The Good News told By Mark

A Bible teaching commentary
on the Gospel of Mark
in easy-to-read English

Written by Fred Morris

Jesus watches the poor widow with her gift

Mark Unit 10 of 12

Chapters 12:28-14:21

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Unit 10: Chapters 12:28 to 14:21.

A Religious Leader Who Truly Knew God's Truth

A teacher of the Law heard Jesus give this answer. He asked, "Which is the most important of all the commandments?"

This man did not come to trick or trap Jesus. He came to Jesus to learn more about the truth from God. Jesus was pleased with him. This is what Jesus taught the man from the Old Testament:

1. Only the Lord God Almighty, Yahweh, is God. He is the one true God. There is no other God but Him. Love God most of all, with all your heart and soul and mind and strength.
2. Love your neighbour just as much as you love yourself. This includes friends and family. This also includes strangers and even people you do not like! It includes the people you work with. It includes anyone you meet that needs help.

Jesus said, "There is no commandment more important than these". This man said that he believed these two commandments.

Jesus then confirmed that he was not far from the Kingdom of God. After that, no-one dared to ask Jesus any more questions.

Give to God in Love

In a court of the Temple there were thirteen large offering boxes. The priests used the money to buy food and pay people to care for the Temple. Jesus saw one of the poor widows come into the courtyard. This was as far as women were allowed to go. She put two very small copper coins into one of the boxes.

Rich people threw large bags of money into the boxes. They had plenty of money and so it was easy for them to give it to the Temple. But this widow was putting in all the money she had. It showed how much she loved God.

We can give little or much to our Lord. Giving is easier when we have plenty to give but giving all that we have is hard. If we truly love God we will give all that we have to Him. We will give Him our lives. We will give our gifts and our skills to God with a willing heart.

Mark Chapter 13

Jesus Teaches about the Future

At the end of the day, Jesus went with His disciples to the Mount of Olives, just outside the city. From the other side of the valley, Jerusalem looked beautiful. The disciples pointed to the wonderful Temple buildings.

"Not one stone here will be left upon another," Jesus told them. "Every stone will be thrown down". The disciples asked, "When will these things happen?".

We all want to know what is going to happen in the future, but God tells us only what is good for us to know. Only He knows what is going to happen. He has told us that one day soon, Jesus is coming back to Earth on the clouds. Our great buildings and organisations will be here only as long as God allows them.

"Be careful that no-one fools you," Jesus said. Men will teach wrong things. They will say that they are the Christ. They will say they know the date when Christ will come again. They will fool many people. Jesus said, "Keep watch, that you are not deceived by the enemies of God who seek power for wrong reasons."

Many Troubles that Will Happen

Jesus then said, "You will hear about wars... Do not be alarmed. These things must happen... Nation will fight against nation. There will be earthquakes in many places. People will go hungry".

We are now living in the days that Jesus warned about and many believers do not realise this. There will be big troubles before Jesus returns. Also times of a false peace when Christians will

forget to pray for the Kingdom of God to be established on Earth. They will be deceived by teaching of prosperity and enjoy the activities of our modern world and do nothing about the moral decline.

Jesus also warned His followers, "You will stand in front of governors and kings because of Me. In that way you will be witnesses to them. The Good News has to be preached to all nations before the end comes. You will be arrested and brought to trial, but do not worry... just say what God brings to your mind at the time. It is not you speaking but the Holy Spirit".

Then Jesus told the disciples more things that would happen. Many of these things have already happened. Others will happen soon, but we don't know when. The two greatest things Jesus said would happen were:

1. The Temple will be pulled down. This happened about 40 years after Jesus said these words.
2. Jesus Christ will come again in power. This is still to happen.

His words prepared His followers for the fall of Jerusalem. He told them how to escape the Roman armies. They should not think God would come and save them by a miracle. He will shorten the time of these things "because of God's chosen people, He has shortened it".

In AD 70, the Roman armies attacked all sides of the city. Then the Christians remembered the words of Jesus and escaped. They had time to cross the River Jordan to the east where they were safe.

Jesus Will Come Again

Jesus warns us that in times of trouble, people will say things that are untrue about His return to Earth. They will try to deceive God's people. He warns us several times, "Keep watching!" "False christs and false prophets will appear".

After that, there will be more times of great trouble in the Universe. Jesus said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My

words will never pass away". Jesus will come again and no-one knows when this will happen.

God created the angels who do whatever He tells them to do, but even they do not know the plans of God. However, there will be signs to show that Jesus is coming again. Luke wrote down what Jesus said about the 'last days' before His return to Earth. We call these days the 'end times'. Jesus will return to Jerusalem to judge the Earth. He will stop the human race from destroying itself through knowing evil as well as good and by following lies, which were the plans of Satan from the beginning.

Jesus told a parable to help them understand. He told them the parable to show that His people must be ready at all times and watching for His return.

"What I say to you, I say to everyone. Watch!" No-one knows when Jesus will return. Jesus said that even He did not know! Only Father God knows.

We can use the parable in verses 34-36 to remind us about the church:

- The church belongs to Jesus Christ.
- He leaves His followers in charge.
- Each one has a job to do.
- We must watch out for Jesus to return suddenly.

Will Jesus find us asleep when He returns? We should stay alert and work hard in extending God's Kingdom as if Jesus is coming back at any time!

Mark Chapter 14

A Woman Anoints Jesus with Oil

At that time, the religious leaders looked for an excuse to arrest Jesus and kill Him. We should pray against secrecy and deceit which cause spiritual death within the church.

That evening someone did something to show how much they loved Jesus.

Jesus was a guest at Simon's house. While Jesus ate, a woman brought a jar of very expensive oil. It smelled very sweet. She poured it on the feet of Jesus and wiped them with her long hair. The house was filled with the sweet smell of the oil.

Jesus was pleased with her, but some were angry. Judas said that the oil could be sold and the money given to the poor.

"Why are you angry with her?" Jesus said. "She has done a beautiful thing to Me". "The poor you will always have with you and you can help them at any time… But you will not always have Me".

Jesus is anointed with expensive perfumed oil which makes Judas angry

This woman poured the sweet-smelling oil on Jesus while He was still alive. Jesus knew that He would soon die. Jesus told those in the room that what she had done will always be remembered. The

Holy Spirit revealed to her that Jesus was the Messiah and also that He was soon going to die. This teaches a lesson to do loving things with your family while you have them with you. By loving them, we are also showing our love for Jesus.

After this, Judas, one of the twelve disciples, went to talk to the chief priests to help them to arrest Jesus. They promised to pay Judas money if he did this.

The Last Meal of Jesus

Many years before Jesus lived on Earth, the people of Israel had been slaves in Egypt for over 400 years. God warned Abraham that this would happen to his family when they moved to Egypt. Then God, by His great power, brought them out. Each year, at Passover, God's people always remembered what He had done for them before leading them out of Egypt to the Promised Land.

Each family killed a lamb, just as they did at the first Passover, in Egypt, when the angel of death passed over them. In remembrance, they ate the Passover meal as a family. At the time of Passover, Jews came from all over the country, and from far-away places, to celebrate in Jerusalem. Jewish families still eat this meal today which includes bread made without yeast and wine.

Jesus was a devout Jew and ate the Passover meal with His disciples. The Passover meal always included lamb. This meal was the Lord's Last Supper. Jews remembered that the death of a lamb in Egypt protected their family. The blood of the lamb was painted on the doorpost of the Israelites to save them from the angel of death in Egypt. Today, we remember the death of Jesus, the Lamb of God, whose sacrifice of blood saved us from death into everlasting life.

Christians everywhere remember the Lord's Last Supper. They share a simple meal of bread and wine or grape juice together. Most churches make it a regular part of their worship service, some more frequently than others. Some call it the breaking of bread, or

Communion, or Eucharist, to remember the last fellowship meal that Jesus ate with His disciples. This was before He gave His life on the cross as punishment for our sins.

The disciples asked Jesus, "Where do you want us to go… to eat the Passover?" Jesus told them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him". Normally, only women carried the water. They found the man and he took them to a room which was ready for them to eat the Passover meal. They prepared the meal of lamb, bread without yeast, wine, herbs and sauces. Jesus knew everything about this secret plan.

This last meal helped the disciples to remember their Lord's death. They knew that the blood of the first Passover lamb was sprinkled on the Israelite doorposts in. Seeing the blood, the angel of death passed over their homes and they were saved. Now, Jesus, the true Lamb of God, would die at the time of the Passover celebration. He was the Lamb of God soon to be killed to pay the price for us and free us from our sins.

While they were at the table, Jesus told them, "One of you who is eating with Me will hand Me over to My enemies". Each one said, "Is it me Lord?" Judas was the one who would betray Jesus. The other disciples did not know this.

Then Jesus told them again, "The Son of Man will go just as it is written about Him".

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