end of the world be, and what the signs were. Jesus continued His sermon. He reiterated the certainty of His return. He teaches that His coming again might be delayed. In the meantime, Jesus teaches that His people should maintain the right and proper attitude and action. He predicted His betrayal and death again. He commended Mary for her beautiful deed to Him. Contrasting Mary is Judas who betrayed His Lord with a kiss.

We will study the lesson under the following headings:

CONTENTS

- 1. The Day and the Hour of the Second Coming of Christ:** Matthew 24:36-51; Mark 13:32-37; Luke 21:34-38.
- 2. The Necessity to be Vigilant and Faithful Before Christ's Second Coming:** Matthew 25:1-30.
- 3. The Judgement at the Second Coming of Christ:** Matthew 25:31-46.
- 4. Christ's Fifth Prediction of His Passion:** Matthew 26:1-5; Mark 14:1-2; Luke 22:1-2.

- 5. Mary of Bethany and Judas Iscariot:** Matthew 26:6-16; Mark 14:3-11; Luke 22:3-6; John 12:2-8.

UNDERSTANDING

THE DAY AND THE HOUR OF THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST: MATTHEW 24:36-51; MARK 13:32- 37; LUKE 21:34-38

Jesus states in no uncertain terms that no one knows "the day and the hour" (Matthew 24:36). Jesus further emphasized it by saying that not the angels or even the Son of man, as recorded by Mark. The only one who knows "the day and the hour" is God the Father.¹

Jesus mentioned that the social conditions during the last days would be similar to the days of Noah before the great deluge. In the days of Noah, the people ridiculed him for predicting that rain would fall and that the earth would be completely flooded. At that time, there was no rain on the earth. The people had never experienced rainfall.² The people indulged in "eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage." They continued this until the flood came but by that time, it was late.

¹ Some may argue that Jesus should know the precise day and hour because He is God. Indeed, but Jesus is also fully man. He appealed to His humanity. As man He does not know but ascribed the honour and will to God the Father. As His Son, He submits to the Father. This phrase is similar to the one in Luke 2:52 which says that Jesus increased in wisdom and stature.

² Genesis 2:5 And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground.

The door into the ark, which was the only means of salvation, was shut by God. No amount of crying and pounding against the ark would make a difference. So Jesus was actually saying that in the last days prior to His coming again, the people will behave like their counterparts in the days of Noah. They are pre-occupied with their earthly pursuits and pleasures. They will ridicule the Christians who warn them of the second coming of Jesus Christ, the end of the present world system, and the judgement of God on the whole world by fire which had never happened before, as it was in the days of Noah.

Peter the apostle predicted that in the last days there will be “scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying: ‘Where is the promise of His coming?’ Every thing has continued the same since the beginning of time (2 Peter 3:4).³ The people in the days of Noah only realized when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came. By then, it was too late. They all perished for their unbelief. History will repeat itself. The church has proclaimed the message of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and how it will be the sign of the end of this present world system, and Jesus will establish His kingdom on earth. The vast majority of people in the world are not believing, and not a few scoff and scorn at the idea as being silly and foolish. So it will be the same when the church will be taken away first, and then the return of the Lord Jesus Christ

³ 2 Peter 3:4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

with His saints and angels. It will be too late for many at that time. The second coming of Jesus Christ will happen suddenly without warning. And only those who believe in Jesus Christ will be saved. The rest of human kind will be sent to Hell until the day of the Great White Throne Judgement (Revelation 20:11-12).⁴

When Jesus Christ comes again, it means separation. Two people will be in the field, one shall be taken away and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one shall be taken, and the other left. The ones who will be taken away are those who are unbelievers to be reserved until the day of judgement. The ones left behind will enter into the earthly millennium kingdom of God. Make no mistake. The second coming of Jesus Christ means separation, believers from unbelievers. Jesus already declared that “heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away” (Matthew 24:35). What do these words say? It says that God’s Word is absolutely authoritative and infallible.

Jesus exhorts His disciples how they should conduct their lives in the meantime while waiting for His return. Jesus says: “Take heed to yourselves” (Luke 21:34).

⁴ Revelation 20:11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

His disciples should not be careless in treating His promise of His return as an event that will not happen or that it makes no difference to the way they live today. Jesus specifically warns His disciples that they should not be burdened with a super-abundance of material things and “drunkenness.” The latter can also be understood metaphorically as meaning to be excessively consumed with and caring for the things of this world. The day of His second coming will be sudden and will catch them unexpectedly. Jesus exhorts His disciples to be watchful and prayerful since they do not know the time of His coming again. For the rest of the unbelievers, it will come suddenly upon them like “a snare”. It will trap them quickly and unexpectedly and they cannot escape. Jesus stresses the importance of being watchful and prayerful that the day of His coming again should not take them by surprise.

Jesus tells a short parable saying that if the man of the house knows the time when the thief will come, he will be watching and prevents his house from being burglarized. Hence, they must also be ready because Jesus will come when they will most likely not be thinking of His coming again. Jesus describes that a faithful servant is one who will be occupying himself in doing the things which his master has assigned him to do. When his master returns, he will find his servant so doing, and will reward him. When Jesus returns and finds His servants faithful to Him, they will be very much blessed and rewarded. But the servants,

who indulge in their own lifestyle, not thinking of the return of the Master, will suffer great loss. The “evil servant” is the one who is unbelieving and who rejects the Jesus’ promise to come again. He will suffer the same destiny of those hypocrites who say only but act differently. That place of punishment is hell where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

THE NEED TO BE VIGILANT AND FAITHFUL BEFORE CHRIST’S SECOND COMING: MATTHEW 25:1-30

Chapter 25 continues the message in the previous chapter. Jesus is still speaking about being prepared in view of His coming again and the end of the age. The word “then” in the opening verse of chapter 25 links the two chapters. It indicates a progression of thought leading to the consummation of the age.

Jesus teaches truth in parables. Here He tells THE PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS: Five wise virgins and five foolish. Since it is a parable, we must be careful not to press every detail for some hidden meaning. It is quite clear that Jesus is teaching the necessity of preparedness in view of His coming again. The figure is that of a wedding feast. The figure of wedding is often used in Scriptures to depict the relation of Christ to His people. But in this parable, we will observe that it is not about the relation of Christ to His Bride, the Church as a whole, but to individual Christians.

An understanding of wedding customs in the time of Jesus will help us to understand the parable better. When the couple got married, they did not go on a

honeymoon. Instead, they remained at home, and for a week held open house with wedding festivities. The couple invited their chosen friends to their wedding feast. If the groom came from another locality, the festivities were held in the home of the bride's parents. But if the groom were a local person, his home was the scene for the joyful occasion. It seems that the latter was the case here. Apparently the bridegroom had gone to the home of the bride's parents to claim his bride, and to take her to his own home for the festivities. From one house to the other, a joyful procession accompanied the happy couple. But friends might join the procession along the way. Because of the darkness of ancient cities, everyone was required to carry a light, either a torch or a lamp. Those without them would not be permitted to join the bridal procession, and so could not enter the bridegroom's home (Hobbs, *Matthew*, 346).

This was the background that Jesus said the ten virgins took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom. The lamp had a wick dipped in oil to provide light. It was customary to carry extra supply of oil just in case the wick became dry because of the lack of oil. Five virgins were foolish and five were wise or prudent. All took their lamps but the foolish ones failed to take with them their extra supply of oil. The virgins would begin to light the lamp when they heard the bridegroom's procession was coming. But as usual, the bridegroom delayed in coming. The virgins waited but they fell asleep. Suddenly at midnight, they were awakened by a cry, "Behold,

the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him" (Matthew 25:6). The virgins woke up and prepared to light their lamps. The foolish virgins found that their wick had gone dry. It would not light. They asked the other five virgins to give them their oil. But the wise virgins refused, since they had only enough oil for themselves. Instead they told the foolish virgins to go and buy oil. While the foolish ones were gone in search of oil, the five wise virgins joined the procession and the bridal festivities. Later, the foolish ones came to the bridegroom's house and repeatedly sought admission, saying: "Lord, Lord, open to us" (Matthew 25:11). But the door was shut. They were too late. Because of their unpreparedness, they had missed their opportunity. The bridegroom answered them: "Verily I say unto you, I know you not." The answer was final.

The thrust of the parable clearly focuses on the conduct of the wise and foolish virgins. That the foolish virgins are mentioned first indicates that their attitude is emphasized. The foolish were denied entry into the bridegroom's house. The bridegroom is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ in view of the context. The foolish virgins represent those who profess themselves to be believers but because of their attitude, they deceive themselves and the truth of it is realized when the bridegroom comes. So also at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, there will be many who will say to the Lord Jesus Christ that they have preached in His name, and in His name have cast out devils and done many wonderful works. But Jesus will say to them I never

knew you: “depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Matthew 7:22, 23). However, the main thrust of the parable is that believers must heed the exhortation of the Lord Jesus Christ to be watchful, ready and be prepared, awaiting His glorious return.

Jesus tells another parable which has been named, “the parable of the talents” (Matthew 25:14-30). In ancient days when a man was going away to a far country for a period of time, he would hand over his goods or belongings to “his own servants.” He gave one five talents (money), another one two talents, and another one talent. He gave to each of them “according to his several ability.” He then took his journey. In his absence, the first two of his servants immediately began to trade with their talents, and they doubled them. The third servant simply buried the talent in the ground. After a long time, their master returned. He called his servants to give an account of what they had done to the talents he gave them. The first two servants who doubled their talents received their Lord’s commendation: “Well done, thou good and faithful servant.” And the Lord rewarded them accordingly. When the third servant reported, he told his master that he knew he was “a hard man” and that he was unreasonable too for he reaped what he had not sown, gathered where he had not strawed. So he was afraid of him and went and hid the talent. He then said to his master: “Lo, there thou hast that is thine.” The Lord chided him in no uncertain terms. He said to him: “Thou wicked and slothful servant.

Thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed. Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.” That servant’s talent was taken away from him. His lord called him an unprofitable servant and had him cast out into “outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Again, the thrust of the parable is simple and clear. Believers while waiting for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ are enjoined to be faithful to their Lord and Master, and to be good stewards of the talents and gifts which the Lord has given them. The master of the house is correctly identified as the Lord Jesus Christ on the basis of the punishment that he pronounced on the third servant. No one other than God can condemn someone to damnation in hell. Contrary to the third servant’s description of the character and conduct of the lord of the house, he had been reasonable. He gave the amount of talents according to the ability of his servants. He did not ask them to do more than what they were able. He was therefore fair and just. Notice that the same exact commendation which was given to the servant who made five more talents was also given to the second servant who made less. There was a difference in their amount made, but the effort and result was one hundred percent. In that respect the first and the second servant were equal. Their lord judged them according to their faithfulness rather than according to the amount they made. This is a

wonderful truth concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. Each believer is given different gifts and abilities. Those who are given much, much will be required of them. However, the yardstick of measurement is the servant's faithfulness and not the quantity that he gains i.e. the results.

But the third servant is self-serving, wicked and accuses the master unreasonably. Though he was identified with the other two servants, he was nevertheless not the same as he was exposed on the day of accounting. He did not recognize the master as his legitimate lord. He only made pretence of honouring the master while he was away. In much the same way, there are many church members who are like him. They live in fellowship with God's people and hear the word of God preached and taught every week. But in spite of all these spiritual privileges that they enjoy, they make no positive response to the gospel and therefore they cannot bear any fruitful service. The third servant actually showed that his loyalty to his master was false or a counterfeit. Did he not accuse his master unreasonably? He charged his master for being merciless and dishonest. This third servant represents those professing Christians whose limited knowledge of God leads him to all the wrong thoughts on the nature and character of God. His final destiny is to be separated from the presence and goodness of God in hell. He was not a believer in the first place.

**THE JUDGEMENT AT THE SECOND
COMING OF CHRIST:
MATTHEW 25:31-46**

Jesus ends His Olivet Discourse with the most severe and sobering warnings of judgement in all Scripture. When the Lord Jesus Christ returns in glory, not as a babe who was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a stable manger, but in great power and majesty with all His holy angels as the King of kings and the Lord or lords. The Lord Jesus Christ at His return to earth will "divide His sheep from the goats." In Jesus' time, sheep and goats were herded together. Sheep are docile and gentle animals, but goats are unruly and energetically noisy and they easily upset the sheep. They do feed or rest well together, and so the shepherd separates them for grazing and for sleeping at night (MacArthur, *Matthew*, 121). The Lord Jesus Christ shall gather all nations and separate them. Notice that no one nation is exempted—ALL NATIONS! That speaks of the Divine Sovereignty of the Lord Jesus Christ. His sheep are righteous in Him; whom He has purchased with His own blood. Whereas the unrighteous goats will be separated from the righteous sheep, and "these shall go into everlasting punishment" (Matthew 25:46).

Jesus lists six areas of need of His people, namely, being hungry, thirsty, a stranger, naked, sick and in prison. Jesus mentions that these are the characteristics of His blood-bought people. These good deeds evidence the children of God and the citizens of His kingdom. The kingdom is for those who ministered to the needs

of God's people. These deeds are a testimony of their true, living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Observe that all the deeds that are mentioned here relate to daily needs. Nothing is mentioned about great and spectacular deeds. Jesus' identification with His people is significant. He says: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me" (Matthew 25:40). If a believer fails to serve Christ's people, he has failed to serve Him, and to fail to serve Him is to prove one does not belong to Him (verse 45).

CHRIST'S FIFTH PREDICTION OF HIS PASSION:

*MATTHEW 26:1-5; MARK 14:1-2;
LUKE 22:1-2*

Jesus has finished His sermon. He turned to His disciples and said: "Ye know that after two days is the feast of the Passover, and of unleavened bread, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified" (Matthew 26:2). The feast of the Passover is a Jewish feast commemorating the night when the angel of the Lord passed over the homes of the Israelites who had marked the doorposts of their house with the blood of a lamb. Those that did not have the mark of the blood on the posts of the door of their houses would witness the death of their firstborn, both cattle and man. The feast of the unleavened bread follows immediately for seven days. This is the day Israelites remember their bondage and deliverance of their forefathers from their Egyptian taskmasters (Exodus 12). Jesus said that during the celebration of the Passover feast, He would be betrayed to be

crucified. But the Jewish religious leaders, the chief priests, the scribes and the elders of the people that met in the palace of Caiaphas, the high priest, decided otherwise. They met and deliberated that Jesus must be apprehended subtly, and be killed but "not on the feast day." Jesus said on the day of the Passover feast, He would be betrayed and crucified, whereas they said that He would not be crucified on that day because many people from all over the region flocked to Jerusalem for the occasion. History tells us that their words had no power but Jesus' prediction of His death came true. Men may say many things, but what God says is more important and powerful.

Mary of Bethany and Judas Iscariot:

*Matthew 26:6-16; Mark 14:3-11;
Luke 22:3-6; John 12:2-8*

Jesus retired to Bethany and went to the home of Mary and Martha, and Lazarus whom He raised from the dead. Martha was serving Jesus, Lazarus sat with Him. Mary then came to Jesus. She broke an alabaster box of very precious and costly ointment and poured it on Jesus' head. She also anointed Jesus' feet with it, and wiped His feet with her hair as Jesus sat eating. The house was completely filled with the fragrance of the spikenard perfume. When the disciples saw what Mary did, they were angry and said in their heart what a waste it was. The box of perfume could be sold for a high price and the proceeds given to the poor. Judas Iscariot became vocal. He remarked that the

ointment could be sold for three hundred pence, and the money be given to relieve the poor. Matthew, the writer of the Gospel, recorded that Judas was in reality pretending because he did not care for the poor. He was a thief. He was the disciple who “had the bag”, meaning that he was the treasurer of the disciples. John charged him for a criminal breach of trust. He had misappropriated their money. This is the height of hypocrisy. Imagine, Judas trying to impress others that he was very pious, godly, caring and compassionate towards the poor. But in reality, he was a thief, liar, hypocrite and a crook. Such people are very dangerous for they are able to fool many, and they will hurt and destroy lives and God’s ministry. Beware of such people but above all do not become like them yourself.

Jesus knew their thoughts. He said to His disciples that they had the poor all the time with them. They could help them whenever they wanted. But they were not going to have Jesus always with them in the flesh. He had just told them that He would soon be crucified. Jesus commented that Mary did a very good thing for she was anointing His body even before His death and burial. Jesus mentioned that whenever the gospel is preached, this good deed by her should be mentioned as a memorial of her.

On the other hand, Judas Iscariot was diametrically and hypocritically different. Having been with Jesus for over three years and having enjoyed the companionship of the Lord Jesus Christ, he was ungrateful. He was so self-serving that he betrayed

Jesus for just thirty pieces of silver. Moreover, he betrayed Jesus with a kiss. In those days, the men greeted each other with a kiss. It was an indication of affection and friendship. But in the case of Judas, it was just the opposite. It was the kiss of betrayal of his Lord.

PRACTICAL VALUE

Today’s lesson contains many wonderful truths and many practical lessons about Christian character and Christian living. The precise time of Jesus’ coming again is not revealed. It is futile to speculate. The most important thing is that JESUS WILL COME AGAIN. Jesus promised and His word is good enough for every Christian. There are so-called Christians in places of ecclesiastical authority who deny Jesus’ teaching concerning His return. Their true profession of faith in Christ is suspect. Such people, who bear the name of Christ, are not truly born-again Christians. Such are the ones Jesus will say on His return, “I know you not.”

His promises and Word are sure. Jesus calls us to remain faithful, watchful, and prayerful and be ever ready so that His sudden return would not catch us unaware. Jesus teaches us to be alert and ready. He teaches us to be useful towards God, to use our talents and gifts He has bestowed upon us in serving Him and advancing His kingdom. He expects from all His children faithfulness not results. He gives a very sobering warning that there will be judgement when He returns. The important thing is to

be sure that we are truly born again Christians, and not be self-deceiving. We should be careful that we do not bear the name of Christ in vain, and are actually devoid of spiritual power in the heart. There is a need to examine ourselves regarding our relation with Christ and our salvation.

We also learn that God's sovereign plan cannot be thwarted by men. Men can say whatever they want to say, but finally, it is God that is in control. Things and events happen as He has planned and purposed.

Mary made a great sacrifice in anointing Jesus with the precious and costly spikenard. She demonstrated her deep love for Jesus by doing this. We need to ask ourselves how much do we love our Lord Jesus Christ? How much are we willing to make sacrifices for His sake? And are we like Judas, a hypocrite? These are some of the many life changing lessons that we can learn, and grow spiritually, and have peace of heart and joy. AMEN

DHW BIBLE CLASS

LESSON 34

THE LIFE OF CHRIST

DAILY READINGS & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Daily Readings

MONDAY: Matthew 24:36-51; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6.

TUESDAY: Matthew 25:1-30.

WEDNESDAY: Matthew 25:31-46.

THURSDAY: Matthew 26:1-5; Mark 14:1-2; Luke 22:1-2; Exodus 12:1-17.

FRIDAY: Matthew 26:6-16; Mark 14:3-11; Luke 22:3-6; John 12:2-8.

Discussion Questions

1. In regard to the Lord's return, what do we know with certainty and what is left uncertain?

2. What are to be the characteristics of the Christian, in view of his Lord's return, as depicted in the passage under consideration?

4. Suggest a possible reason why God has chosen not to reveal the time of Christ's return?

5. Do you identify more with the foolish virgins or the wise virgins? What can you do to be ready for Jesus' return?

6. What are the differences and similarities between the first two servants? What encouraging principle in serving the Lord is learned from this parable?

7. What was the failure of the third servant? What application has this to your Christian life?

8. What conclusion must we come to regarding Christ who claims for Himself the right to decide the final destiny of men?

9. How can we serve Jesus by serving another person?

10. "He said" (1) . . . "but they said" (v.5). Humanly speaking, whose word seemed likely to prevail? Yet whose word did prevail?

11. What would someone, who does not know Judas, think of him after hearing his comments concerning giving to the poor the proceeds from the sale of the ointment? What actually is the truth about him?

12. In this lesson, name one thing that you should practise and one thing that you should not practise?
