

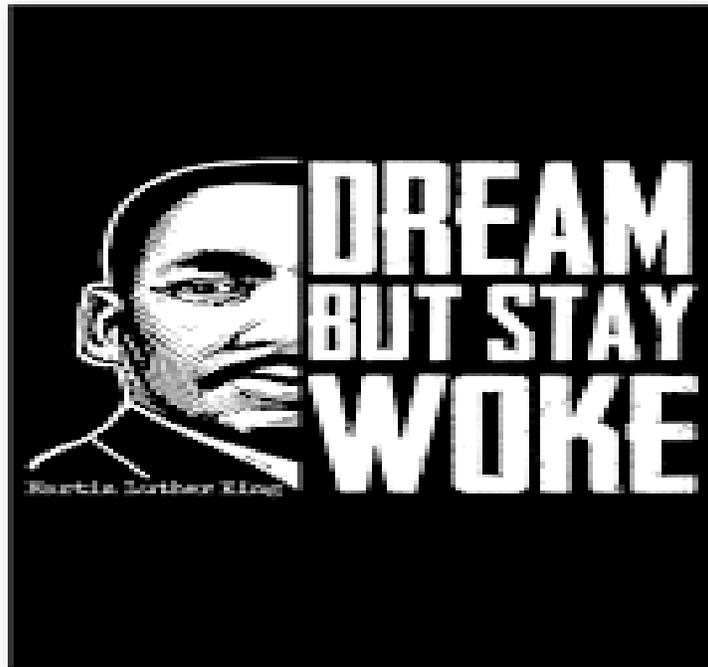
St. Matthew A.M.E. Church
336 Oakwood Avenue
Orange, NJ

Rev. Melvin E. Wilson, Pastor/Teacher

Email: pastorwilson@stmatthewame.org

Cell: (914) 562-6331

Pastor's Bible Study



The Parable of the Faithful Servant

Servant Church of the Oranges
SAINT MATTHEW
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
God's Love for God's People

Tuesday, October 1, 2019

6:30 pm

THE PARABLE OF THE FAITHFUL SERVANT
Mark 13:32-37; MATTHEW 24:36-44; LUKE 12:35-48

NIV (New International Version) - Mark

³² “But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³ Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. ³⁴ It’s like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. ³⁵ “Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. ³⁶ If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. ³⁷ What I say to you, I say to everyone: ‘Watch!’”

NKJV (New King James Version) - Matthew

³⁶ “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. ³⁷ But as the days of Noah *were*, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ³⁸ For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ⁴⁰ Then two *men* will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. ⁴¹ Two *women will be* grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. ⁴² Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. ⁴³ 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. ⁴⁴ Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

MSG (The Message, Paraphrased) - Luke

³⁵⁻³⁸ “Keep your shirts on; keep the lights on! Be like house servants waiting for their master to come back from his honeymoon, awake and ready to open the door when he arrives and knocks. Lucky the servants whom the master finds on watch! He’ll put on an apron, sit them at the table, and serve them a meal, sharing his wedding feast with them. It doesn’t matter what time of the night he arrives; they’re awake—and so blessed! ³⁹⁻⁴⁰ “You know that if the house owner had known what night the burglar was coming, he wouldn’t have stayed out late and left the place unlocked. So don’t you be slovenly and careless. Just when you don’t expect him, the Son of Man will show up.” ⁴¹ Peter said, “Master, are you telling this story just for us? Or is it for everybody?” ⁴²⁻⁴⁶ The Master said, “Let me ask you: Who is the dependable manager, full of common sense, that the master puts in charge of his staff to feed them well and on time? He is a blessed man if when the master shows up he’s doing his job. But if he says to himself, ‘The master is certainly taking his time,’ begins maltreating the servants and maids, throws parties for his friends, and gets drunk, the master will walk in when he least expects it, give him the thrashing of his life, and put him back in the

kitchen peeling potatoes. ⁴⁷⁻⁴⁸ “The servant who knows what his master wants and ignores it, or insolently does whatever he pleases, will be thoroughly thrashed. But if he does a poor job through ignorance, he’ll get off with a slap on the hand. Great gifts mean great responsibilities; greater gifts, greater responsibilities!

I. ANALYSIS OF THE TEXT

- A. Since Mark’s Gospel is the basis for this parable study, we will use Mark’s version of the story for our discussion. But note Matthew and Luke’s versions. This parable is not unique to Mark’s gospel. The focus of the others is the same, but the details are slightly different.
- B. An “**eschatological**” parable.
 - 1. The entire 13th chapter of Mark is about things that will happen in “the future.”
 - a. Vss. 1-23: Temple will be destroyed; deceivers will come in his name; wars and rumors of wars, nation will rise against nation, kingdom against kingdom. These are “the beginnings...”
 - b. Vss. 24-31: Jesus’ return
 - c. Vss. 32-37: Our passage
- C. How these verses and stories have been used. Understanding biblical prophecy.
 - 1. A project for you: How many types of prophecies are there in the Bible?
- D. The earth-shattering teaching of this text: “**No one can predict by Scripture or science the exact day of Jesus’ return,**” or, when the world will end (Is it the same thing?)
 - 1. The Rapture/Dispensationalism
 - 2. An important aside

Dispensationalism is an approach to biblical interpretation which states that [God](#) uses different means of working with people ([Israel](#) and the [Church](#)) during different periods of history, usually seven chronologically successive periods. However, the dispensational division of history varies among its adherents from three periods, to four, seven, and eight dispensations. Seven is the most common.

- 1. Innocence (Genesis 1 -3) - Adam and Eve before they sinned
- 2. Conscience (Genesis 3-8) - First sin to the flood
- 3. Civil Government (Genesis 9-11) - After the flood, government
- 4. Promise (Genesis 12-[Ex. 19](#)) - Abraham to Moses, the Law is given
- 5. Law (Exodus 20 - [Acts 2:4](#)) - Moses to the cross
- 6. Grace ([Acts 2:4](#) - [Revelation 20:3](#)) - Cross to the millennial kingdom
- 7. Millennial Kingdom ([Rev. 20:4-6](#)) – The rule of Christ on earth in the millennial kingdom

Though dispensationalists share common opinions about interpreting scripture, there are different types of dispensationalist positions.

Classical Dispensationalism

1. God has different purposes at different times
2. The Church is a parenthesis in history between the times of God dealing with Israel
3. There will be a literal Kingdom in heaven and also a Kingdom on earth during the millennial period

Modified Dispensationalism

1. Two peoples of God: Israel and the Church
2. Different roles
3. Salvation is the same for both groups
4. Church and Israel exist together during the millennium

Progressive Dispensationalism

1. Israel and the Church are both the people of God
2. It relies more on covenantal interpretations
3. Old Testament promises expanded to include the Church
4. There are still distinctions between Israel and the Church
5. Israel is still God's chosen people with a plan from God
6. Pre-trib rapture is generally held, but not necessary

Dispensationalists, as a whole, seek to interpret the scripture as literally as possible. The positions hold that salvation has always been by faith, but it is manifested differently between Old and New Testaments ([Gen. 15:6](#); [Hab. 2:4](#); [Rom. 4:1-5](#); [John 3:16](#)). It accepts God's covenants as vital parts of dispensational activity, but the primary unit of division is the dispensation (i.e., period of time). There are promises to Israel that are yet to be fulfilled. Israel will be completely restored and be prominent in the world as it carries out God's promises. The Church may replace Israel to some extent, but not fully. The Church did not exist in O.T. times. Premillennial held by all dispensationalists. Pre-tribulation rapture held by almost all dispensationalists.

Dispensationalism summary

- Literal interpretation of the Bible
- God works via different arrangements in distinct periods of history
- Israel is the literal descendants of Abraham, not spiritual ones
- Israel is the heir to the promises made to Abraham about the seed being blessed

- Participation in the Abrahamic Covenant is “mainly” by physical birth in Jewish lineage
- Two distinct people groups: Israel and the Church
- Church began at Pentecost
- Salvation is by faith in accordance to the revelation given in a particular dispensation
- The Holy Spirit did not indwell people in all dispensations, only during the dispensation of the Church Age
- Christ will reign in the future 1000 year period which occurs after the rapture (by Matt Slick)

II. LESSONS/SPIRITUAL & LIFE APPLICATIONS/QUESTIONS

- A. We just don’t know when.
- B. Are you willing to function even if you don’t know what the future holds?
- C. How does faith work in a “**I don’t know**” environment?
- D. How important is preparation?



For Next Week:

[THE PARABLE OF THE WHEAT AND TARES](#) - Matthew 13:24-30



Join us on the St. Matthew Prayer Line tomorrow morning at 6:30 am
(515) 604-9855, Access Code 886823#