

## ***Jesus' Overview of the Forerunner Message (Mt. 24-25)***

### **I. REVIEW: OUR PRIMARY CALLING AND SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENTS**

- A. The primary calling for every ministry is to work together to fulfill the Great Commission and build the Church. This includes winning the lost, making disciples, building godly families, healing the sick, doing works of justice (compassion), and impacting the 7 spheres of society.
- B. The Lord gives specific assignments in addition to the Great Commission and ours include:
1. ***Keeping a 24/7 sanctuary*** of worship with intercession in the spirit of the tabernacle of David.
  2. Calling people to ***intimacy with Jesus as our Bridegroom God*** and to the first commandment.
  3. Raising up ***end-time messengers*** who proclaim Jesus as Bridegroom, King, and Judge in preparing others for the unique dynamics related to Jesus' return and the salvation of Israel.
  4. ***Jerusalem House of Prayer (virtual)***: a worldwide 24/7 prayer network utilizing technology to partner with others to mobilize 100 million intercessors worldwide to establish a virtual 24/7 house of prayer with fasting teams (365 days) along with the Global Bridegroom Fast
  5. Strengthening the "***Praying Church***" and planting churches as praying communities in many nations (by establishing houses of prayer or prayer furnaces that are not under IHOP-KC)

### **II. JESUS TEACHES THE FORERUNNER MESSAGE (MT. 24-25)**

- A. The best teaching on the forerunner ministry in the Bible was given by Jesus in Matthew 24-25. (The best passage in the Old Testament is Isaiah 62-63). Jesus gave us the signs of the times, important warnings, the responses that He wants from us (Mt. 24:45-25:30), and His response to us (Mt. 25:21) and the nations (Mt. 25:31). It is not enough to be casually aware of Matthew 24-25. We must be so familiar with it that we can freely think on, speak about, and pray over it. Jesus gave details concerning His judgments against the Antichrist in the book of Revelation.
- B. In Mt. 24-25, Jesus taught on the end times (Mt. 24:3-44) then applied it in three parables to those He called to leadership (Mt. 24:45-25:30), before describing His judgment of the nations (Mt. 25:31-46). These two chapters are "one teaching" that is focused on preparing His people.
- C. Jesus strategically taught on the key themes that He wanted us to understand and proclaim.
1. The beginning signs of the times (Mt. 24:3-8)  
*<sup>3</sup> "What will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"...<sup>7</sup> "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes...<sup>8</sup> All these are the beginning of sorrows." (Mt. 24:3-8)*
  2. The intense resistance against His people (Mt. 24:9-10)  
*<sup>9</sup> They will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you...you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake...<sup>10</sup> many will be offended, will betray one another... (Mt. 24:9-10)*

3. Abounding deception (Mt. 24:11)  
*<sup>11</sup> Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. (Mt. 24:11)*
4. Lawlessness and lovelessness (betrayal and cruelty) will abound in society (Mt. 24:12)  
*<sup>12</sup> And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. (Mt. 24:12)*
5. The need for endurance (Mt. 24:13)  
*<sup>13</sup> But he who endures to the end shall be saved. (Mt. 24:13)*
6. The power of God on the preaching of the gospel to all nations (Mt. 24:14)  
*<sup>14</sup> This gospel of the kingdom will be preached...to all the nations... (Mt. 24:14)*
7. The emergence of the Antichrist's worldwide worship and economic system related to the abomination of desolation (Mt. 24:15)  
*<sup>15</sup> You see the abomination of desolation...standing in the holy place... (Mt. 24:15)*
8. The great pressures in Jerusalem (Mt. 24:16-20)  
*<sup>16</sup> Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. <sup>17</sup> Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house... (Mt. 24:16-17)*
9. The unprecedented pressures of the Great Tribulation (Mt. 24:21-22)  
*<sup>21</sup> There will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world... <sup>22</sup> Unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved... (Mt. 24:21-22)*
10. The abundance of false claims about seeing the return of Jesus (Mt. 24:23-26)  
*<sup>23</sup> If anyone says to you, "Look, here is the Christ!"...<sup>26</sup> If they say to you, "Look, He is in the desert!"...or "He is in the inner rooms!" do not believe it. (Mt. 24:23-26)*
11. Jesus will come in the sky to make wrong things right in the nations (Mt. 24:27-31)  
*<sup>30</sup> All the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. <sup>31</sup> He will send His angels...and they will gather together His elect...from one end of heaven to the other. (Mt. 24:27-31)*
12. The command to recognize the signs of the times as they increase (Mt. 24:32-36)  
*<sup>32</sup> Learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. <sup>33</sup> So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors! (Mt. 24:32-33)*
13. The fact that most people will not recognize the signs (Mt. 24:37-39)  
*<sup>37</sup> As the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be...<sup>38</sup> They were eating and drinking...until the day that Noah entered the ark, <sup>39</sup> and did not know until the flood came and took them all away [physical death]...(Mt. 24:37-39)*

14. The unprecedented number of deaths (Mt. 24:40-41). The disciples asked, "Where will these be taken?" They will be "taken in death" as indicated by them being in the place where the birds of prey (vultures or eagles) gather over their dead bodies (Lk. 17:36-37).  
<sup>38</sup> *The flood...took them all away [in death], so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.* <sup>40</sup> *Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left.* <sup>41</sup> *Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left.* (Mt. 24:37-41)  
<sup>36</sup> *Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left.* <sup>37</sup> *They answered and said to Him, "Where, Lord?" So He said to them, "Wherever the body is [dead body, NIV], there the eagles [vultures] will be gathered together."* (Lk. 17:36-37)
15. The command to watch to avoid suffering loss at this time (Mt. 24:42-44)  
<sup>42</sup> *Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.* <sup>43</sup> *But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.* (Mt. 24:42-43)
16. Jesus then gave three parables (Mt. 24:45-25:30) to equip leaders to live in readiness for the unique dynamics of the generation in which the Lord returns.
17. Jesus will sit on His earthly throne as the King who judges all nations (Mt. 25:31-46).  
<sup>31</sup> *When the Son of Man comes in His glory...He will sit on the throne of His glory [in Jerusalem].* <sup>32</sup> *All the nations will be gathered before Him...* (Mt. 25:31-32)

### III. THE THREE LEADERSHIP PARABLES

- A. Jesus said that He would come quickly (Rev. 22:7, 12, 20) and that we must live in readiness because the end times scenario would begin at a time that we would not naturally expect (Mt. 24:44). We will need the Spirit's help to recognize the signs of the times and to respond rightly.  
<sup>44</sup> *You also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.* (Mt. 24:44)
- B. Parable #1: *Jesus' delay is shorter than expected.* The parable of the faithful and wise servants (Mt. 24:45-51) teaches us that there will be two types of leaders who confess to follow Christ. The two qualities that Jesus wants His leaders to focus on are being faithful and wise.  
<sup>45</sup> *Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler?* (Mt. 24:45)
- C. Parable #2: *Jesus' delay is longer than expected.* The parable of the wise and foolish virgins (Mt. 25:1-13) emphasizes the need to cultivate intimacy with Jesus as our Bridegroom God. Some leaders with good motives will work hard yet will neglect to cultivate intimacy with God.  
<sup>1</sup> *Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.* <sup>2</sup> *Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish.* <sup>3</sup> *Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them,* <sup>4</sup> *but the wise took oil...* (Mt. 25:1-4)

- D. Parable #3: **Jesus' delay is harder than expected**. The parable of the faithful steward (Mt. 25:14-30) focuses on being faithful in our life assignment when it is small and difficult. The essence of the fear of God is to know that God sees and rewards what we are doing.  
*<sup>23</sup> Whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, <sup>24</sup> knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward...for you serve the Lord Christ. (Col. 3:23-24)*
- E. The message in this parable is that we are to be **faithful** (diligent) and **good** (godly) with a **servant spirit** (humility) in context to our life calling or assignment even when it is **difficult** (v. 24) and **small** (v. 21). Our assignment (sphere of influence) may be small in man's eyes, but it is so important in God's eyes that He greatly rewards His people for persevering in it. We must be motivated by **how important** our work is in God's eyes more than by **how big** it is in man's eyes. The message is that God sees and rewards our efforts and that there can be loss of reward.  
*<sup>21</sup> Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things... <sup>24</sup> He who had received the one talent...said, "Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown...<sup>25</sup> I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground..."<sup>26</sup> His lord...said to him, "You wicked and lazy servant..." (Mt. 25:21-26)*
- F. The dominant sins that will tempt God's servants in the generation in which the Lord returns are **wickedness** (lust) and **laziness**. The dramatic increase and accessibility of media (entertainment) presents an entire generation worldwide with new temptations. The quality and quantity of media entertainment (pornography, video games, Facebook, Twitter, sports, movies, news, talk shows, etc.) tempts people to be preoccupied with the lives of celebrities, friends, and strangers, etc. The besetting sin of many believers today is laziness with its procrastination and "veg-out" mentality. They refuse wickedness with its lust (pornography, covetousness, etc), but yield to laziness.  
*<sup>1</sup> Know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: <sup>2</sup> Men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money...<sup>3</sup> without self-control...<sup>4</sup> and lovers of pleasure... (2 Tim. 3:1-4)*
- G. **Conclusion**: As wise and faithful servants (the message of parable #1), we do the work that He gives us. This is much more than just staying busy. It takes **labor** to engage with the Spirit's work in our heart as we acquire the "oil of intimacy" (parable #2). The message in parable #2 is that what we gain in our intimacy with God **can be lost** (Mt. 25:8). It takes **labor** to engage in God's work as we diligently serve others (parable #3). The message in parable #3 is that our smallest efforts will not be forgotten by God (Mt. 25:21); therefore, they **cannot be lost**.
- H. In parables #2 and #3, Jesus developed the call to be wise (25:1-13) and faithful (25:14-30). We are to be wise by taking time to **watch** (so as to cultivate intimacy with Jesus) and to be faithful by being diligent in our **work** (by cultivating the fear of God). We are to **watch** and to **work**.
- I. Jesus connects being wise to watching before the Bridegroom God who loves us. Jesus connects being faithful to working with diligence in the fear of God. There is no contradiction between cultivating intimacy with our Bridegroom God, who is filled with tenderness, and understanding our accountability before Him. These parables are incomplete by themselves. They bring together the love of God and the fear of God. The revelation of the Bridegroom by itself leads some to laziness; the revelation of our accountability to Him by itself leads some to harshness.