

This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

Mat 24:1-28; Mar 13:1-23; Luk 21: 5-24

Preface

Scripture Reading: Mat 24:1-28

1. The end shall come.

- 1) What will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age? (v.3)
 - “many false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive many people.... You will hear of wars and rumors of wars (Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom); birth pains (famine and earthquakes); the love of most will grow cold; you will be handed over to be persecuted (you will be hated and put to death)
 - in fact, the end of the age has already begun as of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, his ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit <Acts 2:17-18; 1Joh 2:18>.
 - Since the fall of our ancestor till now, God continues, throughout human history, to reveal “the coming of the end of the age and judgment day” and to warn people and the saints (Gen 3:16-19; Noah’s flood; destruction of Sodom; the rise and fall of Israel; the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70; the Crusade; two world wars; wars of today; calamities...).
 - ⇒ We cannot sit around waiting for “the end of the age and not doing what we should today”.

2) More important is whether you are living a life in preparation for “the end of the age”.

*Whether you believe or not, the end of the world, the end of the age, and your personal end will come.

=death rate is 100%; 250,000 leave this world everyday <Heb 9:27>; “The length of our days is seventy years – or eighty, if we have the strength” <Psa 90:10>.

=finite number of days: our life is like the work of a farmer for a year; one round of match; one spirit; one long-distance run; a student taking a test

2) life of wisdom=prepare for the end of the age

*we should know our beginning and our end; we know God and have seen the kingdom of heaven->we live a life with a purpose->we connect everyday with our master and the headquarters in heaven->everyday we know our tasks our master has given us->we receive from above wisdom and power->we perform our given tasks faithfully->day by day, we live in peace, joy and hope.
*regardless of our circumstances, we know (1) what we are given to do; (2) do it faithfully; and (3) receive praise and reward.

-Whether in honor or humility, in plenty or want; regardless of our position in life or our circumstances; whether in the battlefield..., in prison..., in a broken and sinking ship...

4) a foolish and unwise life=a life w/ no beginning or end

- a life of expediency bound by circumstances, conditions, flesh and the world
- a life lived for “the gratification of the cravings of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the boasting of what one has or does.
- Their days are like those of the condemned awaiting execution and pigs being led to the slaughtering house.

2. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

1) Such things must happen, but the end is still to come (v.6) = God’s end purpose = the number of saved is filled.

- God’s end purpose = get his people and establish his kingdom through Jesus Christ
- to give his people rebirth, sanctify them and give them inheritance

2) signs of the end of the age are repeated throughout history in order to spread the gospel

- God warns the sinful and the saints with what has happened (Noah’s flood; Sodom and Gomorrah; judgment of Israel)

- God’s judgment in each generation is a blessing to the blessed (e.g., Abraham and Israel) but a curse to the condemned.

- Through wars and calamities, God gets his “chosen saints” and strengthens the people of Israel.

3) prospective on the spread of the gospel: its past, its presence and its future

- gospel is preached first to the Jews, then the Greeks, followed by the Romans, Europeans, Americans and Asians...

- We should continue looking for the unsaved—the gospel will be spread to the nations and peoples who have yet to hear and, in those regions and among the people the gospel has been preached, we should continue to look for those God has predestined to be saved.

4) Pending more of the sanctification and crowns of glory for the saved

- For those already born again, their sole purpose on earth is to base their lives and living on the “rock of the gospel” and continue to expand their lives’ network...

- throughout generations, the great work of the gospel, started each and every time with a “weak saint”, spreads to the whole world... (e.g., Joseph, David, Ruth, Mary, the 120 disciples Paul, Hudson Taylor, D.L. Moody...)

- Before each calamity (days of darkness), God has already prepared “one he wants to use” for the restoration of “Emmanuel” to call together a group of saints who love God, press onward for the eternal kingdom and mourn for their generation because they have seen the darkness of their age...

- As to how the Lord will use “me” and how much he will expand my life’s network, all is God’s sovereignty. Therefore, regardless how God will use us, we’ll be fine as long as we are willing today to be part of a “blessed group”, learn from Christ and serve him, expand the work of the “four evangelizations”, pass on to our children for further expansion of what we pray for and what we do for the entirety of our lives.

3. The most important of all is to follow the Lord faithfully today.

1) The Lord’s second coming and the coming of the eternal new heaven and new earth are more important to me or else...

- what can I receive in my finite number of days on earth (before the end of the age, our “personal end” is already predetermined).

- Each day has its own ending. The most important is what have I received today?
- 2) As a matter of fact, Lord Jesus comes into my life and my fields of living everyday.
- the Throne=H.S.=in my heart; as we apply the Lord's given identity, promises, and good will to our life, living and relationships, his guidance is obvious. As long as we seek his good will with our deeply rooted and solidly based faith and are willing to obey, the Lord's power will come upon us and we'll be able to see his help and fulfillment.
- 3) saints at the end of the age should all the more "be set apart".
- =Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me.
- *in the darkness of the end of this age, many spiritual battles are awaiting the "blessed saints".
- flesh, world, heresies; anti-Christ, false prophets, heretics; suggestions of the evil spirit, deceptions, and attaches; conditions, circumstances, and processes we experience in our work for the Lord.
- =>after we overcome, we will be able to make best use of our answers, experiences, and testimonies for the work of "saving, healing and strengthening of man".
- 4) We have to continue to confirm, look forward and follow
- (1) our life's vision; (2) joining up (in everything and with every step); (3) our mission today and our resolve to follow