

The Gospel Will Be Proclaimed

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[0:00] I'm going to be looking at Matthew chapter 24, verses 13 through 14. It says, We are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet.

For nation will rise up against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. But all these are the beginnings of the birth pangs.

Then they will deliver you up to tribulation, put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another, and many false prophets will arise and lead many astray.

And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations.

And then the end will come. Again, verse 14. And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations.

[1:36] And then the end will come. This is the word of God. God may be seated. Today, and thank you, Rev Kev, for the invitation to come.

I'm glad to be able to help in a moment of need. Today, I really want to focus. I know we read this whole passage, and I wanted to read the passage, put it in a context.

And we'll come back to some of the other thoughts higher up. But I really want to focus on verse 14. This gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to the nations.

And then the end will come. And so we're going to look at this basically in five points. Now, I'm going to spend a little longer time period on the first point because I think it's the most important.

Not, well, I'll explain to you in a minute. So don't worry. This is not going to be a two-hour sermon. Hopefully, just a 30, 35-minute sermon. But the first point, we're going to talk about the gospel.

[2:51] Then we're going to talk about the promise. He says this gospel will be proclaimed. And then we're just going to briefly look at how it's proclaimed.

Of course, that's not directly in the text. Then I want to think about the urgency of the need of proclaiming the gospel. The urgency. And our part in proclaiming the gospel.

So let's think about the gospel. The gospel of the kingdom is the good news. The good news about Jesus Christ. It's good news.

It's not bad news. It's not a message of condemnation. It's a message of salvation. It's a message of welcoming. God welcoming us through his son back to himself.

Unfortunately, for many religious people in the world, and probably even for agnostics and atheists, we tend to have an idea that if I'm good, if I'm doing the right things, whatever those things are for me, you know, then somehow in the end it's going to turn out pretty good for me.

[4:09] If it's in the Christian faith, then God's going to welcome me into his kingdom. I'm going to be able to enjoy eternal life. And probably even in this life, he's going to give me the good things.

Because he owes me. I'm being good. I am good. But, yeah, help us. Because that's not the gospel. That's not the gospel at all.

The gospel is the very opposite of that. And sometimes it's the simplicity of the gospel that's the hardest thing to believe. Yeah, yeah.

I remember we interviewed a couple. We were in El Paso. We helped the church planner interviewing potential members. And I remember one couple that came.

And we used the two E questions. If you were to die tonight, do you know for certain you would go to heaven? And if you did die tonight and you went to heaven, and God asked you, why should I let you in?

[5:09] What would you say? Okay? And the couple responded, it's just Jesus Christ. It's grace. Now, most people will say that.

And then they'll follow that up with, and, and, but they didn't do that. And I'm going to tell you, when they said it that way, it sounded like, it's almost like, wait, wait, you're missing something.

But no, no, you're not missing anything. They've understood the gospel. The simplicity of the gospel sometimes is harder to believe than its complexity. There's just a part of us.

There's something in us, all of us, in me, in you, that somehow we sense that we've, certainly we've got to do something.

Certainly can't just be simply believing and trusting and resting alone in the Lord Jesus Christ. But it is.

[6:12] In his book, The Center Church, Tim Keller gives a very basic description of what the gospel is and isn't. And he has three basic points, three basic concepts.

First of all, that the gospel is good news, not good advice. Amen. All right. It's good news. It's not good advice.

It's not telling you, the basic, the basic gospel is not telling you how to live. It's telling you good news. It's not telling you that this is something that you have to do in order to earn God's favor.

It's telling us God is offering you everything. Secondly, it's telling you that we have been rescued or saved.

What have we been rescued from? Ultimately, from the wrath of God. God's wrath is not like our human anger. It doesn't get hot and cold.

[7:17] It doesn't fly off. He doesn't fly off the handle, in other words. His anger is his justice. And we have offended him gravely and deeply. So, God, in the gospel, say, this is, I'm rescuing you from my wrath.

before we know Jesus Christ, before you trust in Jesus Christ, you're enemy of God.

And you're living under the shadow of fear. Probably. Okay. I guess people can deny that. But where does guilt come from?

Why do people feel guilty? But the gospel changes that. So, we no longer have to live under that shadow of fear. We now live under the shadow of God's blessing, God's favor, God's presence.

So, it's good news announcing that we have been rescued or saved. And it is good news about what has been done by Jesus Christ to put right our relationship with God.

[8:32] So, yes, the gospel content then is about, our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the gospel. What he did, coming to earth, living the perfect life, dying in our place, paying sacrificially for our sin, for our wrongdoing, and then being raised again from the dead, and seated at the right hand of his father.

It's all been completed by him. And because of that, there are four adjectives, or four, yeah, adjectives that can describe all of us, any Christian.

Okay. And I really am trying to stress this this morning, because I know it's very easy to be a member of a church, or be an attender of a church, and not really understand the gospel, not really capture it, to be thinking all along, well, yes, it's Christ, but me.

And I say that from experience, not just theoretically, because I grew up in a church, where I heard, partially heard the gospel, that it wasn't by works, you weren't saved by what you did, but at the same time, you better be a good person.

And so, when I was about 13, I was received into membership of this church, and I was really afraid the elders were going to ask me, if I was trusting in Christ, and I didn't know what I was going to tell them, because I don't think I was trusting, I knew I wasn't trusting in Christ.

[10:21] But then one of the elders spoke up, and said, well, Charlie's a good kid, he can join the church. You don't join a church, because you're a good person.

And your elders should never allow you to join a church. Unfortunately, the church is not very strong, obviously, in the gospel, but that stayed with me, for many, many, many years, even after I did come to faith in Jesus Christ.

That lingering sense of guilt, that there was something I could not, I could not keep up, I could not fulfill, I could, I was constantly falling short, until, by God's grace, begin to understand more deeply, that the gospel, that it's not me, it'll never be me, it's Jesus Christ, what he's done.

So these four adjectives, I think, help to describe this change, that occurs in us, that first of all, we are forgiven, and that is a very powerful concept.

Has anyone, have you ever offended someone, and then later, maybe not even asking for forgiveness, but they say, I forgive you.

[11:41] If it's your wife, your husband, parent, a child, a good friend, it's very, very, impacting.

I can't even, think how to say it good, in English. That just, it's something that is very liberating, in a life, in your life.

That's what God's saying to us. The father, he's saying, I forgive you. In the parable of the prodigal son, the father goes out, and sees his son, the prodigal son, coming from afar, and he runs to him.

Now, the word forgiveness, is not used in that passage, but the very actions, of the father, speak of forgiveness. A ring on his finger, shoes on his feet, new clothes, a welcome back, into the family, that you're mine.

And so, the forgiveness, offered to us in the gospel, is offered, without cost. Freely. Given so freely. Oh, can you, can you capture that?

[12:51] That you're forgiven. Completely. Fully. And forever. Then we are redeemed. We've been bought back to God, by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1, 7 and 8. In him we have redemption, through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, upon us, in all wisdom and insight.

Redeemed. Bought with a price. In, a long time ago, we lived in Lima, Peru. And we knew a couple there, our first term.

And, try to explain this, in, in Lima, and it probably still exists, it's a big city. They have an area of town, where you can go, and buy auto parts, used.

Okay, used. They've been stolen, off other people's cars. Now, the question is, why did the police, allow that to exist? Well, that's another discussion.

[13:58] So, this couple that we knew, he had a part, stolen off his car. It was very common. Headlights, taillights, mirrors, computers, taken out of the car.

So, he goes down to this area, where he knows, he can probably find a replacement. And, I don't know how he identified the part, but he said, he said he was walking along, and he saw the part, that belonged to his car.

And, he told the man, who was selling it, that's mine. Mine. And, the man responded to him, sir, that was yours. But, now it's mine.

And, if you want it, you're going to have to pay me for it. He had to redeem the part, that already belonged to him. But, that's the idea. We belong to God in creation, and we went astray.

We wandered far from him. But, he's redeemed us, bought us back to himself. Okay, wonderful good news. And, then we are acceptable. We are acceptable.

[14:59] God calls his children acceptable. And, what that means, is, you're, you can never do anything, positive, to make God love you more, than he loves you right now.

But, now this is the, this is the kicker. You can never do anything, so bad, as his child, that he would, cease, to love you.

Now that's, we can understand, maybe the first. The second, hmm, not so sure about this, you know. No, but God, you're accepted.

I'm accepted. We're forgiven completely. We have a right standing before God. When God sees us, he sees his own son, Jesus Christ.

Now that does, we don't have a righteousness of our own. We're not worthy. We'll never be worthy. One of my, a student that I've been teaching, in Mexico, wrote something about, that, about, we were looking at, uh, heaven.

[16:14] And, uh, he wrote something in an email about, or in a, well, anyway, about not being worthy. And, after I thought about it for a little bit, I wrote him back, just, just briefly said, brother, you'll never be worthy.

You, right. There's no worthiness in us. Right. There's, there's no dignity. There's no reason that we should go, and be accepted by God. But we are.

And then we are loved. We are loved unconditionally by God. So, the four adjectives that describe, the believer, in Christ, is that, of being forgiven, redeemed, accepted, and loved.

And this, understanding of the gospel of the kingdom, requires us to believe, that which is counter intuitive. I've tried to make that point. It just doesn't seem right.

How can God do that? How can he love me freely, unconditionally? Well, of course, it's because of what his son has come to do, and did, and does.

[17:33] We are accepted. We are loved. And as we understand the gospel more deeply, and you do, you do grow in the gospel, your understanding of the gospel, okay?

It's not like, well, I believe 50 years ago, and nothing ever happened, and, and, but I'm, I'm, I'm going to heaven one day. No, you grow in your understanding of the gospel.

Steve Brown, in a book, says this, we will not be very interested in proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, as long as we think Christianity is about fixing me, and others, building empires, changing the world, making my life count, correcting doctrinal truth, promoting programs, raising money, and being nice.

Isn't that true? None of us are going to be interested. What kind of gospel would that be? All right. So as we grow, we're going to grow in our desire to proclaim the gospel, and that takes us to the second point I want us to look at.

Jesus is saying here in this verse, this gospel will be proclaimed in all the world, to all the nations, to all the peoples.

[18:52] How can he make such a claim? Well, it's the same way that when he came into Jerusalem, and the Pharisees and Sadducees told his disciples, and those who were following, to be quiet, and not sing Hosanna, not to declare that he's the king.

Jesus said, you don't understand. If they don't say it, then these rocks are going to cry out. Because God has ordained it.

And God has ordained that this gospel will go into all the world. It's going to be proclaimed to every nation, and tribe, and language. It's going to occur in every moment of life.

By that, I mean, it's occurring when there's famines. It's occurring when there's war. It's occurring when there's natural disaster. It's occurring, yes, in the good times, when there's peace, and when there's prosperity.

So, it's never been dependent on the circumstances. And usually God, actually God uses the circumstances. The thing very interesting for me, anyway, is that prosperity tends to produce more rejection of the gospel than hardship.

[20:25] But Christ, our Lord, is sovereign over all. Because he, as it says in Revelation 5, and they sang a new song saying, worthy are you to take the scroll and to open the seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God, from every tribe, and language, and people, and nation.

And you have made them a kingdom, and priests to God, and they shall reign on the earth. So, the gospel is being proclaimed, even as we speak. We just heard a wonderful report about Cuba.

It's occurring throughout Latin America. It's occurring in Asia. It's even occurring in the Islamic nations. Around the world where there's much opposition. Nothing can impede this proclamation.

How will it be proclaimed? Well, obviously there are many different ways. Some will go as teachers, preachers. Some will be going just in the byway, as they're walking, as they're going.

They'll be sharing. People are going to maybe ask them, hey, your life seems different. Why is you, why are you so happy? What, what is it, this joy in your life? Where did it come from? Why do you have peace in the midst of this terrible situation?

[21:47] Of course, it spreads through mercy, ministries of mercy or mercy ministries. As we, as Cuba, that's part of what God has been doing.

Providing food for the needy. So the gospel is going forth. In Romans 10, Paul says, how will they call on him whom they have not believed?

And how will they believe in him whom they have not heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach? Unless they are sent. As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news.

Praise the Lord that the gospel is being proclaimed throughout this world. And we're part of it. But then that brings me to the sense of urgency.

Our sense of urgency. In the context now of the passage that we looked at, we noticed that our Lord Jesus was asked in particular a question by his disciples.

[22:58] When, when, basically, when are you going to come back again? When are you coming back? What will be the signs? What should we be looking for? And so he begins to tell them all these things.

Some are going to come in my name saying, I am the Christ. Don't believe them. You're going to hear about wars and rumors of wars. You're going to see nations rise up against nation, kingdom against kingdom.

There will be famines and earthquakes. But these are only the beginnings. He says, these are only the beginnings. So these things have been going on. Millennials.

Centuries. They never seem to end, do they? There are moments of peace, perhaps in the world, but there's never been complete peace anywhere. And then he goes on to tell them that then also some are going to fall away.

You're going to be hated also because of this message, this gospel that you're bearing forth. There'll be false prophets. And because of lawlessness, the love of many will grow cold.

[24:02] So the urgency then is that we're seeing these signs. Take this in general. These are signs that the Lord's coming is perhaps not as far off as we might want to think or think.

And it may not be as close as we think. We don't know, okay? But they are signs to warn us, to urge us to be, I'll say, use the word diligent, diligent in proclaiming the gospel.

Because we don't know. We don't know the hour or the day. Farther down in this passage, verses 42 and 44, Jesus tells his disciples, stay awake for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.

But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into.

Therefore, you also must be ready for the son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect. Vigilant. Now, I was thinking about my own life, that sometimes I don't feel like and know I'm not very vigilant.

[25:27] We heard some good messages on spiritual warfare, on prayer. Vigilant. Ready.

To go. Ready to share the gospel. thinking to, about the recent message that Rivkev has presented to us from John 15.

The fruit bearing. And part of the fruit bearing is going to be the gospel going forth through us to others, as God brings others to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ. So, I think the question that stands before us is this. Will I, as a follower of Jesus Christ, participate in God's mission? Will we, as a family, how will we participate?

As a church? Because the Holy Spirit is, is, sends out people. Now, not, I'm going to talk a little bit here about the idea of foreign missions.

[26:33] And obviously, not everybody in this church tomorrow is going to be preparing to go overseas somewhere and learn a new language, become acculturated, to try to begin to share the gospel.

Okay? But as a church, we're all to be involved. we're involved hopefully financially we're involved with prayer but it's still I want to challenge the younger people here if you understand the gospel is God perhaps putting in your heart a call a sense of calling internal calling to go to go elsewhere and live elsewhere to give up yes it means giving up some things who will go who will go it says in Acts 13 that the church in Antioch were prophets and teachers Barnabas and Simon who was called Niger Lucius of Cyrene Marene a long time a lifelong friend of Herod the Tetrarch and Saul and while they were worshiping the Lord said the Holy Spirit said set apart for me

Barnabas and Saul for the work that I have called them to and so after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off the Holy Spirit's at work sending people out into the world of course that world is not just over there that world is right here who will go who will say Lord send me and I'm going to contend with you this morning the reason I tried to spend a little more time on the gospel is that the better you understand the gospel the more you appreciate the gospel the more you appropriate what the Lord Jesus Christ has done and is doing the more compelled you and I will be to proclaim the gospel okay let's pray Lord we ask that you would you indeed would compel us even as Paul speaks about this in 2 Corinthians he's compelled to share the gospel compelled to go into the world

Lord you're not calling all of us to go far away but you are calling some and you are calling us all to be involved in one way or another with this great enterprise that your gospel will be proclaimed in all the world as a testimony against the kingdoms and then you are going to come again and we rejoice in that and we glory in that help us Lord Jesus fill our hearts and minds with the gospel truths that we might respond appropriately I ask in your name Father or the name of our Lord Jesus Christ Amen Amen Amen