



GracePoint: A Weekly Sermon Discussion

83 – "Finished ALL These Sayings"

Announcements:

8/30 @7:30 -

Prayer

8/31 @6:30 -

Grace Group

9/3 @8:30 -

Sunday School

9/3 @6:00 -

FAMILY NIGHT

Large Group

ICE BREAKER: What is your greatest fear?

READ: Matthew 26:1-2

One thing we often overlook is things like transitions in scripture, but they are important and can tell us a lot. Of particular importance for us today is how Matthew transitions out of the final large discourse in his book. Matthew does something really cool if we are paying attention. It is subtle, but something that is worth comparing to how he ended all the others. So let's do that:

- Sermon on the Mount: "And when Jesus finished these sayings" (7:28)
- Missions Discourse: "When Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples" (11:1)
- Kingdom Parables: "And when Jesus had finished these parables" (13:53)
- Kingdom Living Discourse: "Now when Jesus had finished these sayings" (19:1)
- Olivet Discourse: "When Jesus had finished all these sayings" 26:1

Did you see the difference? Let's talk about it!

The little word "all" carries an important significance. David Turner notes that this is "not simply the end of a discourse but the end of all that Jesus taught in his gospel. His teaching about the Rule of God is now completed and his passion narrative begins". In other words, Jesus is done teaching. There is no more for him to teach us about life in the kingdom, how we ought to live, what he requires of us, etc. The kingdom -- its plan, its content, and what life there looks like -- has been spelled out and now he must purchase the people who will be in the kingdom through his death. Another way that we could say this to get to the heart of what Matthew is trying to say is that the time for teaching has ended and the time for doing has begun. There is here an important point here if we contemplate it: Most people think of religion as a set of rules or things that we must do. But even in how the Gospel of Matthew is written, the plan of God is seen much differently. God lays out what is required for a righteous life, then HE does it! This is the mystery of the Gospel!

DISCUSS: What does it mean for us that Jesus taught AND did? More importantly, what does this mean for how I live my life?

From here, however, we should note that while the "official" teaching of Jesus is done, Jesus is by no means done teaching. First and foremost he will teach through example. For a big picture we could look at things like when Paul encourages us to be humble like Christ was humble, even to the point of death (Philippians 2). But there are many other practical things we could see. He is the example of trusting the plan of God though it may cost us (see Matthew 26:39). He is the example of grace and dignity as he is arrested (Matthew 26:52-54). He is the example of how to endure as he bore the shame and humiliation of a sham trial and did not defend himself (27:14). Truly, we could go on and on. Just because Jesus is not teaching us with words, his life (and truly how he died) is for us the greatest instructor we could hope for. In all these things we should "have the mind of Christ within us".

DISCUSS: How can we live in the example of Christ? In what ways does his life instruct us?

I would like to end with one final thought of how Jesus continues to teach us. I would say that Matthew 26:1 marks the end of the PRE-RESURRECTION teaching of Christ. But since he has risen he can now teach us in a way that is even more perfect than before. And here there are two reasons. The first is that in the resurrection we see the plan of God unfolding. More than just an event in history, the resurrection is when EVERYTHING changed. And so now we see and understand the nature of his sacrifice, the nature of the kingdom, truly the nature of who he is as messiah. Therefore he can come and teach us to "go and make disciples of all nations" and we can do that. Because he is the resurrected king we can trust that when he says he will be with us always, he will truly be with us always. But the second way is that this is what laid the foundation for how he still perfectly teaches all of us, namely through the Spirit. He has sent to us the comforter, the one who is inside us teaching us and shaping us and bringing illumination to our hearts and minds. While the words are all said and recorded in Scripture, the Spirit is still teaching us each and every day what God has already said to us!

DISCUSS: In what ways has the resurrection changed everything in regards to how we are taught by Jesus? How can we trust more in the Spirit's leading and teaching?