

TELOS

Telos (Greek): def.: striving for a goal, completing your purpose . It means achieving maturity, and undivided wholeness in a person's behavior. For the Christian it means becoming like Jesus.

"We proclaim Christ, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ"

Col. 1:28

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Truthview Alliance Church

Matthew 21

As I studied Matthew 21 I was struck by some thoughts that I believe Matthew was trying to instill in us. In each story and parable Matthew is pointing out how people are not recognizing Jesus. He also shows us the qualities of those who do recognize Jesus as the Messiah.

Let's first talk about those who did not recognize their Lord. It was those who were religiously adhering to God's law. Obviously God gave the law so why would this be a bad thing? Human nature is to make everything about us. Whether it's when we are conversing with friends or admonishing our kids, or doing a favour for someone else. Notice how our conversations always end up with "Well, I did this or that today". Or "Johnny, when you yell and scream in the store it embarrasses mommy", or "It sure felt good to give some money to the tsunami relief project." Of course these things are not bad things to think or say. It is a wonderful thing to help others in need. But it is not to be used to boost our self-esteem.

This same attitude presented itself when God gave the law to his people. Instead of seeing that we cannot fit the bill without God's help, religious people made it about themselves. The more things they did right, the more they felt they were worthy of God and better than others. They added rituals to their rituals and confronted those who dared not adhere to those rituals...like Jesus.

Matthew 21:15 "But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple area, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they were indignant."

Unfortunately, it is not that hard to imagine Christians becoming indignant when other Christians are not acting as they are "supposed" to. So the teachers of the law became indignant when they saw the wonderful things Jesus did and heard the children giving him rightful praise. Don't kid yourselves these teachers of the law knew the scriptures inside and out. They knew the Messianic miracles to be performed and how Jesus fulfilled each requirement. But because Jesus didn't measure up to their religious specifications, they wanted to get rid of him. They wanted someone who would fit their mold. They made the Messiah about them and not about what God wanted to give them. They decided that God's gift wasn't acceptable. They wanted a Messiah on their terms.

FOLLOW ME

Experience the Loving Leadership of Jesus

Now maybe you think that I am being too hard on them. After all, they did not really recognize Jesus. They were deceived in their thinking and they didn't really know the gravity of the choices they were making. The lesson Jesus gave us of the barren fig tree shows us otherwise. Jesus didn't say to the tree, "Oh you poor thing living in such difficult surroundings. I understand that it is very hard to do what you are supposed to do. You are good because look at the long branches you made. I'll overlook the lack of fruit thing this time. You just didn't understand that it was a requirement now did you?" No, he said, "May you never produce fruit again." As Christians we may try to justify why we aren't living the way we know we should, but God isn't convinced. No fruit means no fruit, and God doesn't look lightly upon that.

Let's look at the people who did recognize Jesus. Verses 14 & 15 say the blind and the lame and the children came to him. What do these people have in common? Their judgment is not clouded by their accomplishments. They are able to freely give themselves because they are not so busy promoting themselves. They see their need and know that Jesus loves them because of their need. He longs to fill their empty spots and set them free. As the children and believers shouted Hosanna and waved their branches, the whole city of Jerusalem was stirred. (verse 10) These people who recognized and accepted Jesus became full to overflowing. They couldn't contain their praises. The whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?" Do our very lives stir those around us so they ask, "Who is Jesus?" Or do we just stir the conversation enough so that others around us ask, "Who does he think he is?"

I hope that by studying this passage this week, we become repentant of our barren lives. That we have the faith to say, "Lord, whatever you want me to do, I will do." If we believe that Jesus is who He says He is and live in faith the way He shows us to live, He will produce the fruit that will stir the hearts of those around us to recognize him.

Kingdom Principle #4:

Jesus transforms me as I surrender control of my Kingdom issues to the Holy Spirit.

Memory Verse:

"Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce fruit."

Matthew 21:43

Monday

The Triumphal Entry - Matthew 21:1-17

Passage Preview

To the adulation of the crowds, Jesus enters Jerusalem on a donkey. He then drives the money changers from the temple, heals the sick and confronts the religious leaders.

Key Words

- Daughter of Zion: Indicates the residents of the region of Zion.
- Hosanna: Hebrew word literally meaning, "save, we pray". The common usage came to be an utterance of praise.
- Indignant: Strong displeasure at something deemed unworthy

Read Matthew 21:1-17

¹ As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ² saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. ³ If anyone says anything to you, tell him that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away."

⁴ This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

⁵ "Say to the Daughter of Zion, 'See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'"

⁶ The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. ⁷ They brought the donkey and the colt, placed their cloaks on them, and Jesus sat on them. ⁸ A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Hosanna in the highest!"

¹⁰ When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?"

¹¹ The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

¹² Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves. ¹³ "It is written," he said to them, "'My house will be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it a 'den of robbers.'"

¹⁴ The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them. ¹⁵ But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple area, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they were indignant.

¹⁶ "Do you hear what these children are saying?" they asked him. "Yes," replied Jesus, "have you never read, "'From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise?'"

¹⁷ And he left them and went out of the city to Bethany, where he spent the night."

1. What spiritual truth stood out to you? Why?

2. What thought or insight was most meaningful to you? Why?

3. Who did the prophet Isaiah (verse 5) say would come riding on a donkey?

4. Who did the children call out that Jesus was (verse 15)? What did their statement mean?

5. Why were the Chief Priests & Teachers of the Law upset by this?

6. **Kingdom Question:** What implications do these revelations of who Jesus is have for your life?

Summary

Jesus intentionally proceeds with the fulfillment of prophecy. He fully accepts the honor and praise given Him by the people, with no false humility.

Prayer

Lord please help me to know you so deeply that I am stirred by your presence to continually praise you. I pray that the people I come in contact with will be able to recognize their need for you and will also desire to honour and praise you as their Lord and Saviour.

Tuesday

The Fig Tree - Matthew 21:18-27

Passage Preview

Jesus uses his causing a fig tree to wither as an example of faith for His disciples. He then turns the religious leaders' dishonest questions back on them.

Key Words

- Authority: A power or right delegated or given.
- Heaven: Here referring to the authority of the one who rules the kingdom of heaven.

Read Matthew 21:18-27

¹⁸ "Early in the morning, as he was on his way back to the city, he was hungry. ¹⁹ Seeing a fig tree by the road, he went up to it but found nothing on it except leaves. Then he said to it, "May you never bear fruit again!" Immediately the tree withered. ²⁰ When the disciples saw this, they were amazed. "How did the fig tree wither so quickly?" they asked.

²¹ Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and it will be done. ²² If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer."

²³ Jesus entered the temple courts, and, while he was teaching, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him. "By what authority are you doing these things?" they asked. "And who gave you this authority?"

²⁴ Jesus replied, "I will also ask you one question. If you answer me, I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

²⁵ John's baptism--where did it come from? Was it from heaven, or from men?" They discussed it among themselves and said, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will ask, 'Then why didn't you believe him?' ²⁶ But if we say, 'From men'--we are afraid of the people, for they all hold that John was a prophet."

²⁷ So they answered Jesus, "We don't know."

Then he said, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things."

1. What spiritual truth stood out to you? Why?

2. What thought or insight was most meaningful to you? Why?

3. What condition does Jesus put on receiving what you ask for in prayer?

4. **Kingdom Question:** What is one thing that you would like to see God accomplish in and through your life? Think big! Something that seems like it is too grand to ever really happen in your life. Would this bring glory to God? Is it something that is for His kingdom and not yours?

Ask God for it, knowing that He will answer. (He may say "no", "wait", "I have a better idea" or "Yes", but He will answer.)

5. Why did Jesus not provide a direct answer about the source of His authority?

Summary

Jesus was always in fellowship with God the Father. When He asked for something in prayer He knew that it was God's will. Our challenge is to remain in fellowship with God. To be steeped in His Word, before Him in prayer, and looking for what He is doing in our surrounding world. Then we may exercise faith for the big things that God wants to do for us.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, I confess the lack of fruit in my life. Please help me to ask for things in your name so that you will be glorified by my life. Help me not to selfishly expect things of you, but to be willing to do the things you ask of me. I do not want to wither up like the fig tree. I want you to look at my life and say, "well done my good and faithful servant."

Wednesday

Parable of Two Sons - Matthew 21:28-32

Passage Preview

Jesus continues His discourse with the religious leaders, likening them to sons who give lip service to obedience but in reality do not do what their father has asked.

Key Words

- Way of righteousness: Refers here to John's message of confession and repentance from sin.

Read Matthew 21:28-32

²⁸ "What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work today in the vineyard.'

²⁹ "'I will not,' he answered, but later he changed his mind and went.

Summary

John, in speaking to the religious leaders, called them "You brood of vipers!" and told them to "Produce fruit in keeping with repentance." (Matthew 3:7-8) Jesus said that John came to show the way of righteousness; his message of repentance was intended to produce fruit by turning from sin. If sorrow over of the effect of sin on our lives does not affect the way we live, it is not true repentance.

Prayer

Lord, as I begin to see the things in my life that need to be changed, help me to truly repent. I pray that I will not say sorry one day and the next continue doing what I was doing. Help me to walk away from the sin in my life so that your life will be evident in mine.

Thursday

Parable of the Tenants - Matthew 21:33-46

Passage Preview

Jesus relates a parable that depicts the religious caretakers of Israel past and present as those who first rejected and killed God's prophets and now His Son. This parable was so clear that no one needed an explanation to grasp its meaning.

Key Words

- Watchtower: Towers built in vineyards as a place to stand guard against thieves.
- Capstone: (Cornerstone NASB) indicates the importance of the stone's position in the building.

Read Matthew 21:33-46

³³ "Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a wine press in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey. ³⁴ When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit.

³⁵ "The tenants seized his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. ³⁶ Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way. ³⁷ Last of all, he sent his son to them. 'They will respect my son,' he said.

³⁸ "But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, 'This is the heir. Come, let's kill him and take his inheritance.' ³⁹ So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

⁴⁰ "Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?"

⁴¹ "He will bring those wretches to a wretched end," they replied, "and he will rent the vineyard to other tenants, who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time."

⁴² Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?"

⁴³ "Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. ⁴⁴ He who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed."

⁴⁵ When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard Jesus' parables, they knew he was talking about them. ⁴⁶ They looked for a way to arrest him, but they were afraid of the crowd because the people held that he was a prophet."

5. **Kingdom Question:** In verse 43, Jesus said that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you (the corrupted Jewish theocracy) and given to another people (the Church) to produce fruit. What are these fruits that Jesus speaks of?

What are the evidences in your life of God's kingdom rule?

Summary

This parable paints a picture of God's sovereignty and the volition of man at work to accomplish His eternal purposes. God, in His love and patience, sent first His prophets and then His own Son to call the Jewish nation to repentance. They beat and killed His prophets and then crucified His Son in an attempt to make God's kingdom their own. God in His sovereignty used this act of rebellion against His Son to work out His eternal plan in establishing a people for Himself that would produce fruit for His kingdom. So, in His love, He extended His kingdom to Jew and Gentile alike, forming His church.

Prayer

Lord, please help us to recognize the way you want us to live. Help us to know your servants and encourage each other as we grow in our faith. I pray that we will not kill others by judging their actions, but that we would lift each other up in prayer. Please let Trailview Alliance Church be a light in our community so that the rest of the city will turn their hearts to you.

Friday

“The Mixed Bag Situation”

Read chapter 22 in the Follow Me Book

Introduction

Commercialism and Christianity. These two words, by definition, seem mutually incompatible. One is all about giving, the other is about getting. Is it possible for Jesus to be commercialized and not destroy the very essence of Christian truth?

1. What have been some of your own personal thoughts, feelings, and concerns regarding the marketing and selling of Christianity?

These TELOS materials have been adapted with permission from the “Follow Me” discipleship Curriculum produced by North Shore Baptist Church in Bothell, WA and based on the book Follow Me by Jan David Hettinga and the gospel of Matthew.

This week’s editor:
Stacey Grose

Please spend time praying for the Pastor as he prepares to preach this Sunday.

⇒ If you have any comments or questions about TELOS please direct them to Pastor Ken at the church office:
phone: 773-4433 or email: ken.trailview@sasktel.net

The mission of TELOS is to help you develop the beliefs, practices and virtues of a fully devoted follower of Jesus Christ. TELOS is one component of our strategy at Trailview of living out our call to become a “community of servants who live to fulfill the Great Commission.

All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version, Copyright 1973, 1978, International Bible Society.

Kingdom Principle #4:

Jesus transforms me as I surrender control of my Kingdom issues to the Holy Spirit.

Memory Verse:

“Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce fruit.”
Matthew 21:43