

**GROW. PRAY. STUDY.**  
**First United Methodist Church - Weekly Study Guide**  
*“Equipping people in becoming deeply committed Christians ”*

**The Final Week - Tuesday: The End of the Age and the Final Judgment**

Jesus spent most of the day Tuesday of his final week on earth teaching in the Temple Courts as he had on Monday. Yet, on Tuesday his subject was quite different. He began by pointing out the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, asking them what good it does to be pristine on the outside when inside their souls were dark and decaying. Jesus, of course, also asks the same question of us. It is easy to spend all our time focusing on the failures of others in order to turn our attention away from our own failures. In doing so we, too, are being Pharisees.

Jesus then began to point to the final judgment and what it will be like when the Messiah comes again. He reminds us that how we live our lives right here and now will greatly influence where we find ourselves at the final judgment. He asks us the uncomfortable question, “Will we be ready?” He then reminds us we are only ready if we are living our lives deeply committed to Him and His love.

As we walk through our readings this week I want to encourage you to have that uncomfortable question, “will you be ready?” at the forefront of your thoughts. It is an important question because it plays a large role in how we prioritize and live out our lives. Christ will return in final judgment.....nothing can stop this and trusting in things and people other than Him will prove to be pointless. When this day comes how will he say you lived out your life?

**MONDAY - READ Matthew 24:1-31**

This week we'll read Matthew 24 and 25. These chapters are the fullest report of what Jesus told his disciples about the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the age. Verses 1-3 set the stage. To the disciples, it seemed clear that the ruin of the great Temple could only happen at the end of the age. About 40 years later, the Roman army smashed Jerusalem and the Temple. The majesty of the Temple would prove unreliable, Jesus said, “but stand firm to the end,” he said. What does it mean for you to stand firm in your faith, even in difficult times? In whom does your hope for the future center?

*Pray the Wesley Covenant Prayer*

**TUESDAY– READ Matthew 24:32-51**

Many Christians through the centuries have tried to predict the date of Jesus' return. Yet in this section, Jesus told his followers that only his heavenly Father knows the time of his return. “Even I don't know,” he said (verse 36). “Don't worry so much about getting ready. Just BE ready, always.” What do you think it means to “be ready” for Jesus return? Does your answer bring anxiety, or peace and hope?

*Pray the Wesley Covenant Prayer*

### **WEDNESDAY– READ Matthew 25:1-13**

The three parables in Matthew 25 emphasize what Jesus taught in chapter 24. First, he tells of a normal wedding of his day (quite unlike ours!) to make it clear that we must be ready to welcome the Lord at all times. Patience is a character quality God’s servants need (Galatians 5:22, James 5:7-9). What spiritual lesson(s) do you learn from looking at the difference between the “wise” and the “foolish” characters in this story? With which group do you identify more? How are you deepening your personal bond with Jesus so that you know him, and he knows you?  
*Pray the Wesley Covenant Prayer*

### **THURSDAY - READ Matthew 25:14-30**

A “talent” was a lot of money—up to 20 years of a typical worker’s wages. The master asks his servants to use the means he’s given them to advance his aims while he’s away. When he returns, he asks them to account, not for the total they bring, but for their willingness to overcome fear and make a good effort. What resources has God placed in your life? How are you using those resources to serve the Kingdom of God and bless others?  
*Pray the Wesley Covenant Prayer*

### **FRIDAY– READ Matthew 25:31-46; Mark 12:28-34**

Jesus caps his teaching about the end of the age with this startling view of the final judgment. Some of his hearers must have thought, “He can’t mean the judgment will turn on how we treated the dregs of society?” But Jesus’ word picture here fits perfectly with his choice of the greatest commandments. When did you recently see someone in need and act to fill that need? When have you been unwilling to respond to a need you could have met?  
*Pray Wesley Covenant Prayer*

### **SATURDAY- READ Matthew 26:6-16**

Today we will be reading the passage we will deal with in worship tomorrow. As you read this Scripture pray that God cleanse your heart and prepare you for worship tomorrow.

#### ***I invite you to pray the following prayer:***

*Dear God: As I read this passage today help me do so with an open heart, sincerely listening for your voice in my life. Use this passage to prepare me for worship tomorrow. As I read it help me to set aside my own agenda and my own desires so that I may come to worship tomorrow prepared to be molded by you as I continue my journey to becoming a deeply committed disciple of yours. In Christ’s name I pray, AMEN*

Here at FUMC we believe part of becoming a Deeply Committed Christians is praying daily. If you find yourself struggling with what to say, we suggest you try praying Wesley's Covenant Prayer.

*A Covenant Prayer in the Wesleyan Tradition*

I am no longer my own, but thine.  
Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt.  
Put me to doing, put me to suffering.  
Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee,  
exalted for thee or brought low by thee.  
Let me be full, let me be empty.  
Let me have all things, let me have nothing.  
I freely and heartily yield all things to thy pleasure and disposal.  
And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit  
thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it.  
And the covenant which I have made on earth,  
let it be ratified in heaven. AMEN