

Matthew 26:1-13
Feilding Baptist
7 December 2025

Call to Worship

Welcome to worship with Feilding Baptist Church!

Our advent candle today is the candle of - peace. We think of God bringing peace. We think of Jesus being the Prince of Peace. What about us? Look at these three verses;

Matthew 5:9 (NIV - UK)

[Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.](#)

Romans 12:18 (NIV - UK)

[If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.](#)

Colossians 3:15 (NIV - UK)

[Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.](#)

Message - No Tithing!

What are the implications of being disciples of the Servant King?

Last week we looked at the last verses of Matthew 25. This is where the sheep and the goats are drafted. And Graham Jackson took this literally, and headed over to Hawkes Bay this week to draft some sheep. And guess what he found? Not one goat! It must have been like heaven?!

Unlike when my brother in law was drafting their lambs a few weeks ago. Here with the lambs was, not a goat, but a piglet! They saved it for us. And it was delicious!

There is a saying, 'Being brought back to earth with a bump'. A sudden, often unpleasant realisation of reality. The bump might literally be the touchdown of the plane's wheels at the end of a wonderful holiday. Being brought back to earth, is the return to work. For us, after finishing the bike ride and going on holiday, it was the discovery in Te Anau that our credit card had a thousand dollars less in it than we expected. Some extra payments had been made. And it wasn't Diane, or me, or the cat. Scammed. Don't worry, the bank refunded us. It brought us back to earth after the high of finishing the TA in Bluff.

Here in Matthew 26, it's like Jesus is purposely bringing the disciples back to earth. It's the start of a new section. If you've got a Bible that has Jesus' words in red, look at the previous three chapters, they're almost all red. Jesus is doing a lot of teaching! And if you look at what Jesus was saying, you'll find that Jesus repeatedly talks about when He will return, when He will come again. So it's pretty interesting that Jesus doesn't leave the disciples with the highs and excitement of that thinking, all about heaven. In fact, that saying, of being so heavenly minded that they were of no earthly use, very much applies here. Jesus brings the disciples back to earth.

Jesus brings the disciples back to earth with a bump, suddenly talking, not about His return, but His death. Yet, there is a flow here, from chapter 25, that we should not miss. It is a new section, but the fragrance of the sheep and goats lingers. Let's read;

Matthew 26:1-13 (NIV - UK)

The plot against Jesus

1 When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples, 2 'As you know, the Passover is two days away - and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.'

3 Then the chief priests and the elders of the people assembled in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, 4 and they schemed to arrest Jesus secretly and kill him. 5 'But not during the festival,' they said, 'or there may be a riot among the people.'

Jesus anointed at Bethany

6 While Jesus was in Bethany in the home of Simon the Leper, 7 a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, which she poured on his head as he was reclining at the table.

8 When the disciples saw this, they were indignant. 'Why this waste?' they asked. 9 'This perfume could have been sold at a high price and the money given to the poor.'

10 Aware of this, Jesus said to them, 'Why are you bothering this woman? She has done a beautiful thing to me. 11 The poor you will always have with you,[a] but you will not always have me. 12 When she poured this perfume on my body, she did it to prepare me for burial. 13 Truly I tell you, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.'

Footnotes

Matthew 26:11 See Deut. 15:11.

May God bless these words to our hearts and minds.

v1-5

With the consideration for 'the least of these' ringing in our ears from chapter 25, what do we have here?! I was deeply shocked to read in verse three, that the chief priests and elders were meeting in - where - the palace of the high priest. Now, to be honest, other translations have chosen other words for palace, and the best translation is courtyard. But the courtyard was in the palace, so it is correct. The translators for the NIV have chosen, palace, so that we don't miss the point.

What sort of priest or pastor or minister, lives in a palace?! What does this say about them and their role? Where do their people live? Are they in palaces? How do we relate to 'the least of these' when we are living in palaces?

When I was teaching a pupil asked me where I lived. The school I was teaching in was in Waitara, a Decile one community. I lived in the town for five years, but when I got married, we bought a house in New Plymouth, a city, 15 minutes down the road. When I answered the pupil, that I lived in New Plymouth, I got a look that showed me that any respect that they had had for me, had just left the room. The message was, you think you're too good to live with us.

Where we eat, where we drink, where we live, is noticed, and makes a statement.

And yes, you're right, it is about our character. Some people can live in palaces and care about the least of these. The Queen was a good example. But here, the chief priests and the elders were scheming. They were being the very opposite of peacemakers. Sure they don't want a riot (v5), but they were not interested in making peace with Jesus, instead considering violence and death.

v6-13

The high priest lives in a palace. And so that we don't miss this point, look ahead three verses to verse six, where is Jesus? Jesus is in the home, not palace, of Simon the what - leper. Most likely a healed or cured leper. What sort of place do you expect this was? It's the last place you would expect a king. The king should be in a palace. Oh, this is interesting isn't it. What sort of king is this?

Who are we disciples or apprentices of? Someone high and mighty who lives in a palace? No, and significantly, we are disciples of someone who is down at our level, prepared to get dirty. And in case we think that Jesus was just passing by, doing the right thing, calling in on the least of these, see what Jesus is doing? Jesus is reclining at the table, He is eating! Here is the last supper before the Last Supper.

What are the implications for us, who follow, who are disciples or apprentices of Jesus? You see the problem with following and not apprenticing? We can follow at a distance, and just observe. But to be a disciple or apprentice, is about taking on board what the Master is doing and saying. It's about becoming like the Master.

Jesus isn't in the palace, but in the home of someone known as a leper. Here is a playing out of what Jesus expects of us, in regards to the 'least of these'.

And what happens in Simon's home? See verse seven, a woman comes in with expensive perfume, pouring it on Jesus' head. The reaction of the disciples, v8, is understandable. What about the least of these? Think of all those we could have helped. Their focus was on the poor. Great! But remember last week, how many things did the sheep do, how many things did Jesus' honour?

There were six things, that suggests to me, that there is one short. Seven is the perfect number, something was missing. We can focus on doing, doing, doing, and leave no time for worship, prayer, Bible. Time with God.

So here is a person, a woman, who does the seventh thing, pours out extravagance, has God first. But, hang on, is this the seventh thing, or the first thing? Are we to do all those other six things for the least of these first, and tag God on the end, as number seven. No, God isn't to come into the picture when all the work has been done. Extravagance for God, seen in time with God, in worship, prayer, and Bible, is to be #1, before all the doing starts.

We begin with Jesus rising. Sunday is the first of the seven days of the week, not the last.

The sheep were rewarded for all that they had done. But their doing had come from their relationship with God. Just like this woman, who poured out the expensive perfume, an extravagant offering. And wherever this gospel is preached, she will be remembered, says v13.

What will we remember? Hopefully extravagance.

I think the concept of tithing is brilliant. But we do need to challenge ourselves. Remember the woman in the temple who gave two cents, compared to the rich person who gave two thousand, the percentage she gave according to Jesus was 100%, where the rich guy it appears gave 10%. You see, we're disciples of a King who was prepared to give everything. A Servant King, who was prepared to give even His life. This woman in today's verses, didn't just give 10%.

We must challenge ourselves with what we're giving. This isn't just about money, it's about time, it's about life. If we're to be fair dinkum disciples of Jesus, we need to think through the implications. Being an apprentice of Jesus is not a soft option.

Let's pause for a moment, to consider the implications of being a disciple of the Servant King.

Father, may we remember this woman, for what she gave. And may we remember where you eat, and who you associated with. But may we get our priorities right, putting time with you first, not last. As we take time to share in communion, may we remember, what Jesus has done, and will do, for us. May we be thankful. Amen.

Let's listen to The Servant King

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A0FSZ_iSYO8&list=RDA0FSZ_iSYO8&start_radio=1