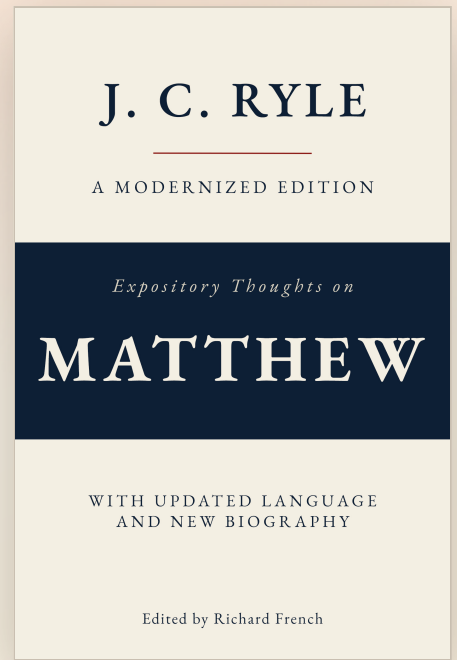




SECTION AND PASSAGE REFERENCE

Expository Thoughts On the Gospel Of Matthew

JC Ryle

A section-by-section reference of the exposition: what each section argues, the figures and concepts it treats, and its key quotable claims.

What this is

A section-by-section reference of the exposition: what each section argues, the figures and concepts it treats, and its key quotable claims. 31 sections, each with **Summary, Key Figures & Concepts, Exegetical Apparatus, Central Claim, Scripture & Citations,** and **Key Claims & Quotable Lines.**

Section index

1	Foreword	2	Biography of JC Ryle, No scripture passage expounded (biographical background; Ephesians 2:8 and 2 Timothy 4:7 referenced as personally significant to Ryle)
3	Preface	4	Chapter 1: Matthew 1
5	Chapter 2: Matthew 2, Matthew 2:1-23	6	Chapter 3: Matthew 3
7	Chapter 4: Matthew 4, Matthew 4:1-25	8	Chapter 5: Matthew 5
9	Chapter 6: Matthew 6	10	Chapter 7: Matthew 7, Matthew 7:1-29
11	Chapter 8: Matthew 8, Matthew 8:1-34	12	Chapter 9: Matthew 9
13	Chapter 10: Matthew 10	14	Chapter 11: Matthew 11, Matthew 11:1-30
15	Chapter 12: Matthew 12	16	Chapter 13: Matthew 13, Matthew 13:1-58
17	Chapter 14: Matthew 14, Matthew 14:1-36	18	Chapter 15: Matthew 15
19	Chapter 16: Matthew 16	20	Chapter 17: Matthew 17
21	Chapter 18: Matthew 18, Matthew 18:1-35	22	Chapter 19: Matthew 19, Matthew 19:1-30
23	Chapter 20: Matthew 20	24	Chapter 21: Matthew 21
25	Chapter 22: Matthew 22	26	Chapter 23: Matthew 23
27	Chapter 24: Matthew 24, Matthew 24:1-51	28	Chapter 25: Matthew 25
29	Chapter 26: Matthew 26	30	Chapter 27: Matthew 27
31	Chapter 28: Matthew 28, Matthew 28:1-20		

1

Section 1

Foreword

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

Section 1

This foreword, written by Richard French, explains the origin, purpose, and method of a modernized edition of J.C. Ryle's *Expository Thoughts on Matthew*. French describes discovering Ryle while working on a project about the book of Revelation, and explains why he believes this Victorian work still merits a wide readership. He identifies two "barriers" between Ryle and modern readers: the King James Version text Ryle quotes at the head of each section, and a "thin layer of Victorian vocabulary" in Ryle's own prose. French states his editorial policy explicitly: Scripture passages have been modernized (pronouns, verb forms, genealogy spellings), while Ryle's own writing has been altered only where a word would "genuinely mislead" a modern reader, with every change logged and checked against the original. He emphasizes that Ryle has not been rewritten, paraphrased, summarized, or improved. The foreword also describes Ryle's intended mode of reading (aloud, in short sections, for family worship or pastoral visits) and notes a companion study workbook exists alongside this edition, though the volume "stands complete without it." The foreword closes with a statement of purpose: to carry Ryle's work "across the years without dropping it," and a personal, dated sign-off from the editor.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 1

Charles Spurgeon
Cited as having called Ryle "the best man in the Church of England," used to substantiate Ryle's stature.

Richard French
The editor/author of this foreword, who frames his own role as a custodian rather than an improver of Ryle's text. He describes his prior work on the book of Revelation as the path that led him to Ryle.

The King James Version (KJV) text
Identified as the first of the "two small barriers" between Ryle and modern readers, specifically its "thees and thous and begats."

Victorian vocabulary in Ryle's prose
Identified as the second barrier, described as "a handful of words that have shifted meaning or fallen out of use since 1856."

The companion study workbook
A separate resource mentioned as built "alongside this edition," containing discussion questions for groups and a family reading plan, explicitly positioned as supplementary and non-essential to this volume.

The King (Matthew 1 / the end of the story)

Referenced briefly as the subject Ryle spent his life making plain, connecting the Gospel's opening to its eschatological conclusion.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 1

Original-language notes

None present in this section.

Cross-references

None beyond the general mention of "Matthew 1" and an unspecified reference to "the end of the story" (implicitly Christ's return), not tied to a specific verse citation.

Views engaged

None; no competing theological or interpretive positions are discussed. The section is bibliographic/editorial in nature.

Doctrinal points

No doctrinal claims are established in this section; it is preparatory and methodological, framing the edition rather than expounding Scripture.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 1

The foreword's claim is editorial rather than theological: this modernized edition removes only two barriers, the archaic KJV Scripture quotations and a small set of outdated words in Ryle's own prose, while preserving Ryle's sentences, convictions, and theological vocabulary intact. The author argues the edition's legitimacy rests on restraint, stating explicitly that Ryle has not been rewritten, paraphrased, summarized, or improved.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 1

Sources/figures cited

- J.C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on Matthew* (1856 original), referenced as the source text being modernized
- Charles Spurgeon, quoted as calling Ryle "the best man in the Church of England"

Dating/historical claims

- Ryle's original work is dated to 1856 ("a country pastor sat down to make the Gospel of Matthew plain to ordinary people" "One hundred and seventy years ago")
- This edition is dated 2026, place given as Gig Harbor, Washington, USA

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 1

"He said his goal was writing a child could follow and a scholar could not dismiss."

WHY IT LANDS Establishes the standard of clarity the author believes Ryle achieved and that this edition seeks to preserve.

"This edition removes those two barriers and nothing else."

WHY IT LANDS States the entire editorial thesis and scope of the modernization in one sentence.

"Where a word would genuinely mislead you today, it has been updated. Where a word merely sounds like Ryle, it stays."

WHY IT LANDS Defines the precise editorial rule distinguishing necessary modernization from unnecessary alteration.

"What you will not find here is Ryle rewritten, paraphrased, summarized, or improved. I do not believe he needs my improvements, and you did not pick up this book to read me."

WHY IT LANDS A clarifying, quotable statement of editorial humility and fidelity to the original author.

"The King who arrives in Matthew 1 is the same King who returns at the end of the story. Ryle spent his life making that King plain."

WHY IT LANDS Connects the foreword's closing thought to the theological throughline the edition aims to preserve.

2

Section 2

Biography of JC Ryle, No scripture passage expounded (biographical background; Ephesians 2:8 and 2 Timothy 4:7 referenced as personally significant to Ryle)

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

Section 2

This section traces the life of John Charles Ryle from his birth in 1816 to his death in 1900, establishing his personal and historical background rather than expounding a biblical text. It covers his privileged upbringing in a Cheshire banking family, his academic and athletic distinction at Eton and Oxford, his conversion during a illness in his final Oxford year, the collapse of his father's bank in 1841 which redirected him into ordained ministry, his thirty-eight years as a parish clergyman, his prolific publishing career, his three marriages and widowhoods, his twenty years as the first Bishop of Liverpool, and his death and posthumous reputation. The section functions as introductory biographical grounding for the commentary, establishing Ryle's credibility and character before his exegetical or devotional writing is engaged elsewhere in the book. It notes the mid-twentieth-century decline and later revival of interest in Ryle's works, crediting Martyn Lloyd-Jones with an early role in that resurgence. The section closes with a sources list attributing each biographical detail to a specific external source (encyclopedic entries, denominational and devotional websites, and secondary biographical treatments), rather than to original archival research by the author.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 2

John Ryle of Park House (father)

Private banker and MP for Macclesfield (1833–1837) whose bank failure in June 1841 ruined the family and precipitated Ryle's entry into ministry.

Susanna Ryle (mother)

Daughter of Charles Hurt of Wirksworth, Derbyshire; noted only for lineage.

Ephesians 2:8

The verse Ryle heard read aloud with deliberate pauses in an Oxford parish church, identified as the decisive moment of his conversion and later carved on his gravestone.

2 Timothy 4:7

The second text carried on Ryle's gravestone, noted alongside Ephesians 2:8.

Herbert Edward Ryle (son)

Became Bishop of Exeter, Bishop of Winchester, and Dean of Westminster.

Charles Sumner, Bishop of Winchester

Ordained Ryle on December 21, 1841.

Benjamin Disraeli

Outgoing Prime Minister who offered Ryle the bishopric of the newly created Diocese of Liverpool.

Bell Cox case (1885)

A controversy during Ryle's Liverpool episcopate in which a ritualist clergyman was imprisoned for contempt of court; Ryle was criticized for not vetoing the private prosecution though he called the imprisonment "barbarous."

Charles Spurgeon

Cited as calling Ryle "the best man in the Church of England."

Bishop F.J. Chavasse

Ryle's successor at Liverpool, described him as "that man of granite with the heart of a child."

Canon Richard Hobson

Preached at Ryle's burial, praising his lifetime contribution.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Credited with hailing the 1950s reprinting of Ryle's works as a hopeful sign, beginning the modern revival of interest in Ryle.

J.I. Packer

Cited (via secondary source) for the estimate that Ryle's lifetime book sales exceeded twelve million copies in a dozen languages.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Original-language notes

None present in this section.

Cross-references

Ephesians 2:8 (quoted in full: "by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God") and 2 Timothy 4:7 (referenced as the second gravestone text, not quoted).

Views engaged

The section notes that "the precise circumstances of his conversion are contested among historians," presenting Ryle's own account as the version he himself often told, without adjudicating between competing historical reconstructions.

Doctrinal points

None argued directly; the section reports that Ephesians 2:8, a text asserting salvation by grace through faith apart from works, held personal and biographical significance for Ryle as the verse of his conversion and was chosen for his gravestone alongside 2 Timothy 4:7.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 2

This section makes no interpretive argument about scripture. Its implicit claim is biographical and framing: Ryle's authority and voice as a writer derive from a life marked by privilege, sudden ruin, personal grief, and sustained pastoral labor, culminating in national evangelical leadership and a posthumous revival of influence that the source material treats as ongoing "more widely read across the world today than at any time since the 1890s."

Scripture references cited: Ephesians 2:8 (quoted in full); 2 Timothy 4:7 (referenced, not quoted)

- Original-language terms discussed: none
- External sources or scholars cited:
- Wikipedia, "J. C. Ryle" (source 1)
- Theopedia, "J. C. Ryle" (source 2)
- Keith's Histories, "The Life of John Charles Ryle" (source 3)
- Crossway, "10 Things You Should Know about J. C. Ryle" (Andrew Atherstone) (source 4)
- Infogalactic, "J. C. Ryle," drawing on the Dictionary of National Biography (source 5)
- Banner of Truth, "J. C. Ryle Author Biography" (source 6)
- Keith's Histories (source 7)
- VCY, "J. C. Ryle" (source 8)
- Crossway (source 9)
- Reformed Churchmen, "The 110th Anniversary of J.C. Ryle's Death," drawing on Iain Murray, Faithfulness and Holiness (source 10)
- Theopedia (source 11)
- VCY (source 12)
- Keith's Histories (source 13)
- Enrichment Journal (Assemblies of God), "J.C. Ryle: A 19th-century Evangelical" (source 14)
- Enrichment Journal, citing J.I. Packer (source 15)
- J.C. Ryle, Expository Thoughts on Matthew, Preface (1856) (source 16)
- Keith's Histories (source 17)
- J.C. Ryle Quotes, "J.C. Ryle Biography" (source 18)
- Wikipedia and biblebb, "J. C. Ryle: The Man, The Minister and The Missionary" (source 19)
- Evangelical Times, "John Charles Ryle" (source 20)
- Evangelical Times (source 21)
- Evangelical Times (source 22)
- Desiring God, "'The Frank and Manly Mr. Ryle'" (John Piper), citing J.I. Packer, Faithfulness and Holiness, p. 62 (source 23)
- biblebb (source 24)
- Dating and historical claims (with stated basis, per cited sources):
- Born May 10, 1816, Macclesfield, Cheshire (source 1)
- Entered Eton 1828; elected to Eton Society 1833; matriculated Christ Church, Oxford, May 15, 1834 (sources 1, 4)
- Craven Scholar 1836; first class in literae humaniores 1837; B.A. 1838 (sources 1, 5)
- 1836 Varsity cricket match, ten wickets in an innings, Oxford won by 121 runs (source 6)
- Conversion during illness, 1837, final year at Oxford (sources 6, 8)
- Father's bank failure, June 1841 (sources 2, 11)
- Ordained by Charles Sumner, December 21, 1841 (source 6)

- Curate at Exbury; rector of St Thomas's, Winchester, 1843; rector of Helmingham, Suffolk, 1844 (sources 6, 12)
- First volume of Expository Thoughts on the Gospels (Matthew) published 1856 (source 6)
- Married Matilda Plumptre 1845, died June 1847; married Jessie Walker 1850, died May 1860 of Bright's disease; married Henrietta Clowes 1861, died 1889 (sources 1, 10, 17)
- Vicar of Stradbroke, Suffolk, from 1861, nineteen years (sources 6, 18, 20)
- Knots Untied (1874), Holiness (1877), Practical Religion (1878) (source 19)
- Accepted Salisbury deanery March 1880; advanced to Diocese of Liverpool April 19, 1880; D.D. by diploma May 4, 1880; consecrated June 11, 1880, age sixty-four (sources 1, 5, 7, 20)
- Bell Cox case, 1885 (source 18)
- Retired March 1, 1900; died at Lowestoft June 10, 1900; buried at All Saints Church, Childwall, Liverpool (sources 1, 10, 13, 22)
- Ryle's revival of readership credited to 1950s reprinting and Martyn Lloyd-Jones's endorsement (source 9)

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 2

"altogether without God in the world"

WHY IT LANDS Ryle's own retrospective description of his spiritual condition before conversion, capturing the section's contrast between his outward respectability and inward lack of faith.

"totally unfit to die."

WHY IT LANDS A companion phrase to the above, underscoring Ryle's later self-assessment of his pre-conversion state as spiritually unready.

"If I had not been ruined, I should never have been a clergyman."

WHY IT LANDS Ryle's own retrospective judgment that his father's financial ruin, not personal ambition, was the providential cause of his entering ministry.

"the best man in the Church of England."

WHY IT LANDS Attributed to Charles Spurgeon, functioning as a notable external endorsement of Ryle's character and standing.

"that man of granite with the heart of a child."

WHY IT LANDS Bishop F.J. Chavasse's characterization of Ryle, capturing the section's portrait of Ryle as combining firmness with pastoral warmth.

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

3

Section 3

Preface

SUMMARY

Section 3

This section is the author's Preface, in which he explains the method and purpose behind his "Expository Thoughts." He states he has divided the biblical text into sections averaging about twelve verses each, followed by short, plain "Expositions" of each. For every passage he begins by stating its main scope and purpose, then selects two to four leading points (doctrinal or practical) to press on the reader rather than attempting exhaustive comment. He explains his stylistic aims of plainness and directness, likening himself to a speaker addressing a mixed congregation with limited time, who must prioritize truths "needful to salvation" over secondary matters. He notes that occasional footnotes address difficult passages for readers without access to a commentary. He affirms that his interpretive judgments, on doctrine, practice, or prophecy, are his honestly held convictions, consistent with the Thirty-nine Articles and the Protestant confessions generally, and quotes an unnamed "old preacher" (identified in a footnote as Traill) to describe the doctrinal core he adheres to: the person, office, righteousness, and Spirit of Christ. He closes by identifying his intended readership: family prayers, visitors to the sick and poor, and private readers unable to consult larger commentaries, and prays the work will aid conversion and edification.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 3

The unnamed "old preacher" (footnoted as Traill)

Quoted at length to define the doctrinal center the author claims to share, Christ's divine person, office, righteousness, and Spirit; cited from "Traill's Preface to 'Throne of Grace.'"

The Thirty-nine Articles

The doctrinal standard of the author's own Church, which he states his Expositions harmonize with.

The Protestant Confessions of Faith

Broader confessional standards the author claims general agreement with.

The intended readerships

Families at prayer, visitors to the sick and poor, and private readers without access to larger commentaries, explicitly named as the audiences the work is designed for.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 3

Original-language notes	None in this section.
Cross-references	Scripture references occur only within the quoted material from the "old preacher": Colossians 1:15 (Christ's divine person), 1 Timothy 2:5 (Christ's divine office), Jeremiah 23:6 (Christ's divine righteousness), Romans 8:9 (Christ's divine Spirit, received by all who are His).
Views engaged	No specific alternative interpretive views or scholars are argued against; the author generally aligns himself with the Thirty-nine Articles and "all the Protestant Confessions of Faith" without naming specific opposing positions.
Doctrinal points	The author commits to prioritizing "things needful to salvation" over comprehensive doctrinal treatment; he affirms conformity with Anglican Articles and broader Protestant confessional consensus; via the quoted "old preacher," he affirms Christ's divine person, office, righteousness, and Spirit as the doctrinal center of "true Christianity."

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 3

The Preface argues that plain, selective, pointed exposition, focused on a few well-fixed leading truths rather than exhaustive commentary, best serves ordinary readers and hearers. The author states his governing conviction: "a few points, well remembered and fastened down, are better than a quantity of truth lying loosely, and thinly scattered over the mind." This establishes the book's method and stated doctrinal boundaries before any passage-by-passage exposition begins.
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SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 3

Scripture references cited: Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 2:5; Jeremiah 23:6; Romans 8:9 (all occurring within the quoted "old preacher" passage) - Original-language terms discussed: None - External sources or scholars cited: An unnamed "old preacher," identified via footnote as the source of "Traill's Preface to 'Throne of Grace'" - Dating or historical claims: None stated in this section - Author's own confessional self-identification: Thirty-nine Articles ("of my own Church"); "all the Protestant Confessions of Faith" - Signature/location: "J. C. Ryle. Liverpool."

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 3

"I have felt that a few points, well remembered and fastened down, are better than a quantity of truth lying loosely, and thinly scattered over the mind."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's core methodological conviction: focused retention over comprehensive but diffuse coverage.

"I have set down nothing but what I conscientiously believe to be the real meaning of the inspired writer, and the mind of the Spirit."

WHY IT LANDS A direct claim to interpretive integrity and fidelity to authorial and divine intent.

"I have always held that truth is most likely to be reached when men on all sides conceal nothing, but tell out all their minds. Right or wrong, I have endeavoured to tell out my own mind."

WHY IT LANDS Frames the author's interpretive candor as itself a route to theological truth, even amid disagreement.

"I know no true religion but Christianity; no true Christianity but the Doctrine of Christ; of His divine person (Colossians 1:15), of His divine office (1 Timothy 2:5), of His divine righteousness (Jeremiah 23:6), and of His divine Spirit, which all that are His receive (Romans 8:9)."

WHY IT LANDS The quoted doctrinal creed the author adopts as defining "true Christianity," Christ's person, office, righteousness, and Spirit.

"I have said to myself in writing each Exposition, 'I am addressing a mixed company, and I have but a short time.'"

WHY IT LANDS Captures the rhetorical posture and urgency shaping the author's selective, plain-spoken style.

4

Section 4

Chapter 1: Matthew 1

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

Section 4

This section covers Matthew 1:1-17 (the genealogy of Jesus from Abraham to Christ) and Matthew 1:18-25 (the virgin birth and the naming of Jesus). The author treats the genealogy as fully inspired and purposeful rather than a tedious list, arguing it proves God's faithfulness to His covenant promises to Abraham and David. The author draws three lessons from the genealogy: that God keeps His word, that grace does not pass automatically from parent to child (demonstrated by godly fathers with wicked sons), and that Christ's willingness to be born into a lineage containing shameful histories reveals His compassion for sinners. In the second half, the author treats the virgin birth as a mystery to be believed rather than explained, praises Joseph's patient and prayerful conduct, and expounds the two names given to Christ. "Jesus" is explained as meaning Saviour, with a fourfold scope of salvation (from guilt, dominion, presence, and ultimately all consequences of sin). "Emmanuel" is expounded as establishing the hypostatic union, the coexistence of full deity and full humanity in one person. The author warns that denying either nature risks "fearful heresies" and argues that Christ's divinity grounds the believer's security while His humanity grounds the believer's comfort in suffering. This section establishes foundational Christological and soteriological themes (covenant faithfulness, total depravity, the dual nature of Christ, and the meaning of salvation) that the author signals will recur throughout the commentary.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 4

Abraham and David

Named as recipients of God's promises (a blessing to all nations through Abraham's seed, and a Saviour from David's family); the genealogy is offered as proof these promises were kept.

Rehoboam, Joram, Amon, Jeconiah

Cited by the author as sons of pious fathers who were themselves wicked, used to illustrate that "grace does not run in families."

Joseph

Described by the author as "a just man" whose conduct upon discovering Mary's pregnancy exemplifies "godly wisdom, and tender consideration for others" and patient waiting on God rather than rash action.

Mary

The virgin mother; her virginity is affirmed by the author as a literal, miraculous fact, described as a mystery not to be speculated about but believed with reverence.

The name "Jesus"

Interpreted by the author as meaning "Saviour," equated with the Old Testament "Joshua," and unpacked into a fourfold salvation from the guilt, dominion, presence, and ultimately the consequences of sin.

The name "Emmanuel"

Interpreted by the author as denoting Christ's nature as God-man, "God manifest in the flesh," signifying "God with us."

The hypostatic union

The author's doctrinal concept, that Christ possesses a true union of divine and human natures in one person, described as "a point of the deepest importance."

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 4

Original-language notes

None explicitly discussed (no Hebrew or Greek terms are analyzed in transliteration); the author does note that "Jesus" is "the same name as 'Joshua' in the Old Testament" and that "Emmanuel...being interpreted is, God with us," but treats these as translational/etymological points rather than technical language analysis.

Cross-references

Genesis 12:3 (Abrahamic promise); Isaiah 11:1 (Davidic Saviour prophecy); Numbers 23:19 and 2 Timothy 2:13 (God's faithfulness/truthfulness); John 1:13 (new birth "not of blood nor of the will of the flesh"); Philippians 2:7 (Christ's condescension, "likeness of men"); 2 Corinthians 8:9 (Christ's poverty for our sakes); Isaiah 28:16 (patience/not making haste, applied to Joseph); Proverbs 3:6 (acknowledging God, applied to Joseph's reward); John 3:17 (God's purpose to save, not condemn); Song of Solomon 1:3 ("Your name is as ointment poured forth," applied to the name Jesus); Romans 9:5 ("who is over all, God blessed forever," applied to Christ's deity); references within the text to Christ's self-testimony ("Before Abraham was, I am!" and "I and my Father are one") and a disciple calling Him "my God," used as evidence of His divine nature; also 1 Thessalonians 2:13 (Scripture as the word of God, not of men).

Views engaged

No named scholars or competing interpretive schools are engaged in this section; the author does implicitly caution against unnamed doctrinal error regarding Christ's nature, warning that losing sight of the dual-nature truth leads to "fearful heresies," and invokes the Apostles' Creed ("Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary") as the safe resting point on the virgin birth.

Doctrinal points

(1) The full inspiration and profitability of every part of Scripture, including genealogies. (2) God's covenant faithfulness demonstrated historically through the fulfilled Abrahamic and Davidic promises. (3) The doctrine of inherited sin/total depravity illustrated by godly fathers producing wicked sons, and the necessity of spiritual rebirth ("born of the Spirit") rather than inherited grace. (4) The literal virgin birth of Christ. (5) The doctrine of Christ's two names as revealing office (Saviour) and nature (God-man). (6) The hypostatic union, full deity and full humanity united in one person, with practical pastoral application: divinity grounds security, humanity grounds sympathy and comfort.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 4

The author argues that Matthew 1, far from being a dry genealogical formality, is fully inspired Scripture proving God's covenant faithfulness, exposing humanity's inherited corruption, and revealing Christ's compassion in taking on a lineage marked by sin. The chapter's two names for Christ, Jesus and Emmanuel, are argued to jointly establish His saving office and His dual nature as true God and true man, a foundation the author insists believers must hold firmly to avoid doctrinal error and to find both security and comfort.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 4

Scripture references cited: Matthew 1:1-17; Matthew 1:18-25; Genesis 12:3; Isaiah 11:1; Numbers 23:19; 2 Timothy 2:13; John 1:13; Philippians 2:7; 2 Corinthians 8:9; Isaiah 28:16; Proverbs 3:6; John 3:17; Song of Solomon 1:3; Romans 9:5; 1 Thessalonians 2:13

- Original-language terms discussed: None with transliteration; the author glosses "Jesus" as meaning "Saviour" (noting equivalence to "Joshua") and "Emmanuel" as meaning "God with us."
- External sources or scholars cited: The Apostles' Creed (quoted: "Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary").
- Dating or historical claims: The genealogy's internal structure is noted as "fourteen generations" from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the Babylonian deportation, and fourteen from the deportation to Christ, per the text itself; no external dating of composition is offered by the author in this section.

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 4

"Nothing is useless in the Bible. Every word of it is inspired."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's foundational conviction that even genealogical lists carry full scriptural authority and purpose.

"Grace does not run in families. It needs something more than good examples and good advice to make us children of God."

WHY IT LANDS A clear doctrinal statement on inherited sin and the necessity of individual regeneration, illustrated by the genealogy's wicked sons of godly fathers.

"If the Lord Jesus was not ashamed to be born of a woman whose pedigree contained such names as those we have read today, we need not think that He will be ashamed to call us brethren, and to give us eternal life."

WHY IT LANDS A pastoral, marketable line linking the genealogy's flawed figures to Christ's compassion for sinners.

"The name Jesus means 'Saviour'... He saves them from the guilt of sin, by washing them in His own atoning blood. He saves them from the dominion of sin, by putting in their hearts the sanctifying Spirit. He saves them from the presence of sin, when he takes them out of this world to rest with him."

WHY IT LANDS Lays out the author's fourfold framework for the scope of salvation tied to the name Jesus.

"Let us take care that we clearly understand that there was a union of two natures, the divine and human, in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a point of the deepest importance."

WHY IT LANDS States the section's central Christological doctrine, the hypostatic union, as a foundational and non-negotiable truth.

"If we would have a strong foundation for our faith and hope, we must keep constantly in view our Saviour's divinity... If we would have sweet comfort in suffering and trial, we must keep constantly in view our Saviour's humanity."

WHY IT LANDS Summarizes the practical, pastoral payoff of the dual-nature doctrine: security from Christ's deity, comfort from His humanity.

5

Section 5

Chapter 2: Matthew 2, Matthew 2:1-23

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

Section 5

This section expounds two passages: the visit of the wise men (Matthew 2:1-12) and the flight into Egypt, the massacre of the innocents, and the settlement at Nazareth (Matthew 2:13-23). In the first half, the author draws five lessons from the wise men's history: that God has hidden servants in unexpected places, that religious privilege does not guarantee honoring Christ, that head knowledge of Scripture can exist without grace in the heart, that the wise men modeled spiritual diligence, and that their worship of an infant represents an extraordinary example of faith. In the second half, the author reflects on Herod as a picture of worldly power hostile to Christ's cause, on Christ's early sorrows as a "Man of Sorrows" from infancy, on death as a leveller of tyrants, and on the humility embodied in Christ's obscure upbringing at Nazareth. The exposition proceeds verse by verse through practical, devotional application rather than historical-critical analysis, drawing repeated moral and spiritual lessons for the reader's own faith and conduct. Throughout, the author connects the biblical narrative to the reader's present spiritual life, using rhetorical questions and comparisons to English and world history (Edward the Sixth, Charles IX, bloody Mary) to reinforce points about the fate of persecutors and the true nature of religious privilege.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 5

Herod the king

Interpreted as an example of worldly power that is "seldom friendly to the cause of God," and as an illustration of how wealth and greatness can corrupt the soul, leading to "every excess of wickedness and cruelty."

The chief priests and scribes

Interpreted as representing "knowledge of Scripture in the head, while there is no grace in the heart." The author notes they gave Herod "an accurate acquaintance with the letter of Scripture" yet never went to Bethlehem themselves.

The star

Treated within the narrative as the sign the wise men followed; not allegorized or given independent symbolic treatment beyond its narrative function.

Egypt / the flight

Interpreted as the beginning of Christ's sorrows, "a type and figure of all his experience upon earth," showing him as a "Man of Sorrows" even in infancy.

The massacre of the innocents

Treated straightforwardly as historical persecution by Herod, connected typologically to the Jeremiah citation regarding Rachel's weeping, without extended independent comment beyond illustrating Herod's cruelty.

Nazareth

Interpreted as a deliberately obscure, humble dwelling place, contrasted with more prominent Old Testament towns (Hebron, Shiloh, Gibeon, Ramah, Bethel), used to teach a lesson in Christ's humility.

Death (as leveller)

A theological motif drawn from Herod's death, used to argue that persecutors of the faith inevitably perish while "the truth shall always prevail."

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 5

Original-language notes

None discussed in this section.

Cross-references

John 1:11 ("He came to his own, and his own received him not"); 1 Corinthians 1:26 ("Not many mighty; not many noble are called"); Mark 10:23 ("How hardly shall those who have riches enter into the kingdom of God"); Luke 12:15 ("Take heed and beware of covetousness"); Hebrews 13:5 ("Be content with such things as you have"); Psalm 146:3 ("Put not your trust in princes"); Job 20:5 ("the triumphing of the wicked is but short"); Luke 2:51 (Christ "subject to" Mary and Joseph); Jeremiah 45:5 ("seek great things... seek them not").

Views engaged

No named scholarly or theological positions are engaged or critiqued; the author raises and leaves open historical speculation about the wise men's identity (Chaldeans, Arabians, descendants of the ten tribes, readers of Daniel) without adjudicating between them.

Doctrinal points

God works through hidden, unexpected servants regardless of geography or social status; religious privilege does not equal spiritual devotion; intellectual knowledge of Scripture without heartfelt grace does not save; true faith is exemplified by belief without visible proof; worldly power and wealth are spiritually perilous and often hostile to Christ's cause; Christ experienced sorrow and persecution from infancy, qualifying him to sympathize with suffering believers; death removes tyrants and vindicates the enduring nature of truth; humility, exemplified by Christ's obscure upbringing in Nazareth, is a virtue believers should cultivate above worldly status.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 5

The author argues that the narrative of the wise men and the holy family's flight to Egypt and Nazareth teaches a series of practical spiritual lessons: God's grace operates outside expected religious channels, mere scriptural knowledge without heart-grace is insufficient for salvation, genuine faith believes without visible proof, worldly greatness is spiritually dangerous and hostile to Christ, and humility, modeled in Christ's hidden upbringing, is the believer's proper aspiration over worldly status or position.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 5

Matthew 2:1-12 (full text quoted)

- Matthew 2:13-23 (full text quoted)
- John 1:11
- 1 Corinthians 1:26
- Mark 10:23
- Luke 12:15
- Hebrews 13:5
- Psalm 146:3
- Job 20:5
- Luke 2:51
- Jeremiah 45:5
- Historical/dating claims: None regarding composition; historical references invoked are illustrative comparisons rather than dating claims, Pharaohs, Neros, and Diocletians as historical persecutors; Charles IX of France and "bloody Mary" of England as persecutors; Josiah and Edward the Sixth of England as examples of favorable rulers. No scholars are cited by name.

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 5

"It is not known who these wise men were. Their names and dwelling-place are alike kept back from us."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's refusal to speculate beyond the text about the wise men's identity, framing their obscurity as itself instructive.

"These verses show us thirdly that there may be knowledge of Scripture in the head, while there is no grace in the heart."

WHY IT LANDS A doctrinal claim distinguishing intellectual scriptural knowledge from saving grace, illustrated by the priests and scribes.

"We read of no greater faith than this in the whole volume of the Bible."

WHY IT LANDS A striking, quotable superlative claim about the wise men's faith in worshiping the infant Christ.

"Let us observe in this passage how true it is that the rulers of this world are seldom friendly to the cause of God."

WHY IT LANDS States the section's thesis about worldly power's general hostility to Christ, using Herod as the paradigm case.

"Pride is the oldest and commonest of sins; humility is the rarest and most beautiful of graces."

WHY IT LANDS A memorable doctrinal aphorism drawn from the lesson of Christ's humble upbringing at Nazareth.

6

Section 6

Chapter 3: Matthew 3

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

Section 6

This section covers two passages: Matthew 3:1-12 (John the Baptist's ministry and preaching) and Matthew 3:13-17 (the baptism of Jesus). In the first passage, the author identifies five "leading features" of John's preaching: he spoke plainly about sin and repentance, about Christ's superiority, about the Holy Spirit's baptism, about the wrath to come for the impenitent, and about the safety of true believers. Each feature is paired with an application to the reader's spiritual need. In the second passage, the author treats Christ's baptism as the inaugural act of his public ministry, paralleling the washing of Jewish priests before service. He uses the episode to caution against two errors regarding the sacrament of baptism: attaching superstitious, automatic saving power to the water, and dishonoring the ordinance by treating it too lightly or privately. He then highlights the Trinitarian appearance at the baptism (Father, Son, and Spirit all manifest) and expounds the Father's declaration "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" as a statement of Christ's eternal appointment as mediator, propitiation, and substitute, extending comfort to believers who are reckoned righteous through union with him.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 6

The Pharisees and Sadducees ("generation of vipers")

Addressed within the quoted text; not separately expounded by the author beyond the quotation itself.

Baptism with the Holy Spirit and fire

Interpreted by the author as Christ's special office, distinct from John's water baptism, teaching that "there must not only be the work of Christ for us but the work of the Holy Spirit in us."

The "wrath to come" / "unquenchable fire" / "chaff"

Interpreted as John's warning of eternal punishment for the impenitent, used by the author to affirm the doctrine of hell and everlasting punishment.

The "garner" / "wheat"

Interpreted as the safety and future gathering of true believers, likened by the author to Noah's safety in the ark ("as safe as Noah was in the ark").

Jesus' baptism by John

The author frames this as Christ's inaugural ministerial act, paralleled with the priestly washing in Exodus 29:4, marking the start of Christ's high priestly work.

The sacrament of baptism (general doctrine)

The author uses Christ's baptism to address the ordinance broadly, warning against two opposite errors: superstitious over-valuation of the water itself, and neglect or dishonoring of the sacrament by treating it as "a mere form."

The Trinity at the baptism

The author identifies the simultaneous manifestation of Father, Son, and Spirit as a "public announcement that the work of Christ was the result of the eternal counsels of all the three persons of the blessed Trinity," drawing a parallel to "Let us make man" at creation.

The voice from heaven ("This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased")

Interpreted as the Father's declaration of Christ's divine sonship, his acceptance as mediator, and his role as "the propitiation, the substitute, the ransom-payer for the lost family of Adam."

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 6

Original-language notes

None explicitly discussed (no Greek or Hebrew terms glossed in this section).

Cross-references

John 5:35 (Jesus' praise of John as "a burning and a shining light"); Exodus 29:4 (priestly washing, typological parallel to Christ's baptism); Exodus 20:1 ("God spake these words," parallel voice from heaven at Sinai); Isaiah 42:21 (law "magnified and made honourable"); Romans 3:26 ("just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly"); Ephesians 1:6 (believers accepted "for his Son's sake").

Views engaged

The author critiques (without naming specific proponents) two opposing errors on baptism: the view that baptism confers grace automatically/as a "charm" regardless of faith, and the view/practice that treats baptism as a mere form to be "hastily slurred over" or hidden from the congregation.

Doctrinal points

The necessity of repentance evidenced by "fruits"; the insufficiency of outward religious privilege or church membership for salvation; the necessity of personal union with Christ by faith; the distinct doctrine of Spirit-baptism as inward preparation alongside Christ's atoning work; the reality of eternal punishment ("hell as well as heaven"); the eternal security and future glorification of true believers; the sacramental theology that baptism and grace are "not inseparably tied together"; the Trinitarian nature of the baptismal theophany; the doctrine of Christ's mediatorial appointment "from all eternity" and substitutionary atonement.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 6

The author argues that John the Baptist's preaching models the essential content of a faithful gospel ministry (repentance, Christ's superiority, the Spirit's baptism, coming wrath, and believers' safety), and that Christ's own baptism, marked by the visible Trinity, inaugurates his mediatorial work while teaching a balanced sacramental theology that avoids both superstition and neglect of the ordinance.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 6

Matthew 3:1-12 (quoted in full)

- Matthew 3:13-17 (quoted in full)
- John 5:35 ("a burning and a shining light")
- Exodus 29:4 (priestly washing with water)
- Exodus 20:1 ("God spake these words")
- Isaiah 42:21 (law "magnified and made honourable")
- Romans 3:26 ("just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly")
- Ephesians 1:6 (accepted "for his Son's sake")
- No named external scholars or historians cited in this section
- No explicit dating or historical-composition claims made in this section beyond the typological/historical parallel to Exodus (priestly consecration) and Sinai (giving of the Law)

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 6

"John the Baptist spoke plainly about sin. He taught the absolute necessity of repentance before anyone can be saved; he preached that repentance must be proved by its "fruits.""

WHY IT LANDS States the author's doctrinal claim that true repentance must be evidenced by visible fruit, not mere profession.

"We must not suppose that all baptized persons as a matter of course, receive the grace of God in the moment that they are baptized."

WHY IT LANDS Clarifies the author's rejection of an automatic, ex opere operato view of baptismal grace.

"The more deeply we are convinced that baptism and grace are not inseparably tied together, the more we ought to feel bound to join in prayer for a blessing whenever anyone is baptized."

WHY IT LANDS Articulates the author's balanced sacramental position: denying automatic grace while still upholding the ordinance's importance.

"We are told of the presence of all three persons of the blessed Trinity. God the Son, manifest in the flesh, is baptized; God the Spirit descends like a dove, and lights upon him; God the Father speaks from heaven with a voice."

WHY IT LANDS States the doctrinal claim that Christ's baptism is a Trinitarian theophany.

"He publishes to the world that he is satisfied with him as the propitiation, the substitute, the ransom-payer for the lost family of Adam, and the head of a redeemed people."

WHY IT LANDS Thesis-bearing statement of substitutionary atonement doctrine drawn from the Father's declaration at the baptism.

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

7

Section 7

Chapter 4: Matthew 4, Matthew 4:1-25

SUMMARY

Section 7

This section treats two passages: the temptation of Christ (4:1-11) and the beginning of his Galilean ministry, including the calling of the first disciples and his early preaching and healing (4:12-25). In the temptation narrative, the author draws four "practical lessons" rather than resolving the "deep and mysterious subject" of how the temptation occurred: the reality and power of the devil, the normalcy of temptation for believers, Scripture as the primary weapon against temptation, and Christ's sympathetic capacity to help the tempted because he himself was tempted. In the second passage, the author highlights the honor of the preaching office, the centrality of repentance as Christ's first proclaimed doctrine, the significance of Christ choosing humble fishermen as disciples (used as an apologetic argument for Christianity's divine origin), and the miracles as demonstrations of Christ's power, his role as spiritual physician, and his compassionate heart. Both passages build a devotional and practical application from the narrative, consistently pointing the reader toward personal piety, Bible-reading, and reliance on Christ.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 7

Jesus Christ (in temptation)

Interpreted as genuinely tempted three times, resisting each time by Scripture ("It is written"), establishing him as a model and as a "sympathizing Saviour" per Hebrews 2:18.

Repentance

Identified as "one of the great foundation stones which lie at the very bottom of Christianity," defined as "a thorough change of heart about sin... godly sorrow for sin... heart-felt confession of sin... a complete breaking off from sinful habits, and an abiding hatred of all sin."

The disciples (Peter, Andrew, James, John)

Their status as poor fishermen is used as evidence of the gospel's universal accessibility and as an apologetic proof of Christianity's divine origin, since an unlearned, powerless movement could not otherwise have overturned Roman heathenism.

Christ's miracles

Described "in the mass" here, interpreted by the author as demonstrating three things: Christ's power ("He is almighty"), his role as spiritual physician for the soul's ailments, and his compassionate heart ("His compassions fail not").

The preaching office

Elevated as "no office so honourable," an office Christ himself took up and directed Paul/Timothy to continue (2 Timothy 4:2), with a stated historical claim that "the brightest days of the church have been those when preaching has been honoured."

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 7

Original-language notes

None discussed in this section; no Hebrew or Greek terms are analyzed.

Cross-references

John 8:44; 1 Peter 5:8; 2 Corinthians 11:14; Ephesians 6:17; Psalm 119:105; Hebrews 2:18; 2 Timothy 4:2; Acts 20:21; Hebrews 13:8.

Views engaged

The author briefly addresses "infidels" who might attempt to explain away the success of Christianity apart from divine origin, arguing "it is vain for infidels to attempt to answer this argument; it cannot be answered." No specific named scholars or competing theological schools are engaged in this section.

Doctrinal points

(1) The reality and personal nature of Satan and the necessity of resisting him; (2) temptation itself is not sin, only yielding to it; (3) Scripture is the primary weapon against temptation; (4) Christ's shared experience of temptation grounds his sympathy and priestly help for believers; (5) repentance is foundational and necessary for all people without exception; (6) grace, not intellect, money, or rank, qualifies a person for the kingdom of heaven; (7) the humble origins of Christ's first disciples serve as evidence of the gospel's divine origin; (8) Christ's healing miracles typify his power to heal the soul and reveal his unchanging compassion "yesterday and today and forever."

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 7

The temptation narrative teaches believers to expect temptation as normal, to resist it through Scripture, and to find comfort in Christ's sympathetic understanding as one who was "tempted like as we are." The calling narrative argues that Christ's choice of humble, unlearned fishermen as disciples, combined with the spread of Christianity from such unpromising origins, itself proves Christianity's divine origin, while his miracles reveal his power, his healing office over the soul, and his unfailing compassion.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 7

Scripture quoted/expounded: Matthew 4:1-11; Matthew 4:12-25

- Scripture cross-referenced: John 8:44; 1 Peter 5:8; 2 Corinthians 11:14; Ephesians 6:17; Psalm 119:105; Hebrews 2:18; 2 Timothy 4:2; Acts 20:21; Hebrews 13:8
- Original-language terms: none discussed
- External sources or scholars cited: none named; general reference to "infidels" and "boastful philosophers of the heathen world" as unnamed opposing positions
- Dating or historical claims: the devil has been "working at one work" "for nearly 6,000 years" (stated by the author without further basis given); reference to Roman emperors and heathen priests and temples as historical backdrop to the disciples' humble origins; general historical claim about the "brightest days" versus "darkest days" of the church correlating with the honoring of preaching

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 7

"There is no enemy worse than an enemy who is never seen and never dies, who is near us wherever we live, and goes with us wherever we go."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's view of Satan as a constant, personal, and formidable threat to believers.

"To be tempted is in itself no sin: it is the yielding to temptation, and the giving it a place in our hearts, which we must fear."

WHY IT LANDS Clarifies a common confusion by distinguishing temptation itself from sin, locating culpability in yielding rather than in the experience of temptation.

"Knowledge of the Bible never comes by intuition; it can only be got by hard, regular, daily, attentive, wakeful reading."

WHY IT LANDS A memorable, quotable exhortation to disciplined Bible study as the chief weapon against temptation.

"A religion which did not flatter the rich, the great, and the learned, a religion which offered no license to the carnal inclinations of man's heart, a religion whose first teachers were poor fishermen, without wealth, rank or power, such a religion could never have turned the world upside down, if it had not been of God."

WHY IT LANDS Presents the author's apologetic argument that Christianity's success despite humble origins proves its divine origin.

"He is just as able to save, just as willing to receive, just as ready to help, as he was 1800 years ago."

WHY IT LANDS Applies Hebrews 13:8's teaching on Christ's unchanging nature directly to the reader's present need for help.

8

Section 8

Chapter 5: Matthew 5

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

Section 8

This section works through the whole of Matthew 5, treating it as the opening of the Sermon on the Mount, which the author calls a passage that "deserve[s] the special attention of all readers of the Bible." The section moves in four movements following the biblical text: the Beatitudes (5:1-12), the sayings on salt, light, and the Law (5:13-20), Christ's exposition of the sixth, seventh, and third commandments (5:21-37), and Christ's teaching on non-retaliation and love of enemies (5:38-48). Throughout, the author reads Christ's words as raising the standard of righteousness beyond outward conformity to inward holiness of heart, motive, and thought. The Beatitudes are treated as eight "foundation stones" or "testing truths" describing the character God blesses, a character the author insists is diametrically opposed to worldly values. The salt and light sayings establish that true Christians must be visibly distinct from the world. The "fulfil not destroy" saying is used to argue for the abiding authority of the Old Testament and the Ten Commandments against those who would set them aside. The exposition of the commandments is read as proof that God's law reaches to thoughts and words, not merely deeds, driving the reader to see the need for Christ's atonement. The closing section on loving enemies is presented as the mark distinguishing true children of God from the world. Each subsection builds on the prior by reinforcing a single cumulative theme: the exalted, heart-level, "spiritual" nature of Christ's ethical demand, which cannot be met by outward religion alone.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 8

Those who mourn

Interpreted as those who "sorrow for sin, and grieve daily over their own shortcomings," not general mourners.

The meek

Interpreted as those "of a patient and contented spirit," compared to "Lazarus in the parable."

Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness

Interpreted as those who desire "to be entirely conformed to the mind of God," desiring holiness over wealth or learning

The merciful

Interpreted as those "full of compassion towards others," pitying sufferers "from sin or sorrow."

The pure in heart

Interpreted as those aiming at "inward holiness" rather than "outward correctness."

The peacemakers

Interpreted as those who "use all their influence to promote peace and love," doing "the very work which the Son of God began."

The persecuted for righteousness' sake

Interpreted as those "laughed at, mocked, despised and ill used" for true Christian living, who will be confessed by Christ "before his Father and the angels."

Salt of the earth

Symbol interpreted as the distinct, preserving, unmistakable "taste" true Christians must retain; loses value if it loses "his savour."

Light of the world

Symbol interpreted as the quality of being "utterly distinct from darkness," useful, guiding, and visible ("A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid").

"I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil"

Central interpretive crux; the author reads this as establishing that Christ fulfilled the prophets' predictions, fulfilled the ceremonial law by becoming "the great sacrifice," and fulfilled the moral law through perfect obedience and atoning death, thereby exalting rather than abolishing the Law.

The Ten Commandments

Treated as "God's eternal measure of right and wrong," still binding under the Gospel, useful to reveal sin and drive people to Christ, though unable to justify.

Sixth commandment (murder)

Expounded by the author as condemning "all angry and passionate language," not merely literal killing

Seventh commandment (adultery)

Expounded as condemning lustful thoughts, "even a glance of the eye," not merely the physical act.

Third commandment (oaths)

Expounded as forbidding "all vain and light swearing," including swearing by created things.

Non-retaliation ("resist not evil")

Interpreted as forbidding "an unforgiving and revengeful spirit," a "quarrelsome and contentious disposition."

Love of enemies

Interpreted as a "spirit of universal love and charity" that must be shown "in deed" as well as word, marking the true "children of your Father which is in heaven."

The young ruler (referenced)

Used as an example of someone who wrongly believed he had kept the commandments through mere outward observance.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 8

Original-language notes

None discussed in this section; no Hebrew or Greek terms are treated.

Cross-references

Isaiah 5:21; Revelation 3:17; Psalm 51:17; Revelation 5:10; Psalm 17:15; Acts 9:36; 1 Samuel 16:7; Romans 13:10; Genesis 1:3; Isaiah 42:21; Romans 3:31; Romans 7:22; Psalm 51:6; 1 John 3:2; Matthew 19:20; Romans 3:10; Psalm 39:1; Proverbs 17:14; John 3:7; 1 Corinthians 2:12.

Views engaged

The author engages (without naming specific scholars) a general position that dismisses or despises the Old Testament as "an obsolete, antiquated, useless book," and a position holding that the Gospel "lowered the standard of personal holiness" compared to the Old Testament law. The author also engages the common Jewish/legalistic assumption (attributed generally, exemplified by "the young ruler") that outward non-commission of murder, adultery, or false oaths constitutes full obedience to those commandments, which Christ's teaching is said to correct.

Doctrinal points

Establishes that Christian character must be marked by humility, mourning over sin, meekness, hunger for holiness, mercy, inward purity, peacemaking, and willingness to endure persecution. Establishes that true Christians must be visibly distinct from the world ("salt" and "light"). Establishes continuity and abiding authority of Old Testament and the Ten Commandments under the Gospel. Establishes that God's moral law extends to thoughts, motives, and words, not only outward acts, and that this exposes universal guilt and the necessity of Christ's atoning blood. Establishes that love of enemies and non-retaliation are marks distinguishing true children of God from worldly people.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 8

Matthew 5 sets the ethical standard for authentic Christianity: an inward, heart-level righteousness exceeding "the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees." The Beatitudes describe the character God blesses, the salt-and-light sayings demand visible distinctiveness, the commandment expositions prove that God's law reaches motives and words, and the enemy-love teaching marks true children of God. Throughout, the author argues this standard reveals human sinfulness and the necessity of Christ's atonement, while affirming the Old Testament's continuing authority.

Matthew 5:1-12; 5:13-20; 5:21-37; 5:38-48 (primary text)

- Matthew 19:20 (the young ruler)
- Isaiah 5:21
- Revelation 3:17
- Psalm 51:17
- Revelation 5:10
- Psalm 17:15
- Acts 9:36
- 1 Samuel 16:7
- Romans 13:10
- Genesis 1:3
- Isaiah 42:21
- Romans 3:31
- Romans 7:22
- Psalm 51:6
- 1 John 3:2
- Romans 3:10
- Psalm 39:1
- Proverbs 17:14
- John 3:7
- 1 Corinthians 2:12
- No named external scholars or historical/dating claims are cited in this section.

"Humility is the very first letter in the alphabet of Christianity. We must begin low, if we would build high."

WHY IT LANDS Establishes humility, not mere doctrinal correctness, as the entry point of authentic Christian character.

"The Old Testament is the Gospel in the bud; the New Testament is the Gospel in full flower. The Old Testament is the Gospel in the blade; the New Testament is the Gospel in full ear."

WHY IT LANDS Memorable statement of the author's doctrine of continuity between the Testaments.

"It is a symptom of an ignorant ministry, and an unhealthy state of religion, when the law is lightly esteemed. The true Christian delights in the law of God."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's doctrinal position that neglect of the moral law signals spiritual and pastoral decline.

"The God with whom we have to do looks far beyond actions. With him even a glance of the eye may be a sin!"

WHY IT LANDS Clarifies the author's reading of Christ's exposition of the seventh commandment as extending guilt to inward thought, not only outward act.

"There is no religion in rudeness, roughness, bluntness, and incivility. The perfection of practical Christianity consists in attending to the little duties of holiness as well as to the great."

WHY IT LANDS Ties the ethic of Matthew 5:38-48 to everyday conduct as evidence of genuine faith.

9

Section 9

Chapter 6: Matthew 6

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

Section 9

This section works through Matthew 6 in four consecutive units: almsgiving and prayer (6:1-8), the Lord's Prayer (6:9-15), fasting/worldliness/singleness of purpose (6:16-24), and anxiety about earthly needs (6:25-34). The author's controlling method throughout is devotional-practical exposition: he takes each imperative of Jesus as a direct, binding rule for the Christian life and repeatedly turns the text back on the reader with self-examining questions. His central interpretive move on 6:1-8 is that Christ assumes almsgiving and prayer as universal marks of true discipleship, not options, so that a professing Christian who neither gives nor prays privately is not a "genuine Christian." On the Lord's Prayer he offers a structural breakdown into ten parts and expounds each clause doctrinally, notably reading "your kingdom come" as referring both to the present kingdom of grace and, chiefly, to the future kingdom of glory at Christ's second coming, tied to Jewish conversion and Gentile fullness. In 6:16-24 he treats fasting as a matter of Christian liberty (no NT command), while pressing hard on worldliness and singleness of purpose as the passage's abiding dangers. In 6:25-34 he reframes the fourfold "take no thought" as a pastoral remedy against corroding anxiety, grounded in God's providence, and closes with the maxim of living one day at a time. Across all four units the author's recurring theme is that God weighs the heart and motive above outward performance or quantity of religious duty.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 9

Prayer (private)

Assumed by Christ as a mark of genuine discipleship; the author states plainly that "prayerless people are not genuine Christians," and that private prayer is required beyond congregational or family prayer.

"Vain repetitions" / heathen prayer

Contrasted with Christian prayer; the author reads this as a warning against formalism and much-speaking as a substitute for sincerity.

The Lord's Prayer

Structured by the author into ten parts (declaration of the Being prayed to; three petitions on name, kingdom, will; four petitions on daily wants, sins, temptation, danger; one profession regarding others; one closing ascription of praise).

"Our Father which are in heaven"

Interpreted in two senses, the "lowest" sense of God as Creator (citing Paul at Athens) and the "highest" sense as Father through adoption in Christ; the author states sonship by faith in Christ is the sonship necessary for salvation.

"Hallowed be your name"

Read as a petition that God's revealed attributes (power, wisdom, holiness, justice, mercy, truth) be made known and glorified, framed as the first desire of God's children and the purpose of creation.

"Your kingdom come"

Interpreted as encompassing, first, the present kingdom of grace in believers' hearts, but "chiefly" the future kingdom of glory at Christ's second coming, when sin and Satan are cast out, the Jews are converted, and the fullness of the Gentiles comes in (stated interpretation, tied explicitly to Romans 11:25 and Hebrews 8:11).

"Your will be done"

A prayer that God's laws be obeyed on earth as perfectly as by angels in heaven, both by the disobedient (that they be taught) and the obedient (that they obey better).

"Daily bread"

Read as acknowledgment of entire dependence on God for all bodily necessities, likened to Israel's daily manna.

"Forgive us our debts"

Read as a confession of sin requiring daily pardon, condemning self-righteousness; the author calls it a "part of the Lord's Prayer which deserves especially to be remembered."

"As we forgive our debtors"

Identified by the author as the only profession (not petition) in the prayer, and the only clause Christ himself comments on afterward; interpreted as meaning unforgiving prayer is "mere formality and hypocrisy," in effect asking God not to forgive.

"Lead us not into temptation" / "deliver us from evil"

Read as confessions of human weakness and exposure to danger (from the world, the heart, and the devil), asking for restraint and preservation.

Fasting

The author treats it as a biblically attested but not commanded NT practice, listing biblical examples (David, Daniel, Paul and Barnabas, Esther) and framing it as a matter of individual conscience, provided it is done "quietly, secretly and without ostentation."

Worldliness ("treasure on earth")

Interpreted as an insidious danger precisely because it appears innocent (attention to business, seeking happiness short of open sin); the author calls it a cause of far more spiritual shipwreck than open transgression.

Singleness of purpose ("single eye")/ two masters

Interpreted as the "great secret of spiritual prosperity"; the author reads divided allegiance to God and the world as the root of Christians' spiritual "failures" and discomfort.

"Take no thought" (anxiety over life, food, clothing, morrow)

Interpreted not as forbidding prudent provision but as forbidding "wearing, corroding, self-tormenting anxiety."

Fowls of the air / lilies of the field

Read as illustrations from providence, teaching that God's care for lesser creatures guarantees his care for believers who fulfill their calling

"Seek first the kingdom of God"

Read as a promise that temporal needs will be added to those who prioritize the kingdom of grace and glory.

"Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof"

Read as a maxim against borrowing tomorrow's troubles, closing the unit's teaching on anxiety.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 9

Original-language notes

None explicitly discussed (no Greek or Hebrew terms are treated in this section; the author works entirely from the English text).

Cross-references

Acts 17:28 (Paul at Athens, "in him we live and move"); Colossians 1:20-22 (reconciliation through Christ's death); Romans 8:15 ("Spirit of adoption... Abba, Father"); John 12:28 ("Father, glorify your name"); 1 Peter 4:11 ("that God in all things may be glorified"); Hebrews 8:11 ("all shall know me, from the least to the greatest"); Romans 11:25 (fullness of the Gentiles); 1 Corinthians 10:13 (temptation "above that which we are able to bear"); John 17:15 (deliverance from evil); John 13:10 (daily washing of feet); Philippians 3:13 ("One thing I do"); Romans 8:28 ("all things work together for good"); Psalm 84:11 ("no good thing will he withhold"); 1 Thessalonians 4:13 (not sorrowing as those without hope); Psalm 37:25 (the righteous not forsaken); 1 Samuel 2:3 ("actions are weighed").

Views engaged

The author briefly notes the absence of a direct NT command regarding fasting and treats it as left to individual discretion, implicitly against any view that would make fasting obligatory; he also implicitly critiques nominal or habitual religiosity ("a certain amount of 'religious duties'") as a false ground of assurance, and critiques "self-righteous payment of a sum of money" as a substitute for genuine motive.

Doctrinal points

Almsgiving and private prayer are marks of genuine, not merely nominal, discipleship. God weighs motive and heart over outward quantity of religious performance. True filial relationship to God as Father requires faith in Christ's blood and union with him, not mere natural creaturehood. The kingdom prayed for is both present (grace) and future (glory, at Christ's second coming, linked to Jewish conversion and Gentile fullness). Forgiveness from God is conditioned on a forgiving spirit toward others. Worldliness, not open sin, is the more common cause of spiritual ruin. Singleness of devotion to God is necessary for spiritual peace and prosperity. Anxious care about temporal needs is inconsistent with confidence in God's fatherly providence.

Across Matthew 6 the author argues that Christ regulates the inner motive and spirit behind visible religious acts, alms, prayer, fasting, and daily living, rather than merely their outward performance. The unifying thesis is that God examines the heart, not the quantity of duties performed, and that genuine discipleship is evidenced by secret devotion, undivided loyalty to God over the world, and trustful freedom from anxiety, all flowing from a true filial relationship to the Father through Christ.

Matthew 6:1-8, 6:9-15, 6:16-24, 6:25-34 (full text expounded)

- Acts 17:28 – Paul's speech at Athens, cited for the "lowest sense" of divine fatherhood
- Colossians 1:20-22 – reconciliation through Christ's death, cited for the "highest sense" of fatherhood
- Romans 8:15 – "Spirit of adoption... Abba, Father"
- John 12:28 – Christ's own prayer, "Father, glorify your name"
- 1 Peter 4:11 – purpose that God be glorified in all things
- Hebrews 8:11 – "all shall know me, from the least to the greatest," used for the future kingdom of glory
- Romans 11:25 – "fullness of the Gentiles," used to interpret "your kingdom come"
- 1 Corinthians 10:13 – tempted "above that which we are able to bear"
- John 17:15 – prayer for deliverance from evil
- John 13:10 – daily washing of feet, applied to daily need for forgiveness
- Philippians 3:13 – Paul's "One thing I do," cited on singleness of purpose
- Romans 8:28 – "all things work together for good," cited as remedy for anxiety
- Psalm 84:11 – "no good thing will he withhold from those who walk uprightly"
- 1 Thessalonians 4:13 – not sorrowing "as others, who have no hope"
- Psalm 37:25 – David's testimony that the righteous are not forsaken
- 1 Samuel 2:3 – "actions are weighed," cited on God's discernment of motive
- Biblical examples of fasting cited without full citation: David (fasting for his sick child), Daniel (fasting for special light), Paul and Barnabas (fasting at the appointment of elders), Esther (fasting before approaching Ahasuerus)
- No named external scholars or extra-biblical sources cited in this section
- No explicit dating or historical-composition claims made in this section; historical/narrative references are to Old Testament figures cited as scriptural precedent, not as dating arguments

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 9

"A giving Saviour should have giving disciples."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's premise that generosity is an assumed, non-optional mark of true discipleship.

"It teaches plainly that prayerless people are not genuine Christians."

WHY IT LANDS A direct doctrinal claim tying private prayer to the reality, not just profession, of saving faith.

"He takes no account of the quantity of money we give, or the quantity of words we use: the one thing at which his all-seeing eye looks is the nature of our motives and the state of our hearts."

WHY IT LANDS Summarizes the section's core theological emphasis on motive over outward religious performance.

"This, we must never forget, is the sonship that we must desire if we would be saved. Without faith in Christ's blood and union with him, it is useless to talk of trusting in the "Fatherhood" of God."

WHY IT LANDS Clarifies the author's doctrinal claim that divine fatherhood is soteriologically conditioned on union with Christ, not mere creaturehood.

"We must not expect to be forgiven if we cannot forgive."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's reading of the reciprocal forgiveness clause as a real condition, not a mere formality.

"Open transgression of God's law slays its thousands, but worldliness its tens of thousands."

WHY IT LANDS A quotable, memorable statement of the author's doctrinal warning that worldliness is the more pervasive spiritual danger.

10

Section 10

Chapter 7: Matthew 7, Matthew 7:1-29

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

Section 10

This section closes the author's exposition of the Sermon on the Mount, moving through three units of Matthew 7. The first (7:1-11) treats the command "Judge not," which the author insists must be carefully bounded so it does not become a weapon against true religion. He argues Christ forbids a censorious, fault-finding spirit rather than all discernment, and pairs this with the call to discretion in sharing spiritual truth ("cast not your pearls before swine") and the duty of persistent prayer. The second unit (7:12-20) covers the Golden Rule, the strait gate versus the broad way, and the warning against false prophets, read as three linked general principles for Christian conduct, self-examination, and doctrinal vigilance. The author stresses that popularity is no mark of true religion and that Scripture, not clerical office, is the test of sound teaching. The third unit (7:21-29) treats the closing warnings about false profession and the two builders, framed as a decisive contrast between mere outward religious profession and genuine obedience. The author closes by underscoring that the Sermon on the Mount as a whole is addressed personally to the reader and will be the standard of judgment at the last day.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 10

Mote and beam

Illustrates hypocrisy in judging others while ignoring one's own greater faults (author's reading, following the text directly).

Dogs / swine, pearls (7:6)

Interpreted as teaching "discretion as to the persons with whom we speak on the subject of religion," specifically those of "violent tempers or openly profligate habits" who will react with hostility to spiritual appeals.

Ask, seek, knock (7:7-11)

Author reads the three verbs as Christ's deliberate emphasis on the importance of prayer, with the "evil" earthly father as an a fortiori argument for God's readiness to answer.

Golden Rule (7:12)

Presented as a comprehensive ethical principle superseding the need for "endless little rules," distinguished from mere reciprocity/"heathenism."

Strait gate / broad way (7:13-14)

Author interprets these as a warning against religious conformity to popular practice; true religion is necessarily a minority path, and being "reckoned singular... and narrow-minded" is not evidence against one's faith.

False prophets (7:15-20), fruit test

Interpreted as an enduring warning against false teachers within the church (not just false religions), with "sound doctrine and holy living" as the test; author extends this to caution against uncritical trust in clergy.

"Lord, Lord" sayers (7:21-23)

Read as false professors, those with outward Christian markers (baptism, preaching, "wonderful works") lacking genuine obedience to "the will of my Father."

Two builders (7:24-27)

Interpreted as two classes of hearers, those who "hear and do" versus those who "hear and do nothing," with trial (sickness, sorrow, bereavement) as the proving ground that exposes the difference.

Scribes / Pharisees (implicit, 7:29)

Referenced as the customary teaching authority Christ's authoritative manner is contrasted against (noted in the closing narrative verse, not separately expounded by the author beyond quoting the text).

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 10

Original-language notes

None discussed explicitly; no Hebrew or Greek terms are analyzed in this section.

Cross-references

1 Thessalonians 5:21 ("prove all things"); 1 John 4:1 ("try the spirits"); Job 9:24 (earth given into hands of the wicked); 1 Corinthians 13:7 (love "believes all things, hopes all things"); Proverbs 9:8 ("Reprove not a scorner"); Acts 18:6 (the Jews at Corinth); 1 Samuel 25:17 (Nabal, "son of Belial"); Ecclesiastes 3:7 ("time to be silent... time to speak"); Matthew 15:14 ("If the blind lead the blind"); Psalm 119:105 ("a lamp to our feet"); James 1:22 ("a doer as well as a hearer"); John 12:48 (the word of Christ will judge at the last day).

Views engaged

The author explicitly names and rejects a misapplication of "Judge not" by "the enemies of true religion," who would use it to forbid all unfavorable judgment or to require perfection before any reproof of others; he also critiques those who claim to be "not learned" as an excuse for spiritual laziness, calling this a cloak hiding "spiritual sloth."

Doctrinal points

True discernment and reproof of sin are compatible with the prohibition on judging; discretion is required in sharing spiritual truth with the openly hostile; persistent prayer is a non-negotiable mark of genuine faith ("without this no soul can be saved"); the Golden Rule is the comprehensive ethic of Christian conduct; true religion is necessarily narrow and unpopular; false teachers must be tested against Scripture regardless of ordination; salvation requires practiced obedience, not mere profession; trials are the proof of the genuineness of one's religious foundation.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 10

The author argues that the closing chapter of the Sermon on the Mount presents a graduated set of tests distinguishing true from false religion: right versus censorious judgment, wise versus reckless speech, genuine versus neglected prayer, narrow versus broad paths, true versus false teachers, and finally true versus false hearers. The culminating claim is that mere profession, privilege, or even visible religious activity cannot save; only actual obedience "does the will of my Father" and withstands trial, making practiced faith rather than professed faith the decisive mark of salvation.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 10

Scripture references: Matthew 7:1-11; Matthew 7:12-20; Matthew 7:21-29; 1 Thessalonians 5:21; 1 John 4:1; Job 9:24; 1 Corinthians 13:7; Proverbs 9:8; Acts 18:6; 1 Samuel 25:17; Ecclesiastes 3:7; Matthew 15:14; Psalm 119:105; James 1:22; John 12:48

- Original-language terms discussed: none
- External sources or scholars cited: none named beyond Scripture itself
- Dating or historical claims: none stated

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 10

"What our Lord means to condemn is a censorious and fault-finding spirit."

WHY IT LANDS This states the author's core interpretive claim narrowing the scope of "Judge not."

"There is nothing so simple and plain as praying if a man really has a will to pray. There is nothing unhappily which men are so slow to do: they will use many of the forms of religion, attend many ordinances, do many things that are right, before they will do this; and yet without this no soul can be saved!"

WHY IT LANDS A quotable, doctrinally weighted claim that prayer is indispensable to salvation.

"It sweeps the whole debatable ground with one mighty principle."

WHY IT LANDS Memorable summary of the author's view of the Golden Rule's comprehensive ethical authority.

"We may well tremble and be afraid if our religion is that of the multitude."

WHY IT LANDS Clarifies the author's reading of the narrow way as a warning against conformist religion.

"Nothing supplies false prophets with followers so much as spiritual sloth under a cloak of humility."

WHY IT LANDS A pointed, quotable critique of feigned humility as an excuse for biblical illiteracy.

"We must make a 'practice' of our Christianity as well as a 'profession.'"

WHY IT LANDS States the section's culminating doctrinal thesis distinguishing true faith from mere profession.

11

Section 11

Chapter 8: Matthew 8, Matthew 8:1–34

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

Section 11

This section covers three passages: the healing of the leper, the centurion's servant, and Peter's mother-in-law (8:1-15); the calming of the storm along with two would-be disciples' encounters with Jesus (8:16-27); and the deliverance of the two demon-possessed men of the Gergesenes (8:28-34). The author reads the cluster of miracles following the Sermon on the Mount as deliberately placed proof that the preacher of that sermon is the Son of God, arguing there is "beautiful fitness" in mighty works following mighty words. From the three healings he draws three lessons: Christ's almighty power, Christ's mercy and compassion, and the preciousness of faith, using the centurion as the model believer commended above Israel itself. In the second passage he treats the scribe and the reluctant disciple as a warning against admitting professors without counting the cost, and reads the storm-stilling episode as proof that true faith can coexist with weakness and fear. In the third passage he affirms the real existence and malice of the devil, insists that the devil's power is strictly limited by permission from Christ, presents Jesus as humanity's deliverer from Satan's bondage, and closes by condemning the Gadarenes' worldliness in preferring their swine to their deliverer. Each passage is used to reinforce a practical, devotional application for the reader's present faith and conduct rather than a technical exegetical argument.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 11

The centurion

A Gentile whose request for his servant's healing "by word only" is presented as the model of great faith, contrasted explicitly with unbelieving "scribes and Pharisees" and "Israel."

Peter's wife's mother

Healed of a fever by a touch, cited as evidence Christ can give "not merely relief, but strength to do work in an instant."

The scribe who offers to follow Jesus

Represents a professed but untested disciple; Jesus's reply ("Foxes have holes...") is read as neither accepting nor rejecting him but warning him to count the cost.

The disciple who asks to bury his father

Represents a case where even a "natural and lawful" duty must be set aside for Christ's greater claim; the author treats "let the dead bury their dead" as a hard saying about total commitment.

The storm and the disciples' fear

Used to illustrate that "true saving faith is often mingled with much weakness and infirmity."

The devil / evil spirits (the two possessed men)

Treated as a real, malicious, personal being ("There is such a being as the devil") whose power is nonetheless limited and subject to permission from Christ, evidenced by the spirits' plea "Are you come to torment us... before the time?"

The Gadarenes

Presented as an example of "painful worldliness," caring more for their drowned swine than for the deliverance of two souls or the presence of "a greater than the devil."

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 11

Original-language notes

None discussed in this section.

Cross-references

2 Kings 5:7 (leprosy regarded as incurable by physicians); Exodus 8:19 ("the finger of God"); Job 36:5 ("despises not any"); Job 13:15 ("though he slay me, yet will I trust in him"); Acts 10:38 ("healing all that were oppressed of the devil"); Hebrews 7:25 ("able to save to the uttermost, because he ever lives to make intercession for us").

Views engaged

The author critiques a contemporary church practice of "filling the ranks of Christ's army with every volunteer who is willing to make a little profession," implicitly arguing against lax admission to church membership without warning of cost; no named scholars or competing exegetical schools are engaged in this section.

Doctrinal points

Christ's omnipotence and mercy as twin foundations for Christian faith; salvation by faith apart from learning ("Many a poor converted heathen... shall sit down in heaven while many learned scholars are rejected for evermore"); the necessity of counting the cost of discipleship; the compatibility of true faith with fear and weakness; the real but limited power of Satan, bound by Christ's permission and ultimately to be bound fully at Christ's second coming; the danger of worldliness displacing devotion to Christ.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 11

The miracles of Matthew 8 function as divine proof following divine words, establishing Christ's almighty power and boundless compassion as the twin foundations of Christian faith. The author further argues that true discipleship demands counting the cost, that genuine faith can coexist with fear, and that Christ's authority over Satan is total but exercised within limits Satan cannot exceed, while worldliness (as in the Gadarenes) remains the great danger that displaces devotion to Christ.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 11

Scripture references: Matthew 8:1-15; Matthew 8:16-27; Matthew 8:28-34; 2 Kings 5:7; Exodus 8:19; Job 36:5; Job 13:15; Acts 10:38; Hebrews 7:25

- Original-language terms: none discussed
- External sources or scholars cited: an unnamed "old saint" quoted ("My faith can sleep sound on no other pillow than Christ's omnipotence")
- Dating or historical claims: reference to events occurring "1800 years ago" (relative dating from the author's own time to Christ's earthly ministry); no other composition or historical-referent dating discussed

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 11

"It was fitting that the greatest sermon ever preached should be immediately followed by mighty proofs that the preacher was the Son of God."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's thesis that Matthew 8's miracles are deliberately positioned as divine authentication of the Sermon on the Mount.

"My faith can sleep sound on no other pillow than Christ's omnipotence."

WHY IT LANDS A quoted maxim used to ground Christian assurance in Christ's almighty power.

"Many a poor converted heathen, who knows nothing but that he is sick of sin, and trusts in Jesus, shall sit down in heaven while many learned scholars are rejected for evermore."

WHY IT LANDS States the doctrine that saving faith, not learning, determines salvation.

"Nothing, in fact, has done more harm to Christianity than the practice of filling the ranks of Christ's army with every volunteer who is willing to make a little profession, and to talk fluently of his 'experience.'"

WHY IT LANDS A pointed critique of lax church admission practices, used to argue for counting the cost of discipleship.

"How many have faith and love enough to forsake all for Christ's sake, and to follow him whithersoever he goes, and yet are full of fears in the hour of trial!"

WHY IT LANDS Captures the author's point that true faith can be genuine even while mixed with fear and weakness.

"Let us settle it firmly in our minds that there is such a being as the devil. It is an awful truth, and one too much overlooked."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's insistence on the real, personal existence of the devil as foundational to reading the exorcism narrative.

12

Section 12

Chapter 9: Matthew 9

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

Section 12

This section works through three units of Matthew 9: the healing of the paralytic and call of Matthew (9:1-13), the question about fasting alongside the raising of the ruler's daughter and healing of the woman with the issue of blood (9:14-26), and the healing of the two blind men, the mute demoniac, and Christ's compassion on the crowds (9:27-37). The author draws practical and doctrinal lessons from each episode rather than offering historical-critical exposition. He treats Christ's knowledge of the scribes' secret thoughts as proof of divine omniscience and a warning that nothing is hidden from Christ. Matthew's call illustrates that no heart is beyond Christ's power to change, and Matthew's immediate obedience is held up as a model of decisive discipleship. The declaration "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" is treated as the doctrinal center of the first unit, establishing that a sense of one's own sinfulness is the qualification for coming to Christ, not a disqualification. In the second unit, Christ's self-designation as "the bridegroom" grounds a picture of union between Christ and believers. The parables of the cloth and wineskins become a pastoral principle about gentleness in teaching young disciples. The woman's touch of the hem is read as an example of saving faith even in its weakest form. The raising of the ruler's daughter demonstrates Christ's power over death. In the third unit, the blind men's confession of faith despite lacking sight is used to argue that grace does not depend on outward advantage or learning. Christ's healing ministry is presented as evidence of his personal fitness to sympathize with the sick, and his compassion on the scattered crowds grounds a call to prayer for laborers in the harvest.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 12

The scribes

Religious figures who inwardly accuse Jesus of blasphemy; the author frames their exposed private thoughts as proof that "the Son of God could read hearts, and discern spirits."

Matthew (the tax collector/apostle)

Called from "the receipt of custom"; the author treats him as the paradigm case that "with Christ nothing is impossible," and praises his immediate, undelayed obedience.

Publicans and sinners

Those who dine with Jesus, prompting Pharisaic criticism; the author uses this to establish that Christ's mission is to sinners, not the self-righteous.

The Pharisees

Criticized in this section as being "wholly ignorant of the grand design for which the Messiah was to come," namely to be "a Saviour, a Physician, a healer of sin-sick souls."

The Bridegroom (Christ)

Self-designation Jesus uses of himself; the author interprets this as expressing Christ's covenantal, loving union with believers, likening it to marital union ("What the bridegroom is to the bride, the Lord Jesus is to the souls of all who believe in him").

New cloth / old garment; new wine / old bottles (parables)

Interpreted not as commentary on Judaism versus the gospel broadly, but specifically as a pastoral principle: young disciples must be taught gradually and not overburdened with "minute conformity to one rigid rule in things indifferent" before grasping repentance and faith.

The ruler (Jairus, unnamed in text) and his daughter

The daughter's death and raising are used to demonstrate Christ's "almighty power" and power over death itself.

The woman with the issue of blood

Her act of touching "the hem" of Christ's garment is the section's central illustration of saving faith in its weakest, most inarticulate form; the author quotes "a good old writer" that "she came trembling, and went back triumphing"

The two blind men

Their confession of Jesus as "Son of David" despite never having seen his miracles is used to argue that faith does not depend on outward advantage, learning, or opportunity.

The dumb man possessed with a devil

Mentioned in the passage; the Pharisees' accusation ("He casts out devils through the prince of the devils") is quoted from the text but not separately expounded by the author in this section.

The scattered multitudes ("sheep having no shepherd")

Used to illustrate Christ's compassion for neglected, spiritually destitute people, which the author extends into a call for present-day concern for "idolaters and heathen," "Mahometans," "Roman Catholics," and "ignorant and unconverted Protestants."

The harvest / the laborers

Christ's charge to pray for laborers is treated as establishing prayer as the primary duty of Christians who desire the world's conversion, above personal work or giving money.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Original-language notes

None discussed in this section.

Cross-references

Hebrews 4:13 ("All things are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do"); Romans 2:16 ("God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ"); Psalm 19:14; Psalm 119:60; Psalm 29:4; Acts 24:25; Revelation 19:7 (the "Lamb's wife"); Matthew 20:16 ("last will be first, and the first last"); Revelation 3:20 ("I stand at the door and knock"); 1 Corinthians 2:16 ("the mind of Christ").

Views engaged

The scribes' internal accusation of blasphemy is presented and rebutted through the narrative itself. The Pharisees' objection to Christ's association with publicans and sinners, and their charge that he casts out devils "through the prince of the devils," are both recorded as views the passage exposes as wrong, though the author does not develop a rebuttal to the exorcism accusation specifically. No named scholarly interpretive positions are engaged, aside from an unattributed quotation from "a good old writer."

Doctrinal points

Christ's omniscience and authority to forgive sins; the necessity of a sense of one's own sinfulness as the qualification for coming to Christ; the perpetual neediness of believers for Christ's mediation, even after conversion ("Sinners we are in the day we first come to Christ... Sinners we shall find ourselves in the hour of our death"); the believer's union with Christ under the bridegroom image; pastoral gradualism in teaching new disciples; the sufficiency of even weak faith for salvation; Christ's power over death; the universality of Christ's power to save regardless of a person's outward circumstances or education; Christ's personal sympathy with bodily suffering; and prayer as the foremost duty in seeking the world's conversion.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 12

Across the three episodes of Matthew 9, the author argues that Christ's power and compassion extend to the whole person: forgiving sin, calling the unlikely, tolerating weak faith, healing bodily disease, and raising the dead. The unifying doctrinal claim is that Christ came "not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance," and that this sense of need, not merit, position, or strength of faith, remains the believer's continual ground of approach to Christ throughout life.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 12

- Scripture quoted/expounded: Matthew 9:1-13, 9:14-26, 9:27-37
- Scripture cross-referenced: Hebrews 4:13; Romans 2:16; Psalm 19:14; Psalm 119:60; Psalm 29:4; Acts 24:25; Revelation 19:7; Matthew 20:16; Revelation 3:20; 1 Corinthians 2:16
 - Original-language terms discussed: none
 - External sources or scholars cited: an unnamed "good old writer," quoted as saying "she came trembling, and went back triumphing"; no named scholar or historical source cited
 - Dating or historical claims: none made in this section

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 12

"Jesus knows. Jesus sees. Jesus records. Jesus will one day summon us to give account."

WHY IT LANDS States the doctrinal claim of Christ's omniscience and coming judgment in memorable, direct form.

"We should learn from Matthew's case that with Christ nothing is impossible. He can take a tax gatherer and make him an apostle."

WHY IT LANDS Establishes the doctrinal point that no person is beyond the transforming reach of Christ's call.

"The first thing needful in order to have an interest in Christ is to feel deeply our own corruption, and to be willing to come to him for deliverance."

WHY IT LANDS States the section's central soteriological claim, that felt sinfulness is the qualification for coming to Christ.

"Sinners we are in the day we first come to Christ. Poor needy sinners we continue to be so long as we live, drawing all the grace we have every hour out of Christ's fullness."

WHY IT LANDS Clarifies that the believer's dependence on Christ for grace never ceases, even after conversion.

"If we may not touch his garment, we can touch his heart. Such faith saves the soul."

WHY IT LANDS Memorably states that even the weakest, most inarticulate faith is sufficient for salvation.

"Money can pay agents; universities can give learning; bishops may ordain; congregations may elect: but the Holy Spirit alone can make ministers of the Gospel, and raise up lay workmen in the spiritual harvest who need not be ashamed."

WHY IT LANDS Establishes the doctrinal priority of prayer and the Spirit's sovereign work over institutional means in raising up gospel workers.

13

Section 13

Chapter 10: Matthew 10

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

MATTHEW 10:1-42

SUMMARY

Section 13

This section works through the whole of Matthew 10 in four movements: the commissioning of the twelve apostles (10:1-15), Christ's warnings about persecution and the need for wisdom (10:16-23), his encouragements to those who labor for souls (10:24-33), and his closing teaching on division, cross-bearing, and reward (10:34-42). The author frames the chapter as the record of "the first ordination which ever took place in the Church of Christ" and "the first charge ever delivered to newly ordained Christian ministers." From the calling of Judas Iscariot alongside the other apostles, the author draws the lesson that ordination does not confer saving grace and that ministers must be judged by Scripture, not treated as infallible. From the mission charge, he draws the lesson that ministry is fundamentally about giving and serving rather than ruling, and that neglecting the Gospel is more dangerous than the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah. Moving through the persecution warnings, the author counsels moderate expectations of success, the need for a "wise as serpents, harmless as doves" balance between cowardly silence and reckless zeal, and reliance on God's providential care symbolized by numbered hairs and observed sparrows. In the final unit, he addresses the "sword" saying as a description of the Gospel's actual social effect rather than millennial peace, insists true discipleship requires cross-bearing and self-denial, and closes with the promise that even a "cup of cold water" given to a disciple is remembered and rewarded by God. Throughout, the section functions as practical pastoral application rather than close exegetical argument, repeatedly turning the text toward the duties and dangers facing ministers, teachers, and ordinary believers who try "to do good" in the world.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 13

Judas Iscariot

Used as proof that "all ministers are not necessarily good men" and that "orders do not confer the saving grace of the Holy Spirit."

James and John

Held up as the pattern of faithful ministerial succession, contrasted with Judas as the type to avoid, per the author's exhortation to "pray for those who may be successors, not of Judas Iscariot, but of James and John."

Sodom and Gomorrah

Cited by the author as the standard of judgment against which those who reject the Gospel are measured, and argued to be a lesser guilt than that of Gospel-rejecters: "we are far more guilty than the men of Sodom, who never heard the Gospel at all."

"Wise as serpents, and harmless as doves"

Interpreted as a call to a difficult middle path between cowardly silence and reckless, offense-giving zeal; the author frames this as one of the hardest of Christ's instructions to apply.

Sparrows and numbered hairs

Interpreted as teaching God's minute providential care over believers engaged in dangerous, difficult labor for Christ.

The "sword," not peace (10:34)

Interpreted not as Christ's intent to create strife for its own sake, but as the inevitable social effect of the Gospel dividing believers from unbelievers within families, "because of the deep corruption of man's heart."

The "cup of cold water" (10:42)

Interpreted as proof that even the smallest acts of support for Christ's laborers are individually observed and rewarded by God.

Melanchthon / "the great German Reformer"

Cited (Luther, unnamed directly) via the saying that "Old Adam was too strong for young Melanchthon," used to illustrate the danger of extravagant expectations in ministry leading to burnout or retreat.

Colonel Gardiner

Quoted for the saying "I fear God, and therefore there is none else that I need fear," used to illustrate fearing God above man.

Daniel and the three children

Cited as models of submitting to danger rather than displeasing God.

Lydia and Diotrephes

Cited as biblical examples respectively of one who helped Christ's servants and one who hindered them (Paul and John).

Joseph and the chief butler

Used as a contrast to illustrate that unlike the butler who forgot Joseph, "the Lord Jesus never forgets any of his people."

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Original-language notes

None discussed in this section; no Hebrew or Greek terms are addressed.

Cross-references

2 Corinthians 1:24 (ministers not lords over the church); Hebrews 2:3 (neglecting so great salvation); Ephesians 5:15 (walking circumspectly, not as fools but as wise); Acts 6:3 (need for men full of the Spirit and wisdom); Psalm 37:6 (righteousness brought forth as the light); 1 Corinthians 4:5 (the Lord will bring to light hidden things and manifest counsels of the heart); Acts 16:15 (Lydia's kindness to Paul); 3 John 9 (Diotrephes' opposition to John); Matthew 25:35 (feeding and giving drink to Christ in the person of his people).

Views engaged

The author briefly engages and rejects a vague, sentimental notion of church "unity," "harmony," and "peace" pursued at the expense of truth, calling it "an idle dream to suppose that the churches of Christ will enjoy much of unity and peace before the millennium comes." He also implicitly critiques two extremes of ministerial conduct: silence/cowardice as "compromising" unfaithfulness, and reckless zeal as "Jesuitical subtlety or carnal policy," positioning his own reading as the correct middle course of "Christian wisdom."

Doctrinal points

Ordination does not confer regenerating grace and ministers are not infallible; the ministerial calling is one of service and self-giving rather than rule; neglect of Gospel privilege incurs greater guilt than pagan ignorance; Christian workers must expect opposition and moderate their expectations of success; believers must fear God above man and trust God's providential care; the Gospel's true effect in a fallen world is division, not automatic peace; cross-bearing and self-denial are required of all true disciples; even the smallest service to Christ's cause is remembered and rewarded by God.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 13

The author argues that Matthew 10 functions as a template for all Christian ministry and discipleship across time, teaching that ordained office guarantees nothing spiritually, that gospel labor requires courage tempered by wisdom, that persecution and even family division are the Gospel's natural fruit in a fallen world, and that God notices and rewards every faithful, even the smallest, act of service or support rendered to his laborers.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 13

Scripture references cited: Matthew 10:1-15; Matthew 10:16-23; Matthew 10:24-33; Matthew 10:34-42; 2 Corinthians 1:24; Hebrews 2:3; Ephesians 5:15; Acts 6:3; Psalm 37:6; 1 Corinthians 4:5; Acts 16:15; 3 John 9; Matthew 25:35

- Original-language terms discussed: none
- External sources or scholars cited: "the great German Reformer" (unnamed, quoted regarding Melanchthon); Colonel Gardiner (quoted saying on fearing God)
- Dating or historical claims: The author asserts this chapter records "the first ordination which ever took place in the Church of Christ" and "the first charge ever delivered to newly ordained Christian ministers," stated as a direct claim without further historical argumentation.

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 13

"Orders do not confer the saving grace of the Holy Spirit: ordained men are not necessarily converted."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's core doctrinal point that ministerial office carries no automatic spiritual regeneration.

"They are not so much ordained to rule as to serve; they are not so much intended to have dominion over the Church, as to supply its wants and to wait upon its members (2 Corinthians 1:24)."

WHY IT LANDS Defines the author's view of proper ministerial role as service rather than authority.

"To hear of the "great salvation" and yet neglect it, is one of the worst sins man can commit."

WHY IT LANDS Frames Gospel neglect as uniquely severe guilt, tied to Hebrews 2:3.

"There is a line marked out for us between two extremes, but it is a line that requires great judgement to define."

WHY IT LANDS Captures the author's balancing of cowardly silence against reckless zeal as the interpretive crux of the "wise as serpents" saying.

"It is an idle dream to suppose that the churches of Christ will enjoy much of unity and peace before the millennium comes."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's reading of the "sword" saying against sentimental notions of church unity.

"The Lord Jesus never forgets any of his people."

WHY IT LANDS Summarizes the closing assurance that even the smallest service to Christ's cause is remembered and rewarded.

14

Section 14

Chapter 11: Matthew 11, Matthew 11:1-30

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

Section 14

This section works through three passages in Matthew 11: John the Baptist's question to Jesus from prison (11:1-15), Jesus's rebuke of "this generation" and the unrepentant cities (11:16-24), and Jesus's prayer of thanksgiving and invitation to the weary (11:25-30). The author argues John's question, "Are you the one who should come, or do we look for another," was not doubt but a deliberate act on John's behalf for his disciples, so they would hear the evidence of Christ's divine mission from Christ's own lips before John's death. The author then treats Jesus's commendation of John as the highest praise given to any mortal, explaining that John surpassed the Old Testament prophets because he was an actual eyewitness to Christ rather than merely a foreteller. In the second passage, the author reads the Jews' rejection of both John's asceticism and Jesus's ordinary living as proof of the unreasonableness of unconverted men, and extends this to "professing Christians" in the author's own day. The woes against Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum are read as establishing that hearing the gospel without repenting brings greater guilt than the wickedness of Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom. The final passage is treated as one of the most important in the Gospels, expounding the excellence of a teachable spirit, the majesty of Christ in receiving "all things" from the Father, and the breadth of the invitation to "all that labour and are heavy laden." The section closes by pressing the reader toward personal application of Christ's invitation.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 14

John's disciples

the two messengers sent to Christ, framed by the author as the true intended audience/beneficiaries of John's question, given prior "ignorant jealousies" between John's and Christ's disciples.

Jesus's testimony to John

the declaration "there has not risen a greater than John the Baptist," which the author calls the highest commendation ever given to a mortal man, distinguishing John from prior prophets as an eyewitness rather than a mere foreteller of Messiah.

"A reed shaken with the wind" / soft clothing

retorical images the author reads as Jesus refuting false characterizations of John as unstable or worldly, affirming instead that John was "a bold, unflinching witness to the truth" and "a self-denying preacher of repentance."

"This generation" / the children in the markets

the author interprets this parable as depicting the Jews' perpetual dissatisfaction with both John's austerity and Christ's ordinary living, and extends the image to describe inconsistent objections made against believers in the author's own time.

Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum

cities rebuked for impenitence despite witnessing Christ's "mighty works"; the author holds these towns "were probably no worse than other Jewish towns" but incur greater judgment for spurning greater privilege.

Tyre, Sidon, Sodom

the author uses these as comparative reference points, wicked cities that "would have repented" or "remained until this day" had they received the same gospel privileges, thereby proving the greater guilt of privileged unrepentant hearers.

The Father's hiding/revealing (11:25)

the author frames this as illustrating the sovereignty of God in salvation, describing it as "a deep mystery" not to be explained, while drawing the practical lesson that pride blocks reception of the gospel and humility receives it.

"All things are delivered to me of my Father"

the author interprets this as demonstrating "the perfect union which exists between the first and second Persons of the Trinity" and Christ's supreme authority over all matters of salvation, applying to Christ the titles Shepherd, Physician, bread of life, light, fountain, and door.

"Come to me, all you that labour and are heavy laden"

the invitation is read as addressed broadly, to "all who feel a load on their heart," without preconditions of worthiness, offering "rest of conscience, and rest of heart."

"I am meek and lowly in heart"

noted by the author as "the only place in Scripture where the 'heart' of Christ is actually named," evidencing Christ's gentleness as proven in the experience of Mary, Martha, Peter, the disciples, and Thomas.

"My yoke is easy and my burden is light"

interpreted as meaning Christ's service, though it involves cross-bearing and trials, is comparatively easy against the "yoke of Jewish ceremonies" and "the bondage of human superstition."

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Original-language notes

None discussed explicitly in this section; no Greek or Hebrew terms are glossed.

Cross-references

Hebrews 7:24 (Christ's abiding priesthood); Isaiah 53:7 and Daniel 9:26 (Messiah "brought as a lamb to the slaughter" and "cut off"); John 1:29 ("Behold the Lamb of God"); Matthew 25:34 ("Come, you blessed of my Father"); Romans 8:7 and 1 Corinthians 2:14 (the carnal/natural man's enmity to God); Acts 3:19 ("repent and be converted"); Luke 1:53 (Mary's Magnificat, "he has filled the hungry with good things"); Acts 9:6 (Saul's question, "Lord, what will you have me to do?"); Luke 18:14 ("the one who humbles himself will be exalted"); Psalm 139:6 ("Such knowledge is too wonderful for me"); 1 Corinthians 3:22 ("If we have Christ, we have all things"); 1 John 5:3 and Proverbs 3:17 (Christ's commandments not grievous, ways of pleasantness); John 6:37 ("the one who comes to me I will in no wise cast out").

Views engaged

The author explicitly rejects an interpretation of John's question as arising "from doubt or unbelief," calling it an injustice to "that holy man." The author also implicitly engages and refutes a view that would think "lightly of John the Baptist" from misunderstanding his question or ministry.

Doctrinal points

The perpetuity of Christ's priesthood as ground for believers' confidence after the death of teachers; the honor Christ bestows on faithful service, anticipating final commendation before the Father; the universal unreasonableness/enmity of the unconverted natural mind toward any form of gospel ministry; the aggravated guilt of hearing the gospel without repenting, exceeding the guilt of pagan wickedness; divine sovereignty in hiding/revealing gospel truth, correlated with pride versus humility; the perfect union of the Father and Son and Christ's total authority over salvation; the unconditional and universal invitation of the gospel to the "labouring and heavy laden"; the comparative ease of Christ's yoke against worldly and ceremonial bondage.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 14

The section argues that Matthew 11 displays Christ's authority to vindicate misunderstood faithful servants (John), to expose the willful unreasonableness and aggravated guilt of unrepentant hearers of the gospel, and to extend, from His own supreme and Trinity-rooted authority, an unconditional invitation of rest to all who are weary. Each unit builds toward the same practical demand: humble acceptance of Christ's testimony, warning, and invitation, rather than the proud self-justification the passage exposes in "this generation."

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 14

Scripture references cited: Matthew 11:1-30 (full passage under exposition); Hebrews 7:24; Isaiah 53:7; Daniel 9:26; John 1:29; Matthew 25:34; Romans 8:7; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Acts 3:19; Luke 1:53; Acts 9:6; Luke 18:14; Psalm 139:6; 1 Corinthians 3:22; 1 John 5:3; Proverbs 3:17; John 6:37

- Original-language terms discussed: none
- External sources or scholars cited: Quesnel ("Whatever measures good men take, they will never escape the censures of the world. The best way is not to be concerned at them"); an unnamed "English bishop" ("among all the aggravations of our sins, there is none more heinous than the frequent hearing of our duty")
- Dating or historical claims: the author states the invitation of 11:28-30 has been in circulation "For 1800 years," implying a first-century composition/origin for the passage, though no specific date of composition for Matthew is argued.

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 14

"This question did not arise from doubt or unbelief on the part of John. We do that holy man injustice if we interpret it in such a way."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's defense of John the Baptist's character against a doubt-based reading of his question to Jesus.

"In short, He would have them know that John was "more than a prophet." He was one to whom God had given more honor than to all the Old Testament prophets."

WHY IT LANDS Captures the author's core claim about John's unique honor as an eyewitness to Christ, surpassing the prophets who only foretold him.

"The plain truth is that true believers must not expect unconverted men to be satisfied either with their faith or their practice. If they do, they expect what they will not find."

WHY IT LANDS States the doctrinal point that the natural man's dissatisfaction with any form of gospel ministry is to be expected, not resolved.

"How great is the guilt of such a man before God! How great is the danger in which he daily stands! Moral, and decent and respectable as his life may be, he is actually more guilty than an idolatrous Tyrian or Sidonian, or a miserable inhabitant of Sodom!"

WHY IT LANDS A memorable, doctrinally loaded statement on the aggravated guilt of unrepentant gospel hearers compared to pagan wickedness.

"We should mark whom Jesus invites. He does not address those who feel themselves righteous and worthy. He addresses "all that labour and are heavy laden.""

WHY IT LANDS Clarifies the unconditional and broad scope of Christ's invitation in 11:28.

"It is the only place in Scripture where the "heart" of Christ is actually named. It is a saying never to be forgotten."

WHY IT LANDS A quotable, distinctive observation on the uniqueness of Christ's self-description as "meek and lowly in heart."

15

Section 15

Chapter 12: Matthew 12

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

Section 15

This section works through four passages in Matthew 12: the disciples plucking corn and the healing of the withered hand (12:1-13); the withdrawal of Jesus and the fulfillment of Isaiah's servant prophecy (12:14-21); the Beelzebub controversy and the sin against the Holy Spirit (12:22-37); and the demand for a sign, the parable of the unclean spirit's return, and Jesus's true family (12:38-50). The author's central concern in the Sabbath passage is to correct two opposite errors: the Pharisaical addition of man-made burdens to the Sabbath, and the opposite modern tendency to discard the fourth commandment altogether. He argues Christ purified rather than abolished the Sabbath law. In the second passage, the "bruised reed and smoking flax" imagery becomes a doctrine of comfort for believers with weak faith. The Beelzebub passage yields four lessons: the desperate lengths of unbelief, the impossibility of religious neutrality, the graduated seriousness of sin according to knowledge (bearing on the unpardonable sin), and the accountability of careless speech. The final passage treats the demand for a sign as evidence that unbelief is a matter of will rather than proof, applies the returning unclean spirit as a threefold warning (to Israel historically, to the churches generally, and to individual souls who experience partial reformation without true conversion), and closes on the tender inclusion of believers as Christ's spiritual family. Throughout, the author affirms Old Testament historicity (Jonah, the Queen of Sheba) as bound up with the authority of the New Testament.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 15

The Pharisees

religious authorities who added traditions to Scripture regarding the Sabbath and who, in this section, accuse Jesus of Sabbath-breaking, of casting out demons by Beelzebub, and demand a sign; portrayed as exemplifying "the desperate wickedness of the human heart."

David and the showbread / the priests in the temple

cited by Jesus as precedent for works of necessity overriding ceremonial restriction; the author treats these as scriptural warrant for the principle of "necessity and mercy."

The man with the withered hand / the sheep in the pit

illustrations Jesus uses to establish that works of mercy are lawful on the Sabbath.

The bruised reed and smoking flax (Isaiah's servant prophecy)

figurative language the author interprets as describing "persons whose grace is at present weak, whose repentance is feeble, and whose faith is small," toward whom Christ is tender and will not "break" or "quench."

The demon-possessed blind and dumb man

healed by Jesus, prompting the Pharisees' Beelzebub accusation.

Beelzebub charge

the Pharisees' claim that Jesus casts out devils by the prince of devils; the author calls it "an absurd charge" refuted by Jesus's "kingdom divided" argument, and compares it to charges later made against Athanasius (by "the early heretics") and Martin Luther (by "the Roman Catholics").

The sin against the Holy Spirit (blasphemy against the Holy Spirit)

described by the author as one of the "things hard to be understood," never fully explained even by "the most learned divines"; the author states it is easier to show what it is not than what it is, and draws from it the principle that "there are degrees in sin" tied to degrees of knowledge rejected.

Idle words / the day of judgment

Jesus's teaching that men will give account for every idle word; the author treats words as evidence of the heart's state ("Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks").

The sign of Jonas, the Ninevites, and the Queen of the South

cited by Jesus as historical realities that will "rise in judgment" against "this generation"; the author uses this to affirm the historicity of Jonah and Solomon's era against those who treat Old Testament narratives as "fables."

The parable of the unclean spirit's return (the "empty, swept, and garnished" house)

the author applies this three ways: to the history of the Jewish nation (from Egypt, through Babylonian captivity, to the coming destruction of Jerusalem "yet forty years" later), to "the whole body of Christian churches" since the Reformation (warning of "some fearful manifestation of antichrist"), and to the individual soul who undergoes partial reformation without full conversion.

Jesus's mother and brothers / true spiritual family

Jesus's statement "Behold my mother and my brothers" is read as declaring that "whoever" does the Father's will is counted as his near relative, offering "rich encouragement" to believers of weak faith.

Gamaliel (referenced as "the way of Gamaliel")

invoked by the author as an example of a fence-sitting, non-decisive approach to religion that "never yet brought happiness and usefulness to anyone."

Pharaoh, Saul, Ahab, Judas Iscariot, Julian, Francis Spira

named by the author as historical examples of persons combining "clear knowledge and deliberate rejection of Christ," ending in "blackness of darkness forever."

Burkitt (cited scholar)

quoted by the author on the lasting moral effect of profane speech ("A profane scoff or atheistical jest may stick in the minds of those who hear it, after the tongue that spoke it is dead").

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 15

Original-language notes

None explicitly discussed in this section (no Hebrew or Greek terms are glossed by the author).

Cross-references

Deuteronomy 23:25 (lawfulness of plucking corn); 1 John 3:13 ("Marvel not if the world hates you"); Job 36:5 ("despises not any"); Acts 9:11 (Ananias and Saul, "behold he prays"); Zechariah 4:10 ("Who has despised the day of small things?"); Hebrews 6:4, 6 and 10:26-27 (on those once enlightened falling away); Philippians 3:9 (righteousness of Christ); Proverbs 18:21 ("Death and life are in the power of the tongue"); Colossians 4:6 ("speech may be always full of grace"); Psalm 39:1 and Psalm 141:3 (David's resolve to guard his tongue); James 3:2 ("If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man"); Song of Solomon 8:8 ("little sister"); Isaiah 7:9 ("If you will not believe surely you shall not be established").

Views engaged

The author engages and rejects the view that Christ's Sabbath teaching means "Christians have nothing to do with the fourth commandment;" he calls this a "hasty conclusion" with "nothing in the New Testament to justify" it. He also engages and rejects skepticism toward Old Testament historicity, criticizing those who profess belief in the New Testament while treating Old Testament accounts (Jonah, Solomon) as fables. He references the "way of Gamaliel" as a rejected model of religious neutrality.

Doctrinal points

(1) The fourth commandment remains morally binding on Christians; Christ purified rather than abolished Sabbath observance. (2) Works of "necessity and mercy" are lawful on the Sabbath, but this liberty must not be abused for "selfish gratification." (3) Christ's tenderness extends to weak faith and feeble repentance ("bruised reed," "smoking flax"); the least degree of grace is "an everlasting possession." (4) Persecution of the godly arises from the unconverted heart's inherent hatred of godliness, not from any fault in the persecuted. (5) There is no neutral position in religion; one is either with Christ or against him. (6) Sin varies in gravity according to the knowledge against which it is committed, bearing on the doctrine of the unpardonable sin. (7) Believers will give account for careless words, which reveal the heart's true state. (8) Old and New Testament authority "stand or fall together." (9) Partial religious reformation without full conversion leaves a person more spiritually vulnerable than before, applied to Israel, to the churches, and to individuals. (10) All who do the Father's will are counted by Christ as his own family, however weak their faith.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 15

Matthew 12 shows Christ correcting Pharisaic legalism concerning the Sabbath without discarding its abiding obligation, exposing the escalating hostility of unconverted hearts toward holiness, warning against superficial or partial reformation, and offering deep comfort to believers whose faith is weak. The author frames these as complementary lessons on the true nature of Christian obedience: neither legalistic addition nor careless neglect, but wholehearted, informed, and merciful discipleship, resting on Christ's tender regard for his spiritual family.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 15

Matthew 12:1-13, 14-21, 22-37, 38-50 (primary text)

- Deuteronomy 23:25
- 1 John 3:13
- Job 36:5
- Acts 9:11
- Zechariah 4:10
- Hebrews 6:4, 6; 10:26-27
- Philippians 3:9
- Proverbs 18:21
- Colossians 4:6
- Psalm 39:1; 141:3
- James 3:2
- Song of Solomon 8:8
- Isaiah 7:9
- Scholars/sources cited: Burkitt (quoted on the lasting moral effect of profane words); implicit historical references to John Hus, Jerome of Prague, Ridley and Latimer (as martyrs hated for godliness, not sin); Athanasius (accused of similar charges by "early heretics"); Martin Luther (accused similarly by "Roman Catholics"); Julian and Francis Spira (historical examples of hardened rejection of Christ)
- Historical/dating claims: the author states that "yet forty years" after Christ's words, Jewish "iniquity came to the full," referencing the later war with Rome, the fall of Jerusalem, and the destruction of the temple, presented as fulfillment of the parable of the returning unclean spirit applied to the Jewish nation.

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 15

"The plain truth is that our Lord did not abolish the law of the weekly Sabbath: he only freed it from incorrect interpretations, and purified it from man made additions."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's central resolution of the Sabbath question: reform, not abolition.

"It is a standing truth in the kingdom of grace that weak grace, weak faith and weak repentance are all precious in our Lord's sight."

WHY IT LANDS Summarizes the doctrine of comfort drawn from the bruised reed and smoking flax.

"There are only two parties in religious matters, there are only two camps, there are only two sides."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's doctrine of the impossibility of religious neutrality.

"The brighter the light, the greater the guilt of him who rejects it; the clearer a man's knowledge of the nature of the Gospel, the greater his sin if he willfully refuses to repent and believe."

WHY IT LANDS Articulates the graduated-sin principle underlying the discussion of the unpardonable sin.

"Our words are the evidence of the state of our hearts, as surely as the taste of the water is an evidence of the state of the spring."

WHY IT LANDS A memorable statement on the doctrinal significance of careless speech.

"It may well be feared that 'the last state' of the professing Christian churches will prove 'worse than the first.'"

WHY IT LANDS Applies the parable of the returning unclean spirit as a corporate warning to the churches, not only to Israel or the individual.

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

16

Section 16

Chapter 13: Matthew 13, Matthew 13:1-58

SUMMARY

Section 16

This section walks through the seven parables of Matthew 13, treating each as teaching about the kingdom of heaven and the nature of the visible church. On the sower (13:1-23), the author draws three lessons: the preacher's work resembles sowing, there are multiple ways of hearing the Word without benefit (wayside, stony ground, thorny ground), and the only true evidence of rightly hearing the Word is bearing fruit. On the wheat and tares (13:24-43), the author argues the parable teaches that good and evil will always coexist in the professing church until the end of the world, and that a final separation of the godly and ungodly will occur only at Christ's second advent. This is used to correct overly optimistic expectations about missions converting the whole world and to answer both the infidel's scoffing about false Christians and the temptation to leave one church for another in search of purity. On the hidden treasure and pearl of great price (13:44-46), the author reads both parables as teaching that true conversion is marked by a willingness to give up everything once a person is convinced salvation is worth it, and applies this to explain both genuine faith and the hesitance of the unconverted. On the net (13:47-50), the author extends the wheat-and-tares teaching to argue that the visible church is necessarily a mixed body of "good fish and bad," warning against telling all baptized people they are regenerate. Finally, on 13:51-58, the author highlights Christ's question "Have you understood all these things?" as a model of preaching application, and treats the rejection at Nazareth as proof of the ruinous nature of unbelief, familiarity breeding contempt, and the danger of assuming that eyewitness proximity to Christ would have produced faith.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 16

The Four Soils (wayside, stony ground, thorny ground, good ground)

Interpreted by the author as four types of hearers of the Word: the careless/indifferent hearer, the hearer with only temporary/emotional impressions, the hearer choked by "the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches," and the hearer who truly understands and bears fruit.

The Wheat and the Tares

Interpreted per Christ's own explanation (given in the text) as good seed/children of the kingdom versus tares/children of the wicked one, sown by the devil; the author reads the field as "the world" and the parable as describing the permanently mixed nature of the visible church until the final judgment.

The Mustard Seed and the Leaven

Named as parables in the passage but not separately expounded with commentary in this section beyond their inclusion among the "seven striking illustrations."

The Treasure Hid in a Field / The Pearl of Great Price

Interpreted by the author as two parables teaching the same lesson, that those truly convinced of salvation's worth will "sell all" (give up everything) to obtain it; used to explain both genuine conversion and the failure of the unconverted to commit.

The Net Cast into the Sea

Interpreted as parallel to the wheat and tares, teaching "the true nature of the visible church of Christ" as a mixed body of "good fish and bad" gathered by Gospel preaching, to be separated only at the end of the world.

The Householder Bringing Forth Treasure New and Old

Referenced from 13:52 but not separately expounded beyond its place in the text quoted.

Nazareth / Christ's Rejection at Home

Used by the author as a historical episode illustrating that familiarity with religious truth and personal proximity to Christ do not guarantee faith; the people's unbelief is presented as the direct cause of Christ doing "not many mighty works there."

Unbelief

Treated as a distinct theological concept, described by the author as "the old root-sin which caused the fall of man" and named alongside pride and worldliness as one of "three great enemies against which God's children should daily pray."

Augustine (cited)

Quoted for the charitable saying "Those who are tares today may be wheat tomorrow," used by the author to caution against harsh efforts to purge the church of hypocrites.

Richard Baxter (cited)

Quoted twice, once on divine patience ("We must not misinterpret God's patience with the ungodly") and once on the net parable ("these plain words more need belief and consideration than exposition").

Matthew Henry (cited)

Quoted on the future state of the righteous, "their sanctification will be perfected, and their justification will be published."

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Original-language notes

None identified; no Hebrew or Greek terms are discussed in this section.

Cross-references

Ecclesiastes 12:10; Isaiah 32:20; 2 Timothy 4:2; Ecclesiastes 11:4; John 6:63; 1 Corinthians 3:7; Psalm 135:16-17; Ezekiel 33:32; John 15:16; James 1:22; 1 John 3:1; Colossians 3:4; John 5:40.

Views engaged

The author engages the "scoffing argument of the infidel, that Christianity cannot be a true religion because there are so many false Christians," refuting it by appeal to the parable's forewarning. The author also engages and cautions against those who would leave "the Protestant church for another" seeking purity, and against strict disciplinary zeal ("Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Independents") that tries to root out all hypocrites, calling such zeal "not according to knowledge." The author also critiques a mode of preaching that tells "all baptized people that they are born again, and have the Spirit, and are members of Christ," calling it "unwarrantable."

Doctrinal points

(1) The preacher sows the Word but only God gives spiritual life. (2) There are multiple false ways of hearing the Word, and fruit-bearing is the sole valid evidence of true reception. (3) The visible church will always be a mixed body of true and false believers until the final judgment. (4) The final separation of righteous and wicked occurs only at Christ's second advent, not through human effort at church purity. (5) True conversion is marked by willingness to sacrifice everything for Christ. (6) Outward church membership (baptism, the Lord's table) is not equivalent to genuine union with Christ. (7) Unbelief, not lack of divine willingness, is the cause of spiritual ruin.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 16

The author argues that the seven parables of Matthew 13 together teach that the visible church, like a field of wheat and tares or a net of good and bad fish, will always contain a mixture of true and false believers until Christ's return, when final separation and judgment will occur. Genuine faith is evidenced only by fruit and by willingness to sacrifice all for Christ, while unbelief, not divine unwillingness, ruins those who reject him. This builds on the section's recurring theme that outward religious profession is insufficient without inward, fruit-bearing conversion.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 16

- Scripture references cited: Matthew 13:1-58 (full passage); Ecclesiastes 12:10; Isaiah 32:20; 2 Timothy 4:2; Ecclesiastes 11:4; John 6:63; 1 Corinthians 3:7; Psalm 135:16-17; Ezekiel 33:32; John 15:16; James 1:22; 1 John 3:1; Colossians 3:4; John 5:40.
- Original-language terms discussed: None.
 - External sources or scholars cited: Augustine ("Those who are tares today may be wheat tomorrow"); Richard Baxter ("We must not misinterpret God's patience with the ungodly"; "these plain words more need belief and consideration than exposition"); Matthew Henry ("their sanctification will be perfected, and their justification will be published").
 - Dating or historical claims: The author states Christ "foresaw and foretold" the mixed nature of the church "1800 years ago," referring to the temporal distance between Christ's teaching and the author's present day; no other composition or historical dating claims are made in this section.

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 16

"Like the sower, the preacher cannot give life. He can scatter the seed committed to his charge, but he cannot command it to grow: he may offer the word of truth to a people, but he cannot make them receive it and bear fruit."

WHY IT LANDS States the doctrinal boundary between human ministry and divine regeneration.

"We must never be content with a barren orthodoxy, and a cold maintenance of correct theological views; we must not be satisfied with clear knowledge, warm feelings, and a decent profession; we must see to it that the Gospel we profess to love produces positive "fruit" in our hearts and lives."

WHY IT LANDS Summarizes the author's core test of genuine faith as fruit-bearing, not mere profession.

"We shall never see all the inhabitants of earth, "the wheat" of God, in the present order of things: the tares and wheat will "grow together until the harvest." The kingdoms of this world will never become the kingdom of Christ, and the millennium will never begin until the King himself returns."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's eschatological position that the visible church remains permanently mixed until Christ's literal return.

"We may be inside the net, and yet not be in Christ."

WHY IT LANDS Clarifying, memorable statement distinguishing outward church membership from true salvation.

"They perish forever, because they will not believe. There is nothing beside in earth or heaven that prevents their salvation... But a greater barrier interposes: they will not believe."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's doctrinal conclusion that unbelief, not divine unwillingness, causes spiritual ruin.

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

17

Section 17

Chapter 14: Matthew 14, Matthew 14:1-36

SUMMARY

Section 17

This section covers three episodes: the death of John the Baptist (14:1-12), the feeding of the five thousand (14:13-21), and Jesus walking on water with Peter's attempted imitation (14:22-36). From John's death, the author draws two lessons, the power of conscience (shown in Herod's guilty reaction to hearing of Jesus) and the truth that God's children must not expect reward in this life. From the feeding miracle, the author draws three lessons, that it proves Christ's divine power to create, that it displays Christ's compassion even toward those who followed him for unworthy reasons, and that it serves as a figurative emblem of the Gospel's sufficiency to meet the soul-wants of all mankind, with the multitude representing perishing sinners and the loaves and fishes representing Christ crucified. From the walking on water, the author draws four lessons: Christ's absolute dominion over creation, the power he bestows on believers (illustrated by Peter), the trouble believers bring on themselves through unbelief when they look at circumstances rather than Christ, and Christ's mercy toward weak believers, shown in his immediate rescue of the sinking Peter. Throughout, the author moves from historical narrative to practical and devotional application, treating each miracle as both literal event and spiritual instruction for the believer's life and assurance.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 17

John the Baptist

the martyred prophet whose death the author frames as "a page out of God's book of martyrs" and as the primary example of godliness unrewarded in this life.

Herodias and her daughter

the instigators of John's execution; the daughter's dance and the mother's instruction to demand John's head are recounted as the proximate cause of the martyrdom.

The five thousand (multitude)

interpreted by the author not only historically but figuratively, as "an emblem of all mankind... a large assembly of perishing sinners, famishing in the midst of a wilderness world."

The five loaves and two fishes

interpreted figuratively as "an emblem of the doctrine of Christ crucified for sinners, as their vicarious substitute, and making atonement by his death for the sin of the world."

Jesus walking on the sea

presented as proof of "absolute dominion" over creation, evidence of divine power that makes "material flesh and blood" walk on water, which the author calls "a physical impossibility" apart from Christ's action.

Peter walking on water

used as an illustration both of the power Christ bestows on believers and of the trouble unbelief brings when a disciple's attention shifts from Christ to circumstance ("the wind boisterous").

Bishop Hall (scholar/authority cited)

quoted on the tormenting power of conscience: "A wicked man needs no other tormentor, especially for sins of blood, than his own heart."

Doddridge (scholar cited)

cited for the observation that "the picture of two feet walking on the sea is said by Doddridge to have been the Egyptian emblem of an impossible thing"

"An old writer" (unnamed source)

quoted on compassion for diseased souls: "We ought... to have abundance of pity and compassion on diseased souls."

The Fathers (referenced collectively)

mentioned as a caution, the author warns against seeing allegories "where the Holy Spirit meant none to be seen," as some Fathers did.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 17

Original-language notes

None discussed in this section (no Hebrew or Greek terms are treated).

Cross-references

Psalm 116:15; Romans 2:15; 2 Timothy 2:9; Zechariah 1:5; Jeremiah 2:19; Isaiah 26:21; Ecclesiastes 5:8; 2 Corinthians 4:17; Psalm 136:25; John 6:26; Exodus 34:6; Romans 2:4; Micah 7:18; Isaiah 53:6; Revelation 3:17; 1 Corinthians 1:23; John 6:33; 1 Kings 18:44; Psalm 93:4; Jonah 2:3; John 14:12; Psalm 94:18; Hebrews 13:5.

Views engaged

The author briefly engages and rejects the practice of "many of the Fathers" who saw allegories in miracle narratives "where the Holy Spirit meant none to be seen," while still affirming that this particular miracle does carry a legitimate figurative meaning. The author also implicitly engages a skeptical/naturalistic objection to the walking-on-water miracle ("the man of science will tell us that for material flesh and blood to walk on water is a physical impossibility") and answers it by appeal to Christ's creative power.

Doctrinal points

The reality and function of natural conscience in all people, distinct from and insufficient without the Holy Spirit ("It is a poor, blind guide, without the Holy Spirit: it can save no one"); the doctrine of future judgment and reward, since present suffering of the godly is not the full measure of divine justice; the deity of Christ, proved by his power to create (multiply loaves) and to suspend natural law (walk on water); the atonement, with the loaves and fishes as emblem of Christ crucified as substitute; the doctrine of assurance and perseverance for "weak believers," that little faith is still faith and Christ does not abandon the doubting disciple.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 17

Across three narrative episodes, the author argues that Scripture's historical details carry deliberate spiritual instruction, conscience testifies to sin even in the ungodly, true reward is deferred to eternity rather than given in this life, Christ's miracles prove his divine, creative power, and Christ meets both the physical needs and, figuratively, the eternal soul-needs of sinners through his atoning death, while remaining mercifully patient with the weak and doubting faith of his own disciples.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 17

Scripture references cited: Matthew 14:1-12; Matthew 14:13-21; Matthew 14:22-36; Psalm 116:15; Romans 2:15; 2 Timothy 2:9; Zechariah 1:5; Jeremiah 2:19; Isaiah 26:21; Ecclesiastes 5:8; 2 Corinthians 4:17; Psalm 136:25; John 6:26; Exodus 34:6; Romans 2:4; Micah 7:18; Isaiah 53:6; Revelation 3:17; 1 Corinthians 1:23; John 6:33; 1 Kings 18:44; Psalm 93:4; Jonah 2:3; John 14:12; Psalm 94:18; Hebrews 13:5

- Original-language terms discussed: none
- External sources or scholars cited: Bishop Hall (quoted on conscience as tormentor); Doddridge (cited on the Egyptian emblematic meaning of feet walking on the sea); an unnamed "old writer" (quoted on pity for diseased souls); "the Fathers" (referenced generally regarding excessive allegorizing)
- Dating or historical claims: John the Baptist is described as "cut off by a violent death before the age of thirty-four," a biographical/historical claim about his age at death; no other dating of composition or historical-referent claims are made in this section

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 17

"A wicked man needs no other tormentor, especially for sins of blood, than his own heart."

WHY IT LANDS Quoting Bishop Hall, this captures the author's central point that conscience alone can torment the guilty, even a king, without external punishment.

"If ever there was a case of godliness unrewarded in this life, it was that of John the Baptist."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's doctrinal claim that present suffering of the godly does not reflect their true, future reward.

"To create is the peculiar prerogative of God."

WHY IT LANDS A concise doctrinal statement grounding the feeding miracle as proof of Christ's deity.

"The children of men are a large assembly of perishing sinners, famishing in the midst of a wilderness world, helpless, hopeless, and on the way to ruin."

WHY IT LANDS The author's figurative reading of the five thousand as an emblem of universal human spiritual need.

"They are an emblem of the doctrine of Christ crucified for sinners, as their vicarious substitute, and making atonement by his death for the sin of the world."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's typological interpretation of the loaves and fishes as representing the atonement.

"He would have us know that doubting does not prove that a man has no faith, but only that his faith is small; and even when our faith is small, the Lord is ready to help us."

WHY IT LANDS A pastoral doctrinal claim on assurance, that small faith is still real faith and still receives Christ's help.

18

Section 18

Chapter 15: Matthew 15

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

Section 18

This section covers four passages: the dispute over hand-washing and tradition (15:1-9), Christ's teaching on defilement coming from the heart (15:10-20), the healing of the Canaanite woman's daughter (15:21-28), and the feeding of the four thousand (15:29-39). The author argues that the Pharisees' complaint about unwashed hands reveals the hypocrite's tendency to prize outward ceremony over substance, and that Christ's rebuke exposes the danger of elevating human tradition above God's Word. In the second passage, the author draws two lessons: false doctrine must be opposed, its adherents forsaken, and its ultimate destruction is certain; and the heart, not external food or washing, is the true source of defilement. The Canaanite woman's episode is read as an illustration that true faith can arise in unlikely places, that affliction can drive souls to Christ, that Christ's own people (the disciples) can be less compassionate than Christ, and that importunate prayer is rewarded even when it seems unanswered. The feeding of the four thousand is treated as an emblem of Christ's healing power over sin-sick souls and evidence of his abundant "compassion," a word the author notes is used of Christ more than any other recorded feeling in the Gospels. Throughout, the section builds a cumulative case that outward religion without inward reality is worthless, that Scripture must never be subordinated to tradition, and that Christ's compassion and power extend to all who come to him in faith, regardless of origin or delay.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 18

The "Corban" teaching (gift/vow excusing neglect of parents)

cited by the author as the concrete example Christ uses to show how tradition "made the commandment of God of none effect."

Isaiah's prophecy ("This people draws near to me with their mouth...")

quoted by Christ against the Pharisees; the author uses it to ground the section's final lesson that God desires "the worship of the heart."

"Every plant which my heavenly Father has not planted"

the author interprets this as Christ's declaration that false doctrine "was a plant to which no mercy should be shown" and must be "rooted up," regardless of who teaches it.

The disciples' question about the parable

the author reads Peter's request for explanation as the occasion for Christ's teaching on the heart as the source of defilement.

Catalogue of heart-sins (evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies)

the author calls this "an awful picture...of human nature" and "the true and faithful account of the hearts of all mankind," not merely of notorious sinners.

The Canaanite (Syrophenician) woman

a Gentile from "the coasts of Tyre and Sidon"; the author presents her as proof that "it is grace, not place, which makes people believers," and as a model of persevering, importunate faith despite Christ's apparently discouraging responses.

Gehazi and the little maid in Naaman's house

the author cites these as contrasting biblical examples, Gehazi showing proximity to godliness without true faith, the maid showing faith amid pagan surroundings.

The disciples' response ("Send her away")

the author interprets this as evidence that "Christ's people are often less gracious and compassionate than Christ himself."

Christ's exchange about "children's bread" and "dogs"

the author treats this as a test of the woman's faith and importunity rather than a rejection.

The feeding of the four thousand

the author reads the crowd's pursuit of bodily healing as illustrative of how "much more pains people take about the relief of their bodily diseases than about their souls."

"Compassion" as applied to Christ

the author notes it is used "nine times over" in the Gospels of Christ's feelings, more than any other emotion, and treats this as a deliberately chosen scriptural emphasis on Christ's defining character trait.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 18

Original-language notes

None explicitly discussed in this section; no Hebrew or Greek terms are glossed.

Cross-references

Romans 14:17 ("the kingdom of God is not food and drink..."); John 21:16 ("Love you me?"); Acts 8:21; Psalm 51:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Proverbs 4:23; Proverbs 28:26; Psalm 119:71; Luke 12:20; Acts 9:26; Proverbs 13:12; Matthew 7:7; Philippians 3:8; Luke 15:2; Lamentations 3:22.

Views engaged

The author critiques the Church of Rome's elevation of "monastic vows, and vows of celibacy, and keeping feasts and fasts" above family duties and the Ten Commandments; critiques unnamed Christians who prize "episcopacy" and "churchmanship" above "repentance, faith, holiness and the graces of the Spirit"; and critiques the Pharisees' doctrine "that holiness depended on meats and drinks; on bodily washings and purifications."

Doctrinal points

(1) Human tradition tends inherently to usurp the authority of God's Word, even when its authors' intentions are pure. (2) True worship must be of the heart, not mere external observance. (3) False doctrine must be actively opposed and its persistent teachers forsaken, though its final overthrow is assured by God. (4) The heart, not external things, is the true source of all defilement. (5) True faith can arise regardless of birthplace or surroundings ("grace, not place"). (6) Affliction is often instrumental in bringing souls to Christ. (7) Perseverance in prayer is rewarded even after apparent delay or discouragement. (8) Christ's compassion is his most frequently recorded characteristic and extends to healing both body and soul.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 18

Across these four episodes, the author argues that true religion is a matter of the heart, not external ceremony or tradition, and that Christ's own words and actions, rebuking Pharisaic tradition, exposing the heart's corruption, honoring a Gentile woman's persistent faith, and healing multitudes out of compassion, together establish that God desires inward reality over outward form, and that Christ remains today unchanged in his power to heal and his readiness to answer persevering prayer.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 18

Scripture references: Matthew 15:1-9, 15:10-20, 15:21-28, 15:29-39; Romans 14:17; John 21:16; Acts 8:21; Psalm 51:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Proverbs 4:23; Proverbs 28:26; Psalm 119:71; Luke 12:20; Acts 9:26; Proverbs 13:12; Matthew 7:7; Philippians 3:8; Luke 15:2; Lamentations 3:22.

- Original-language terms discussed: none in this section.
- External sources or scholars cited: Bucer (quoted: "a man is rarely to be found, who pays an excessive attention to human inventions in religion, who does not put more trust in them than in the grace of God"); Baxter (quoted: "Men think God's laws too many and too strict, and yet make more of their own, and are precise for keeping them"); Musculus (quoted: "Truth...must not be suppressed because men are wicked and blind"); Whitby (quoted: "It never can be right to follow the blind into the ditch"); Wycliffe (quoted: "the truth shall prevail").
- Dating or historical claims: The author references "1800 years" twice, once regarding the persistence of Pharisaic tradition-elevation ("The spirit of the Pharisees still lives, after 1800 years"), and once regarding Christ's unchanged nature ("High at the right hand of God...1800 years have made no difference in him"), used as rhetorical markers of the time elapsed since the events described rather than as technical dating claims.

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 18

"Thus have you made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition."

WHY IT LANDS This is the author's quoted scriptural anchor for the section's central warning against elevating human tradition over God's Word.

"Whenever a man takes upon him to make additions to the Scriptures, he is likely to end with valuing his own additions above Scripture itself."

WHY IT LANDS A concise statement of the author's core doctrinal warning about the danger of tradition supplanting Scripture.

"This is no sketch of the heart of a robber or murderer: it is the true and faithful account of the hearts of all mankind."

WHY IT LANDS The author's key clarifying claim that Christ's catalogue of heart-sins describes universal human nature, not extraordinary sinners.

"It ought to teach us that it is grace, not place, which makes people believers."

WHY IT LANDS The author's thesis drawn from the Canaanite woman's faith, that true faith is not determined by favorable circumstances or geography.

"Peter and James and John may say to the afflicted soul, 'Send her away,' but such a word never came from the lips of Christ."

WHY IT LANDS A memorable contrast the author draws between the harshness of Christ's followers and the graciousness of Christ himself.

"The Holy Spirit seems to point out to us that this was the distinguishing feature of his character, and the predominant feeling of his mind when he was among men."

WHY IT LANDS The author's doctrinal conclusion that compassion is uniquely emphasized in Scripture as Christ's defining trait.

19

Section 19

Chapter 16: Matthew 16

SUMMARY

This section treats four passages within Matthew 16. The first (16:1-12) covers the Pharisees and Sadducees demanding a sign and Christ's warning about "leaven." The author highlights Christ's repetition of the "sign of Jonah" saying from Matthew 12, using this to argue that Gospel harmonization should not force identical sayings into a single event. He interprets "leaven" as false doctrine, warning that Pharisaism (legalistic addition to the Gospel) and Sadduceeism (skeptical subtraction from it) will perpetually afflict the church. The second passage (16:13-20) addresses Peter's confession and Christ's response about "the rock," "the keys," and "binding and loosing." The author explicitly rejects Roman Catholic and papal readings, arguing the "rock" is the truth of Christ's messiahship confessed by Peter, the "keys" represent Peter's historical privilege of first opening the gospel door to Jews and Gentiles, and "binding and loosing" refers to apostolic teaching authority that ended with the apostles. He also defines the true church as the invisible body of all believers, not any visible denomination. The third passage (16:21-23) treats Christ's first prediction of his passion and Peter's rebuke, drawn to show that even genuine disciples may hold serious doctrinal error, and that Christ's atoning death is the non-negotiable center of Christian doctrine. The fourth passage (16:24-28) covers self-denial, cross-bearing, the worth of the soul, and the second coming as the time of reward, correcting the disciples' expectation of an immediate earthly kingdom.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

- **Pharisees and Sadducees:** Two opposed Jewish sects who unite against Christ in demanding a sign. The author calls this "an unholy alliance" and draws a present-day parallel to groups of "the most opposite opinions" who unite in opposing the Gospel.
- **The "sign of Jonah":** The only sign Christ offers the "wicked and adulterous generation." The author notes this repeats a saying from Matthew 12:39 and uses the repetition to argue Christ habitually repeated sayings on different occasions.
- **Leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees:** Interpreted by the author as symbolic of false "doctrine," not literal bread, per the text's own explanation. The author expands this into two permanent categories of doctrinal error: Pharisaic addition to the Gospel and Sadducee subtraction from it, embodied in his own day by "the Roman catholic Pharisee" and "the neologian Sadducee."
- **Peter (Simon Barjona):** The apostle whose confession of Christ as "the Christ, the Son of the living God" is praised. The author defends Peter's overall character against undue criticism for his instability, comparing his zeal favorably to Martin Luther's, while also using Peter's later rebuke by Christ (16:21-23) to show that a true disciple can still hold serious doctrinal error.
- **"This rock" (Matthew 16:18):** The author states explicitly that this does not mean Peter himself is the foundation of the church, calling that interpretation "exceedingly improbable." He argues instead that the rock is "the truth of our Lord's messiahship and divinity, which Peter had just confessed."
- **"The keys of the kingdom of heaven":** Rejected as meaning Peter had power over admission to heaven ("The idea is preposterous") or any papal-style primacy over the other apostles ("not the slightest proof"). Interpreted instead as Peter's historical privilege of "first opening the door of salvation, both to the Jews and Gentiles," fulfilled at Pentecost and at Cornelius's house.

- **"Binding and loosing":** Rejected as referring to a power of forgiving sins ("derogatory to Christ's special office, as our great High Priest"). Interpreted as apostolic authority to "teach with authority the way of salvation" and to make binding rules for the church, exemplified by the Jerusalem Council's decision on circumcision, a commission the author says "began" and "expired" with the apostles, with "no successors."
- **The Church (as Christ defines it):** Defined by the author as "the blessed company of all faithful people," the whole invisible body of believers of every age and place, not any visible denomination (Episcopal, Presbyterian, Independent, or Roman).
- **"The gates of Hell shall not prevail":** Interpreted as a promise that Satan's power will never destroy the people of Christ or bring the true church to permanent ruin, though visible churches (like Ephesus) may perish.
- **Christ's passion prediction (16:21):** The first explicit announcement to the disciples of his coming death in Jerusalem, which the author says was incomprehensible to disciples who expected only "the second glorious coming of Messiah" and "Messiah's crown," having lost sight of "his cross."
- **Peter's rebuke of Christ and Christ's "Get you behind me, Satan":** Used by the author to argue that spiritual ignorance can coexist with true grace in a genuine believer, and that Christ's atoning death is the doctrine on which no error can be tolerated ("error about Christ's death is a disease of the heart").
- **Self-denial, cross-bearing, the soul's worth, and the second coming (16:24-28):** The author reads these as Christ correcting the disciples' expectation of an immediate earthly kingdom, teaching that suffering precedes reward and that rewards for believers come at the second advent, not the first.
- **Brentius (cited scholar):** Quoted describing Peter's confession as "an epitome of all Christianity, and a compendium of true doctrine about religion."

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

- **Hermeneutical approach:** The author reads Matthew 16 with close attention to precise wording, rejecting literalistic or institutional readings of "rock," "keys," and "binding and loosing" in favor of doctrinal/typological readings tied to Peter's confession and apostolic function. On Gospel harmonization, the author argues explicitly against forcing parallel sayings into single events, holding that Christ repeated the same sayings on different occasions.
- **Original-language notes:** None explicitly discussed (no Greek or Hebrew terms are analyzed in this section; the exposition proceeds from the English text).
- **Cross-references:** Ecclesiastes 1:9; Matthew 12:39 (implied via "the twelfth chapter of this gospel and the thirty ninth verse"); 1 Corinthians 10:12; Revelation 1:18; Acts 15:7; Acts 15:19; Colossians 1:18; John 10:28; Isaiah 53; 1 Thessalonians 5:10; Numbers 21:4.
- **Views engaged:** The Roman Catholic interpretation of Peter as the rock and foundation of primacy is directly engaged and rejected ("Let us only remember that, in whatsoever sense men take them, they have nothing to do with the Church of Rome"). The author also engages the harmonization tendencies of "Bible students" who try to force identical sayings into single narrative events, arguing this "has often led Bible students into great difficulties." Denominational partisanship (Episcopal, Presbyterian, Independent) regarding the definition of "church" is criticized as a "fertile source of bigotry, sectarianism and persecution."
- **Doctrinal points:** (1) False doctrine works like leaven, secretly corrupting the whole body of truth, and takes two perpetual forms, legalistic addition and skeptical subtraction. (2) The rock of the church is the truth of Christ's messiahship and divinity, not Peter personally. (3) The keys and binding/loosing represent apostolic functions of gospel proclamation and teaching authority, not a perpetual papal or priestly office, since this commission "began, and with them it expired." (4) The true church is invisible and universal, not identified with any denomination. (5) The gates of hell cannot destroy the true church, even though visible

churches may fail. (6) Even genuine believers may hold significant doctrinal error, illustrated by Peter's rebuke of Christ. (7) The atoning death of Christ is the central, non-negotiable doctrine of Christianity, unlike matters of church government or worship form. (8) True discipleship requires self-denial and cross-bearing, and the soul's eternal worth outweighs any worldly gain. (9) Rewards for Christ's followers are reserved for the second advent, not given in the present dispensation.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Across Matthew 16, the author argues that Christ progressively corrects both doctrinal error (the leaven of Pharisees and Sadducees) and the disciples' false expectations of an immediate, glorious, suffering-free kingdom. The chapter's controverted verses about the rock, keys, and binding/loosing are read against Roman Catholic claims, locating authority in Peter's confessed truth and apostolic function rather than personal or perpetual primacy. The atoning death of Christ is established as the immovable center of true doctrine, with self-denial and future reward as its necessary corollary for believers.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

- Scripture references cited: Matthew 16:1-12; Matthew 16:13-20; Matthew 16:21-23; Matthew 16:24-28; Ecclesiastes 1:9; Matthew 12:39 (referenced as "the twelfth chapter of this gospel and the thirty ninth verse"); 1 Corinthians 10:12; Revelation 1:18; Acts 15:7; Acts 15:19; Colossians 1:18; John 10:28; Isaiah 53; 1 Thessalonians 5:10; Numbers 21:4.
- Original-language terms discussed: None identified in this section.
- External sources or scholars cited: Brentius, quoted describing Peter's confession as "an epitome of all Christianity, and a compendium of true doctrine about religion"; Martin Luther, referenced comparatively regarding zeal, not as a cited theological source.
- Dating or historical claims: The author states that Peter's use of "the keys" "was fulfilled to the letter" at Pentecost (preaching to Jews) and at the house of Cornelius (Gentiles), citing Acts 15:7 as Peter's own retrospective acknowledgment. The author also states the apostolic commission to bind and loose "began, and with them it expired," meaning it was confined historically to the apostolic era, citing the Jerusalem Council's decision on circumcision (Acts 15:19) as the historical example.

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

"A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas."

(States Christ's refusal to give any sign beyond the sign of Jonah, the passage's opening interpretive crux.)

"It is far safer to hold the view here maintained that at different times our Lord often used the same words."

(States the author's explicit hermeneutical principle against forcing Gospel harmonization of repeated sayings into single events.)

"The true meaning of the 'rock' in this passage appears to be the truth of our Lord's messiahship and divinity, which Peter had just confessed."

(The author's core rejection of a Petrine-foundation reading in favor of a confessional/doctrinal reading of the rock.)

"Let us only remember that, in whatsoever sense men take them, they have nothing to do with the Church of Rome."

(Explicit polemical statement rejecting Roman Catholic appropriation of the Petrine texts.)

"On matters of church government, and the form of worship, men may differ from us and yet reach heaven in safety. On the matter of Christ's atoning death as the way of peace, truth is only one."

(Establishes the doctrinal hierarchy central to the section: atonement is non-negotiable while polity is adiaphora.)

"What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

(Quotable, thesis-bearing statement on the eternal worth of the soul central to the final passage's teaching.)

20

Section 20

Chapter 17: Matthew 17

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

MATTHEW 17:1-27

SUMMARY

Section 20

This section expounds three episodes in Matthew 17: the Transfiguration (17:1-13), the healing of the demon-possessed boy (17:14-21), and the temple tax miracle (17:22-27). The author reads the Transfiguration as a divinely-given pattern of the future glory of Christ and his people at the second coming, and as proof of bodily resurrection since Moses and Elijah appear alive and recognizable centuries after death. He also reads the episode as a rebuke to Peter's impulse to place Moses and Elijah on par with Christ, with the voice from the cloud ("Hear you him") establishing Christ's absolute superiority over all human teachers and religious authorities. The author draws a direct link back to the prior chapter's prediction of the cross, framing the sequence of chapters as intentional: suffering foretold, then glory revealed. In the healing narrative, the author treats the boy's possession as a real historical instance of satanic affliction of the young, generalizes it into a broader warning about spiritual bondage among youth, and locates the disciples' failure in unbelief, drawing the further lesson that spiritual warfare requires "prayer and fasting," not presumption. In the tribute money episode, the author draws out Christ's omniscience (knowing the tax collectors' unheard conversation), his sovereign power over creation (commanding a fish), and his voluntary self-limitation in paying an obligation he was not bound to, using "lest we should offend them" as a paradigm for Christian conduct toward civil authority, church governance, and social custom.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 20

Moses and Elijah

appear "talking with" Jesus. The author reads their bodily appearance, centuries after death, as "an unanswerable proof of the resurrection of the body, and the life after death," a "pledge of the resurrection of all."

Peter's proposal of three tabernacles

the author interprets Peter's offer to build tabernacles as placing Moses and Elijah "side by side with his divine Master, as if all three were equal," a proposal he says is then divinely rebuked.

The voice from the cloud ("Hear you him")

interpreted as testimony to "Christ's infinite superiority over all that are born of woman," teaching that Moses and Elijah, though "great men in their day," are "far below Christ" in "nature, dignity and office."

Elias (Elijah) to come / John the Baptist

the disciples' question about Elijah's return is resolved in the text itself as referring to John the Baptist ("the disciples understood that he spake to them of John the Baptist"); the author does not add further interpretive comment on this identification beyond restating it.

The lunatic/possessed son

read as a real historical case of "Satanic possession," used by the author as "a lively emblem of the awful influence sometimes exercised by Satan over the young," which he extends to a modern application about young men enslaved to sin though not literally possessed.

The disciples' failed exorcism

the author reads their failure as demonstrating "the weakening effect of unbelief," with faith as "the root" on which other Christian graces depend.

"Prayer and fasting"

interpreted as the necessary diligence and effort required against Satan's kingdom, read as "a gentle rebuke" implying the disciples had grown careless or overconfident after past successes.

The temple tax / tribute money miracle

interpreted as demonstrating three things in sequence: Christ's perfect knowledge of unheard conversations, his "almighty power over all creation" in commanding the fish, and his willingness to concede a right he was not obligated to concede, "lest we should offend them."

Peter (in the tribute episode)

functions as the one questioned by tax collectors and later instructed by Christ; the author treats Peter's answer ("Yes") as evidence Jesus was not present to overhear the exchange, setting up the point about Christ's omniscience.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 20

Original-language notes

None explicitly discussed in this section; no Greek or Hebrew terms are glossed by the author.

Cross-references

2 Peter 1:16 ("we were eyewitnesses of his majesty"); Hebrews 2:8 ("We see not yet all things put under our Lord's feet"); John 1:14 ("We beheld his glory"); Luke 20:38 ("He is not a God of the dead, but of the living"); Deuteronomy 18:15 (the true prophet to be heard); Romans 9:5 ("God over all, blessed forever"); 2 Timothy 2:26 ("led captive at his will"); Hebrews 3:19 ("They could not enter in because of unbelief"); Joshua 7:3 ("The men of Ai are but few"); Ecclesiastes 9:10 ("Whatever we do, let us do it with our might"); John 12:31 ("prince of this world"); Ephesians 6:12 ("We wrestle not against flesh and blood"); 1 Corinthians 9:27 ("keep under their bodies"); Genesis 17:1 ("walk before him"); Psalm 8:6-8 (dominion over creation); Colossians 1:16-18 ("By him were all things created"); Isaiah 65:25 (the wolf and lamb feeding together); 1 Corinthians 9:12 ("we suffer all things lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ").

Views engaged

No named scholarly interpretive positions are contrasted or refuted; the author instead cites supporting voices approvingly (Bishop Hall, Jerome, Bullinger) to reinforce his own reading rather than to stage a debate between views.

Doctrinal points

(1) The future glory of Christ and believers at the Second Coming is prefigured, not merely promised, in the Transfiguration. (2) The Transfiguration furnishes direct evidential proof of bodily resurrection and the conscious continued existence of the dead ("no such thing as annihilation"). (3) Christ's absolute supremacy over all human religious authority, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, reformers, is established by the divine command "Hear you him." (4) Faith is the operative cause of spiritual power; unbelief is the cause of spiritual defeat. (5) Spiritual victory over Satan requires sustained diligence ("prayer and fasting"), not presumption. (6) Christ possesses perfect omniscience and sovereign power over creation. (7) Christian liberty may rightly be voluntarily surrendered for the sake of not giving offense, though never where a "great truth of the Gospel" is at stake.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 20

The author argues that Matthew 17 presents, in sequence, proof of coming glory, proof of bodily resurrection, proof of Christ's supremacy over all mediators, a warning against unbelief and spiritual laxity, and a model of voluntary concession for the gospel's sake. Read together with the immediately preceding cross-prediction, these episodes teach that suffering and glory, weakness and power, rights and their surrender, must be held in careful theological balance in the Christian life.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 20

- Scripture references cited: Matthew 17:1-13; Matthew 17:14-21; Matthew 17:22-27; 2 Peter 1:16; Hebrews 2:8; John 1:14; Luke 20:38; Deuteronomy 18:15; Romans 9:5; 2 Timothy 2:26; Hebrews 3:19; Joshua 7:3; Ecclesiastes 9:10; John 12:31; Ephesians 6:12; 1 Corinthians 9:27; Genesis 17:1; Psalm 8:6-8; Colossians 1:16-18; Isaiah 65:25; 1 Corinthians 9:12
- Original-language terms discussed: none
 - External sources or scholars cited: Bishop Hall ("Out of hell... there could not be greater misery"; "A miracle is worked... rather than offend even a tax collector"); Bullinger ("I would... that this part of the Gospel pleased us as much as those parts which concede liberty"; "A Christian... never ought to disturb the public peace for things of mere temporary importance"); Jerome ("I know not which to admire most here, our Lord's foreknowledge or his greatness"); John Newton (referenced as an example of a hardened sinner later converted)
 - Dating or historical claims: "Fourteen hundred and eighty years had rolled round since Moses died and was buried; more than 900 years had passed away since Elijah 'went up by a whirlwind into heaven'" (stated as basis for the resurrection-proof argument, drawn from the author's reckoning of biblical chronology)

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 20

"In the first place we have in these verses a striking pattern of the glory in which Christ and his people will appear when he comes the second time."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's central interpretive thesis for the Transfiguration as eschatological preview.

"Now we have in the transfiguration the clearest evidence that the dead will rise again."

WHY IT LANDS Declares the Transfiguration functions as direct evidential proof of bodily resurrection.

"He was the true sun: they were the stars depending daily on his light. He was the root: they were the branches. He was the Master: they were the servants. Their goodness was all derived: his was original and his own."

WHY IT LANDS Memorably states Christ's categorical superiority over Moses and Elijah, and by extension all human religious authority.

"Let it be a settled principle with us when we read our Lord's miracles never to despair of the conversion of any soul."

WHY IT LANDS A pastoral doctrinal conclusion drawn from the healing of the possessed boy.

"Faith is the key to success in the Christian warfare. Unbelief is the sure road to defeat."

WHY IT LANDS States the doctrinal point on faith and unbelief drawn from the disciples' failed exorcism.

"God's rights, undoubtedly we ought never to give up: but we may sometimes safely give up our own."

WHY IT LANDS Encapsulates the author's teaching on Christian concession versus principle, drawn from the tribute money episode.

21

Section 21

Chapter 18: Matthew 18, Matthew 18:1-35

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

Section 21

This section covers three passages: the discourse on greatness, humility, and stumbling-blocks (18:1-14), the teaching on church discipline (18:15-20), and the parable of the unforgiving servant (18:21-35). The author argues that the disciples' question about greatness reveals worldly, "half-enlightened" expectations, and Christ's answer establishes conversion, evidenced by childlike humility, as foundational to Christianity. The author treats the warnings about offences, cutting off hand, foot, or eye, and being cast into "everlasting fire" and "hell fire" as clear proof of literal, eternal future punishment, explicitly opposing those who deny its eternity. The section on binding and loosing is read as establishing legitimate congregational church discipline, with the author explicitly rejecting the application of "hear the church" to support "ecclesiastical tyranny" or the authority of the whole visible church in doctrine. The passage on two or three gathered together is read as proof of Christ's divinity, since only God can be present in multiple places at once. Finally, the parable of the unforgiving servant is used to establish forgiveness as an essential, though widely neglected, Christian duty, grounded in the recollection of one's own need for divine mercy and the coming day of judgment. Throughout, the author draws practical, exhortatory conclusions for the reader's self-examination and conduct, consistent with the devotional-expository method used elsewhere in the work.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 21

Conversion

Interpreted by the author as "an entire change of nature," necessary for all "ranks, classes and orders of mankind," and tested specifically by the presence of childlike humility rather than by mere denominational or party change.

Offences/stumbling-blocks

Interpreted broadly by the author as anything, direct (persecution, ridicule, dissuasion) or indirect (inconsistent living), that hinders another's soul from Christ or true religion.

Everlasting fire / hell fire

Interpreted by the author as literal and unmistakable references to "a place of unspeakable misery in the world to come" for the impenitent and unbelieving, explicitly affirming eternal punishment.

The hundred sheep / one gone astray

Interpreted as illustrating Christ's tender, shepherding care that "one of these little ones should perish" is against the Father's will, extended by the author to all true Christians, not children alone.

"Tell it to the church" / binding and loosing

Interpreted by the author as establishing congregational church discipline with spiritual, not civil or temporal, penalties, culminating in exclusion ("as a heathen man and a publican") for the unrepentant.

"Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I"

Interpreted by the author as a proof text for Christ's divinity, since omnipresence at multiple simultaneous gatherings is a divine attribute.

The unforgiving servant parable

Interpreted as teaching that forgiveness of others must flow from recollection of one's own forgiven debt to God and awareness of the coming judgment.

Quesnel (scholar/commentator cited)

Quoted by the author on the danger of excommunication abuse, used to balance the case for church discipline with caution against its misuse.

Archbishop Cranmer

Cited by the author as a historical example of a forgiving temperament ("if you did him an injury he was sure to be your friend").

Leighton (scholar/commentator cited)

Quoted by the author on the proper proportion of self-severity versus mercy toward others.

Men who "deny the eternity of future punishment"

An interpretive position the author explicitly names and opposes, associating it with the serpent's argument in Genesis ("shall not surely die").

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Original-language notes

None explicitly discussed in this section.

Cross-references

John 3:7 ("born again"); Genesis 3:4 (the serpent's denial "shall not surely die," applied to deniers of eternal punishment); Hebrews 10:27 ("fiery indignation"); Revelation 6:16 ("wrath of the Lamb"); 2 Samuel 12:14 (Nathan's charge against David on giving occasion to blaspheme); Genesis 21:26 (Abimelech and Abraham, unintentional injury); Joshua 22:24 (the altar built by Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh, conduct admitting explanation); Proverbs 25:15 ("a soft tongue breaks the bone"); Nehemiah 4:2 ("What do these feeble people?"); Genesis 33:13 (not overdriving the flock); John 18:9 ("of them which you gave me have I lost none"); Romans 12:20 (returning good for evil); Ephesians 4:30-32 (grieving the Holy Spirit through an unforgiving temper).

Views engaged

The author explicitly names and rejects the interpretation that applies "hear the church" to "the authority of the whole visible church in matters of doctrine," calling it a source of "much ecclesiastical tyranny" and Scripture abuse. The author also names and rejects those "in these latter days" who "deny the eternity of future punishment."

Doctrinal points

The necessity of conversion evidenced by humility; the gravity of causing others to stumble; the reality and eternality of future punishment; the tender, preserving care of Christ the Shepherd toward the "little ones"; the legitimacy and proper limits (spiritual penalties only) of congregational church discipline; the divinity of Christ evidenced by his promised presence at gatherings; the necessity and grounds of Christian forgiveness.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 21

The author argues that Matthew 18 teaches four linked truths: true greatness requires converted, childlike humility; causing spiritual harm to believers is a grave sin with eternal consequences, proven by Christ's own words about literal hell; church discipline, rightly limited to spiritual penalties, is sanctioned by Christ though often abused; and forgiveness of others is a non-negotiable mark of genuine conversion, grounded in remembrance of one's own forgiven debt before God.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 21

- Scripture quoted/expounded: Matthew 18:1-14, 18:15-20, 18:21-35
- Cross-references cited: John 3:7; Genesis 3:4; Hebrews 10:27; Revelation 6:16; 2 Samuel 12:14; Genesis 21:26; Joshua 22:24; Proverbs 25:15; Nehemiah 4:2; Genesis 33:13; John 18:9; Romans 12:20; Ephesians 4:30-32
 - Original-language terms discussed: none noted in this section
 - External sources/scholars cited: Quesnel ("we ought to be more afraid of our sins than of all the excommunications in the world"); Archbishop Cranmer (historical example of forgiving temper); Leighton ("We ought to forgive ourselves little, and others much")
 - Dating or historical claims: none explicit in this section beyond general historical references (the Flood, the destruction of Sodom) cited as typological demonstrations of divine justice, without dates given

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 21

"except you be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's foundational claim that conversion is an absolute prerequisite for salvation.

"What we all want is a conversion from pride to humility, from high thoughts about ourselves to lowly thoughts about ourselves, from self-conceit to self-abasement, from the mind of the Pharisee to the mind of the publican."

WHY IT LANDS Clarifies the author's test for genuine conversion as distinct from mere religious or party change.

"There is a place of unspeakable misery in the world to come, to which all who die impenitent and unbelieving must ultimately be consigned."

WHY IT LANDS States plainly the author's doctrine of literal, eternal future punishment.

"No lips have ever spoken so clearly about hell as those of Christ himself."

WHY IT LANDS A memorable line asserting Christ's own authority as the source of the doctrine of hell.

"It has been falsely applied to the authority of the whole visible church in matters of doctrine, and so been made an excuse for the exercise of much ecclesiastical tyranny."

WHY IT LANDS Explicitly rejects a rival interpretation of "hear the church" that the author considers an abuse of the text.

"So likewise shall my heavenly Father do to you if you from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespass."

WHY IT LANDS The quoted scriptural warning the author uses to ground the necessity of genuine forgiveness as a mark of true grace.

22

Section 22

Chapter 19: Matthew 19, Matthew 19:1-30

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

Section 22

This section covers three episodes in Matthew 19: Jesus's teaching on marriage and divorce with his blessing of little children (19:1-15), his encounter with the rich young man (19:16-22), and his teaching on riches and the rewards of discipleship (19:23-30). The author treats the marriage teaching as establishing that divorce is permitted only for "actual unfaithfulness," grounding this in Christ's appeal to the created order in Genesis. He reads the blessing of children as evidence that Christ tenderly regards the souls of infants, and notes this passage has traditionally been used as an argument for infant baptism, though he does not personally argue the point at length, calling it "a strong, though indirect, argument." In the rich young man passage, the author's central claim is that religious feelings and desires are not the same as conversion, and that the young man's failure exposes covetousness as an idol that can ruin an otherwise promising soul. In the final passage, the author argues that riches are spiritually perilous, but that God's grace is powerful enough to save even the wealthy, citing Abraham, Moses, Job, and David as counterexamples. He closes with an application to those who sacrifice for Christ, arguing that no one is ever a true loser for having done so. Throughout, the author draws heavily on pastoral application, urging self-examination on marriage, child-rearing, idolatry, and the love of money.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 22

The disciples' remark ("it is not good to marry")

Interpreted by the author as reflecting "the deplorably low state of public feeling" on marriage among Jews of the time, showing how normalized frivolous divorce had become.

Little children brought to Jesus

Described by the author as "tender infants, too young to receive instruction, but not too young to receive benefit by prayer." The author reads this as showing Christ's tender care for children's souls and as the traditional (though indirect) basis for infant baptism in "the church of Christ."

The rich young man

A figure the author uses to illustrate that desire for salvation without conversion is insufficient. The author diagnoses his failure as spiritual ignorance of the law's true spirituality and ultimately covetousness, an "idol cherished in the heart."

Bishop Butler

Cited by the author as "that mighty master on moral questions" for the point that "passive impressions, often repeated, gradually lose all their power" if not acted upon.

Judas, Ananias and Sapphira

Referenced by the author as parallel cases of ruin through love of money, placed alongside the rich young man.

The camel and needle's eye saying

Treated by the author as a deliberately startling proverbial saying emphasizing the genuine spiritual danger riches pose, not softened or explained away.

Abraham, Moses, Job, David, Jehoshaphat, Josiah, Hezekiah

Cited by the author as biblical examples proving that wealth does not necessarily exclude a person from grace, since "nothing is too hard for the Lord."

Peter's question and the hundredfold promise

Interpreted by the author as Christ's assurance that sacrifice for his sake will be repaid, applied pastorally to English believers facing "laughter, ridicule, mockery and family persecution."

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 22

Original-language notes

None explicitly discussed in this section; the author works entirely from the English text without engaging Greek or Hebrew terms.

Cross-references

Malachi 2:14-16 (on the abuse of divorce); Job 9:3 (on inability to answer God); 1 Corinthians 2:14 (natural man and spiritual things); John 4:16 (Jesus to the Samaritan woman, paralleled with the rich young man); 1 Timothy 6:10 (love of money as root of evil); 1 John 5:21 (keep yourselves from idols); Hebrews 1:3 (Christ as "brightness of the father's glory"); 1 Corinthians 9:24 (running the race); Isaiah 43:13 (who shall hinder God's work).

Views engaged

The author notes the disciples' own view ("if the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry") as evidence of the debased state of contemporary Jewish opinion on marriage, contrasting it with Christ's standard. He also notes, without fully endorsing or arguing it himself, that "the great majority of the church of Christ have always seen in this passage a strong, though indirect, argument in favor of infant baptism."

Doctrinal points

Marriage is indissoluble except for adultery; the marriage bond images "the mystical union between Christ and his church"; infants possess souls and are objects of Christ's tender care, giving hope for "the salvation of all who die in infancy"; good feelings and desires are not equivalent to conversion; ignorance of the law's spirituality is common and dangerous; a single cherished idol (such as money) can ruin a soul; riches endanger the soul but do not place salvation beyond God's power; sacrifice for Christ's sake is met with certain, abundant recompense.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 22

Across Matthew 19, the author argues that Christ's teaching exposes the true, exacting standard of God's requirements, on marriage, on children's worth, and on wealth, against the lax and self-satisfied assumptions of the age. Genuine religion is distinguished from mere feeling by decisive action, and no external advantage (wealth) or apparent disadvantage (poverty, sacrifice) finally determines salvation, since grace can overcome any obstacle and sacrifice for Christ brings certain reward.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 22

Matthew 19:1-15, 16-22, 23-30 (primary text)

- Malachi 2:14-16
- Job 9:3
- 1 Corinthians 2:14
- John 4:16
- 1 Timothy 6:10
- 1 John 5:21
- Hebrews 1:3
- 1 Corinthians 9:24
- Isaiah 43:13
- Bishop Butler, cited on passive impressions losing power without corresponding action
- The Litany of the Church of England, quoted: "In all times of our wealth, good Lord, deliver us"
- Historical claim: divorce among the Jews in Christ's day was permitted "for the most trifling and frivolous causes," described as tolerated by Moses "to prevent worse evils, such as cruelty or murder," but having become "an enormous abuse"

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 22

"What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's core doctrinal position on the indissolubility of marriage, quoting Christ's own words.

"He regards each infant as possessing within its little body an undying principle that will outlive the pyramids of Egypt, and see sun and moon quenched at the last day."

WHY IT LANDS Memorably states the author's view of the eternal worth of every infant soul.

"It is good to feel; but it is far better to be converted."

WHY IT LANDS Clarifies the author's key distinction between religious feeling and genuine conversion.

"He is not the best man in God's eyes who has most money, but he who has most grace."

WHY IT LANDS A quotable doctrinal summary contrasting worldly and spiritual value.

"No man's place or circumstances shut him out from the kingdom of God; let us never despair of anyone's salvation."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's doctrine that God's grace can overcome any worldly obstacle, including wealth.

"We may rest assured that no man shall ever be a real loser by following Christ."

WHY IT LANDS A thesis-bearing, quotable statement on the certainty of reward for sacrifice made for Christ's sake.

23

Section 23

Chapter 20: Matthew 20

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

MATTHEW 20:1-16

SUMMARY

Section 23

This subsection expounds the Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard. The author locates the interpretive key in Peter's question at the close of chapter 19 ("What shall we have therefore?") and Christ's response promising thrones to the Twelve and hundredfold reward to all who suffer loss for his sake. Because Peter was a Jew raised in ignorance of God's plan for Gentile salvation, and because the disciples were prone to self-righteousness about their sacrifices, the author argues Christ spoke this parable specifically to correct their pride and teach humility. The author deliberately declines to allegorize the "penny," "marketplace," "steward," or "hours," citing Chrysostom's caution against curious word-by-word searching of parables, and instead draws two main lessons: first, that God calls nations to himself by free, sovereign, unconditional grace, illustrated by Israel's early calling versus the Gentiles' later calling, with the "eleventh hour" Gentiles being equally heirs of glory; second, that God saves individuals sovereignly and at his own time, illustrated by Timothy's lifelong service versus the thief on the cross, both equally justified. The author closes with four cautions

against misapplying the parable: it does not teach salvation by works, does not erase the Jew/Gentile distinction in national privilege, does not mean all saved souls share equal degrees of glory, and does not license deathbed repentance presumption.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 23

The laborers hired at various hours

Represent nations and individuals called to God at different points in history, from Israel "in the very beginning of the day" to Gentiles at "the eleventh hour."

The penny (equal wage)

Deliberately not allegorized in detail by the author, who follows Chrysostom's warning against over-interpreting parable details.

Peter's question (Matthew 19, referenced)

Serves as the interpretive key; the author reads the parable as Christ's corrective to the disciples' pride and sense of entitlement for their sacrifices.

The Jews and Gentiles

The author frames the calling of the Gentiles ("the eleventh hour of the world") as a fulfillment of the parable, noting the "old wall between Jews and Gentiles is removed" in terms of justification, while national distinction remains (per the cautions).

Timothy and the penitent thief

Used as contrasting examples of lifelong service versus last-minute conversion, both equally justified by grace.

Chrysostom

Cited approvingly for the hermeneutical principle against over-allegorizing parables.

Bishop Hall

Cited approvingly, "If some have cause to magnify God's bounty, none have cause to complain."

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 23

Original-language notes

None discussed in this subsection.

Cross-references

Acts 10:28 (Peter's vision regarding Gentiles); Romans 9:15 (God's sovereign mercy); Luke 17:10 (unprofitable servants); 1 Corinthians 3:8 (differing rewards); 2 Corinthians 6:2 ("now is the accepted time").

Views engaged

An unnamed "great divine" is cited for the principle "the theology of parables is not argumentative"; Chrysostom's caution against word-by-word parable exegesis is presented as authoritative for the author's method.

Doctrinal points

God's sovereign and unconditional grace in calling nations; God's sovereignty in the timing of individual salvation; salvation is by grace alone and not by works or length of service; national distinction between Jew and Gentile persists despite equal justification; degrees of reward/glory differ among believers; deathbed repentance is not to be presumed upon.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 23

The parable teaches that God calls both nations and individuals to salvation by free, sovereign grace and at his own chosen time, so that late-called believers (Gentiles, or individuals like the penitent thief) are as fully justified as those called earliest (Israel, or lifelong servants like Timothy), while cautioning against inferring works-salvation, erasure of Jew/Gentile distinctions, equal glory for all, or safety in delayed repentance.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 23

Matthew 20:1-16 (primary text)

- Matthew 19 (referenced, Peter's question and Christ's answer)
- Acts 10:28
- Romans 9:15
- Luke 17:10
- 1 Corinthians 3:8
- 2 Corinthians 6:2
- Unnamed "great divine" quoted: "the theology of parables is not argumentative"
- Chrysostom, quoted on parable interpretation method
- Bishop Hall, quoted: "If some have cause to magnify God's bounty, none have cause to complain."
- Historical/dating claim: reference to "the holiest patriarch who died 3500 years ago" as a rhetorical comparison point (no formal dating argument made)
- Reference to "converted inhabitants of Tinnevelly and New Zealand" and "millions of Chinese and Hindus" as contemporary illustrative examples of Gentile calling

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 23

"We learn in the first place that in the calling of nations to the professed knowledge of himself, God exercises free, sovereign and unconditional grace."

WHY IT LANDS States the first main doctrinal lesson: God's sovereign grace in calling nations.

"We learn in the second place that in the saving of individuals, as well as in the calling of nations, God acts as a sovereign, and gives no account of his matters."

WHY IT LANDS States the second main doctrinal lesson: God's sovereignty in individual salvation timing.

"True faith in Christ, though it be but a day old, justifies a man before God as completely as the faith of him who has followed Christ for fifty years."

WHY IT LANDS A memorable, quotable statement of equal justification regardless of length of faith.

"A false confidence in those words, "the eleventh hour," has ruined thousands of souls."

WHY IT LANDS Clarifies the caution against presuming on deathbed repentance.

"It is not right to search curiously, and word by word, into all things in a parable; but when we have learned the object for which it was composed, we are to reap this, and not to busy ourselves about anything further."

WHY IT LANDS Chrysostom quote establishing the author's hermeneutical method for parables.

SUMMARY

Section 23

This subsection treats Christ's third prediction of his passion and the request of the mother of Zebedee's sons. The author highlights Christ's full foreknowledge of his suffering, arguing this foreknowledge intensified rather than diminished his suffering, and that his death was voluntary, deliberate, and necessary as an atoning sacrifice. The author then turns to the request of James and John's mother for places at Christ's right and left hand, reading it as illustrating "the mixture of ignorance and faith that may be found even in true-hearted Christians." The request shows commendable faith in recognizing Jesus as a coming king but blameworthy ignorance in forgetting the necessity of the cross before the crown. The author draws a pastoral application, urging gentleness toward believers whose faith coexists with doctrinal confusion, using James and John's later maturity as encouragement. Finally, the author examines Christ's reproof, "You know not what you ask," as exposing thoughtless prayer, and extends this to modern believers who ask for salvation or holiness without willingness to bear the cost of cross-bearing, affliction, and sanctification.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 23

The mother of Zebedee's children (James and John's mother)
Represents a believer whose request mixes genuine faith with spiritual ignorance.

James and John

Their request for thrones shows "the flesh" seeking glory before crucifixion; the author notes their later growth into "pillars of the church."

The cup and baptism

Christ's terms for his coming sufferings, which James and John claim ability to share, foreshadowing their own future trials.

Luther

Cited for the maxim "the flesh ever seeks to be glorified before it is crucified."

Bishop Hall / other cited voices

Not present in this subsection beyond Luther.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 23

Original-language notes

None discussed.

Cross-references

Isaiah 50:5-6 (voluntary suffering, "I gave my back to the smiters"); John 10:18 (Christ's voluntary laying down of his life); 1 Peter 4:13 (partaking of Christ's sufferings); Ecclesiastes 5:2 ("be not rash with your mouth").

Views engaged

Luther's comment on the flesh's desire for glory before crucifixion is presented approvingly as an apt characterization.

Doctrinal points

Christ's death was voluntary and necessary for remission of sin ("without shedding of his blood there could be no remission of man's sin"); true believers may hold genuine faith alongside significant doctrinal ignorance and should be treated gently; prayer requests should be made with full awareness of their cost.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 23

Christ's repeated, foreknowing announcement of his voluntary sacrificial death stands in contrast to the disciples' immature request for glory without cost, teaching that true greatness in Christ's kingdom requires sharing his sufferings before his reward, and warning believers against thoughtless prayers that fail to "count the cost" of holiness and cross-bearing.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 23

Matthew 20:17-23 (primary text)

- Isaiah 50:5-6
- John 10:18
- 1 Peter 4:13
- Ecclesiastes 5:2
- Luther, quoted: "the flesh ever seeks to be glorified before it is crucified"
- Historical/dating claim: none explicit beyond the narrative's setting "going up to Jerusalem"

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 23

"The Lord Jesus was a voluntary sufferer. When he died on the cross, it was not because he had not power to prevent it. He suffered intentionally, deliberately, and of his own free will (John 10:18)."

WHY IT LANDS States the doctrine of Christ's voluntary, deliberate atoning death.

"the flesh ever seeks to be glorified before it is crucified."

WHY IT LANDS Luther's maxim quoted to characterize James and John's premature request for glory.

"We must remember that true faith may lay at the bottom of their hearts, though there is much rubbish at the top."

WHY IT LANDS Pastoral counsel to deal gently with immature or confused believers.

"You know not what you ask."

WHY IT LANDS Christ's reproof, applied by the author to modern believers' thoughtless prayers for salvation or holiness.

SUMMARY

Section 23

This subsection treats the ten disciples' indignation at James and John's request and Christ's teaching on servant leadership. The author draws three lessons: first, that pride, jealousy, and love of preeminence can exist even among true disciples, evidenced by the ten's indignation; second, that self-denying service to others, not worldly greatness, constitutes true greatness in Christ's kingdom, contrasting the world's standard of rank and power with the kingdom's standard of ministering to others; third, that Christ himself is the pattern Christians must imitate in this servant-life, having come "not to be ministered to, but to minister." The subsection closes

with the author's treatment of Christ's ransom saying as establishing the doctrine of substitutionary atonement, explicitly rejecting views of Christ's death as merely exemplary martyrdom, and framing Christ's death as payment of a debt sinners could not pay themselves.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 23

True greatness (kingdom standard)

Defined by the author as self-denying service and ministry to others, contrasted with worldly greatness (land, money, servants, rank, power).

Christ as example

Presented as the pattern believers must imitate in temper, words, and works.

The ransom saying ("give his life a ransom for many")

Interpreted by the author as establishing Christ's death as a substitutionary atonement, not mere martyrdom or example.

Hooker and Bishop Hall

Cited on the tenacity of pride in the human heart.

Howard and Judson

Cited as examples of true (missionary) greatness, contrasted with generals, statesmen, and kings.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 23

Original-language notes

None discussed.

Cross-references

Jude 6 (angels' fall through pride); Acts 20:35 ("more blessed to give than to receive"); 1 Peter 2:21 (following Christ's steps); Hebrews 12:1 ("the sin which most easily besets us"); 1 John 2:6 (walking as Christ walked); Hebrews 9:14 (Christ "offered himself to God"); 1 Peter 3:18 ("the just for the unjust").

Views engaged

The author explicitly rejects the view that Christ died "merely as a martyr, or as a splendid example of self-sacrifice and self-denial," stating those who hold this "fall infinitely short of the truth."

Doctrinal points

Pride can afflict true disciples; true greatness is defined by service, not rank; Christ is the pattern for Christian conduct; Christ's death is a substitutionary ransom and atonement for sin, satisfying divine justice.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 23

True greatness in Christ's kingdom is measured by self-denying service after the pattern of Christ himself, whose own defining act was not worldly rule but giving "his life a ransom for many," a statement the author insists establishes substitutionary atonement as "the mightiest truth in the Bible" against reductive views of Christ as mere moral example.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 23

Matthew 20:24-28 (primary text)

- Jude 6
- Acts 20:35
- 1 Peter 2:21
- Hebrews 12:1
- 1 John 2:6
- Hebrews 9:14
- 1 Peter 3:18
- Hooker, quoted on pride: "Pride is a vice which cleaves so fast to the hearts of men that if we were to strip ourselves of all faults one by one, we should undoubtedly find it the very last and hardest to put off."
- Bishop Hall, quoted: "pride is the inmost coat, which we put off last, and which we put on first."
- Howard and Judson cited as examples of true Christian greatness (missionary labor)
- No explicit dating claims in this subsection

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 23

"True greatness consists not in receiving but in giving; not in selfish absorption of good things but in imparting good to others; not in being served but in serving; not in sitting still and being ministered to but in going about and ministering to others."

WHY IT LANDS Defines the kingdom standard of greatness as self-denying service.

"This is the mightiest truth in the Bible. Let us take care that we grasp it firmly, and never let it go."

WHY IT LANDS Emphatic doctrinal claim regarding the ransom/atonement teaching.

"Our Lord Jesus Christ did not die merely as a martyr, or as a splendid example of self-sacrifice and self-denial. Those who can see no more than that in his death fall infinitely short of the truth."

WHY IT LANDS Explicit rejection of a purely exemplary view of Christ's death, asserting substitutionary atonement.

"pride is the inmost coat, which we put off last, and which we put on first."

WHY IT LANDS Bishop Hall's quote on the persistence of pride, applied to the disciples' indignation.

SUMMARY

Section 23

This subsection treats the healing of the two blind men near Jericho. The author draws four lessons: first, that strong faith may be found in unexpected places, as the blind men, who never witnessed Christ's miracles firsthand, nonetheless cried out to him as "Son of David"; second, that diligence in using the means of grace matters, since the blind men's practice of sitting "by the wayside" positioned them to encounter Jesus, who never returned to Jericho; third, that perseverance in seeking Christ despite opposition is commended, as the blind men cried out all the more when the crowd rebuked them; fourth, that Christ's compassionate responsiveness to those who seek him demonstrates the boundless mercy of his heart. The author frames these as practical, devotional lessons for "all professing Christians," moving from the narrative detail to broader application about seeking Christ through ordinary means of grace and persistent prayer.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 23

The multitude/crowd

Represents opposition or discouragement that seekers of Christ may face from others, even from those accompanying Jesus.

"Son of David"

The blind men's address to Jesus, taken by the author as an expression of faith despite never having witnessed his miracles.

Jesus' compassion

Presented as the culminating lesson, illustrating "the mercifulness of Christ's heart towards the sons of men."

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 23

Original-language notes

None discussed.

Cross-references

Ephesians 3:19 ("the love of Christ passes knowledge"); Luke 18:1 (parable of persistent prayer, "pray always and not faint"); Genesis 32:26 ("I will not let you go except you bless me"); Matthew 11:12 ("The violent take the kingdom by force").

Views engaged

None explicitly named; general contrast drawn between "unlearned" believers with simple faith and "deeply-read divines" harassed by doubts.

Doctrinal points

Faith can exist strongly apart from direct experiential evidence; diligent use of the means of grace (church attendance, Scripture reading, private prayer) is the ordinary context in which souls are converted; perseverance in prayer despite opposition is commended; Christ's compassion toward seekers is boundless.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 23

The healing of the blind men models the pattern by which souls obtain mercy from Christ: unexpected faith, diligent use of the means of grace, persistent prayer despite opposition, met by Christ's compassionate response, extending the book's practical concern for how ordinary believers should seek and find Christ.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 23

- Matthew 20:29-34 (primary text)
- Ephesians 3:19
 - Luke 18:1
 - Genesis 32:26
 - Matthew 11:12
 - No named external scholars cited in this subsection
 - No explicit dating claims

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 23

"Such faith may well put us to shame. With all our books of evidence, lives of saints and libraries of divinity, how few know anything of simple, child-like confidence in Christ's mercy and Christ's power."

WHY IT LANDS Contrasts the blind men's simple faith with the doubts of the learned.

"It is they who "sit by the wayside" who are likely to be healed."

WHY IT LANDS States the doctrinal/practical point on diligence in using the means of grace.

"We are not to be deterred by opposition or discouraged by difficulties when we begin to seek the salvation of our souls."

WHY IT LANDS States the lesson on perseverance in prayer despite discouragement.

"We see here an illustration of that old truth which we can never know too well, the mercifulness of Christ's heart towards the sons of men."

WHY IT LANDS Summarizes the culminating lesson on Christ's compassion.

24

Section 24

Chapter 21: Matthew 21

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

Section 24

This section treats four episodes in Matthew 21: the Triumphal Entry (21:1-11), the cleansing of the temple and cursing of the fig tree (21:12-22), the question about Jesus' authority and the parable of the two sons (21:23-32), and the parable of the wicked husbandmen (21:33-46). The author reads each episode typologically and morally. The Triumphal Entry is explained as Christ deliberately abandoning his usual secrecy because his death was near and it was fitting the sacrifice of the Lamb of God be public. The temple cleansing and the withered fig tree are both read as figures of the Jewish church's outward form without inward fruit, and as warnings to individual professors and to visible churches generally. The authority question is treated as a display of Christ's wisdom in turning a hostile question back on his questioners, while the parable of the two sons is read as an encouragement toward repentance regardless of a person's past. The parable of the wicked husbandmen is applied nationally, with Israel's privileges and its failure to bear fruit set as a warning to England (and by extension any nation with gospel privilege) about a similarly possible reckoning. Throughout, the author draws a consistent line from Israel's specific historical judgment to the perpetual danger facing any nominal, fruitless profession of faith, tying these Old Testament-fulfillment episodes to present pastoral application.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 24

The multitude / "all the city"

the crowd that hails Jesus with Hosannas; the author reads their later reversal ("Away with him! Crucify him!") as proof of the "worthlessness of man's favor" and the fickleness of popularity.

The moneychangers and traders in the temple

representative of the "notorious abuse" and worldly corruption that had overtaken the Jewish temple system; their expulsion is read as a type of Christ's future purification of his visible church.

The fig tree

interpreted as "a striking emblem of the Jewish church when our Lord was upon earth," full of outward show (temple, priesthood, sacrifices, Scriptures) but barren of true spiritual fruit; its withering is read as literally fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem and the scattering of the Jews, and further applied to any fruitless professing church or individual Christian.

The chief priests and elders

engaged as Christ's adversaries who question his authority; the author frames their tactic as the perennial device used against reformers, Puritans, and Methodists alike.

John the Baptist

invoked in Christ's counter-question about the source of his baptism, used by the author to show Christ's wisdom in exposing his enemies' dilemma rather than evading the question.

The two sons (parable)

the first son (who refuses then repents) is likened to "the profligate publicans"; the second (who agrees then disobeys) is likened to "the formal Pharisees"; the parable is read as encouragement that repentance, however late, is accepted by God.

The husbandmen (parable of the vineyard)

identified explicitly as the Jews ("They are the husbandmen here described"), their killing of the servants and the son read as Israel's historic rejection and murder of the prophets and finally of Christ.

The vineyard

identified with the house of Israel, citing Isaiah 5:7, and taken as a figure for any nation given special gospel privilege, including, the author argues, England.

The rejected stone (Psalm 118 citation within the text)

read as Christ himself, "the stone which the builders rejected," now "become the head of the corner."

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS Section 24

Original-language notes

None explicitly discussed (no Hebrew or Greek terms glossed in this section).

Cross-references

Mark 1:44; Acts 26:26; 1 Thessalonians 4:17; Hebrews 13:8; Malachi 3:2; John 1:11; Daniel 4:23; Romans 11:20; Ecclesiastes 1:9; 1 Peter 3:15; Proverbs 26:4; 1 John 1:9; Isaiah 5:7; Psalm 106:35.

Views engaged

The author addresses (without naming a specific scholar) a general interpretive tendency to read prophecy figuratively, arguing instead for literal fulfillment of prophecies concerning both advents. The author also engages the common rhetorical tactic of challenging a preacher's or reformer's "authority" as historically directed at "the Reformers, the Puritans, and the Methodists of the last century," and at "city missionaries and lay agents in the present day," framing it as the same tactic used against Christ.

Doctrinal points

(1) Christ's omniscience is total and constant, extending to private as well as public conduct. (2) Prophecies of the first advent were literally fulfilled, and this establishes a "fixed principle of interpretation" that prophecies of the second advent, including the restoration of the Jews, judgments on the ungodly, and the gathering of the elect, will likewise be literally fulfilled. (3) Human popularity and praise are fickle and untrustworthy; only Christ's favor "endures forever." (4) The visible church, and individual professors within it, face real danger of becoming "withered fig trees" if outward form lacks inward fruit; fruit of the Spirit is "the only sure proof" of saving union with Christ. (5) God is "infinitely willing to receive penitent sinners" regardless of past sin, but empty profession without genuine repentance is "abominable in God's sight." (6) National privilege carries proportional accountability; unfruitful nations, like unfruitful Israel, risk having "the kingdom of God" taken from them, a warning applied directly to England.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 24

Matthew 21 depicts Christ deliberately making his final approach to Jerusalem public rather than secret because his sacrificial death was imminent and required full visibility, then acting out, through the temple cleansing and the cursed fig tree, a prophetic indictment of Israel's outward religion without inward fruit. The author argues this pattern of privilege followed by unfruitfulness and judgment, historically fulfilled in Israel and the temple's destruction, functions as a literal template for interpreting unfulfilled prophecy and as a direct moral warning to any nation, church, or individual professor who possesses gospel privilege without corresponding spiritual fruit.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 24

Scripture references cited: Matthew 21:1-11; Matthew 21:12-22; Matthew 21:23-32; Matthew 21:33-46; Mark 1:44; Acts 26:26; 1 Thessalonians 4:17; Hebrews 13:8; Malachi 3:2; John 1:11; Daniel 4:23; Romans 11:20; Ecclesiastes 1:9; 1 Peter 3:15; Proverbs 26:4; 1 John 1:9; Isaiah 5:7; Psalm 106:35.

- Original-language terms discussed: none.
- External sources or scholars cited: none named; general historical references to "the Reformers, the Puritans, and the Methodists of the last century," and to the destroyed churches of "Ephesus, and Sardis, and Carthage, and Hippo," and to "the African churches" and "the Mohametan power."
- Dating or historical claims: "Five hundred and fifty years had passed away since the prediction was made" (referring to the time between Zechariah's prophecy and its fulfillment in the Triumphal Entry); "Forty years after our Lord's death, the cup of their iniquity was at length full" (referring to the destruction of Jerusalem, presented as the fulfillment/judgment following Israel's rejection of Christ); "judgments have come on many a church and nation in the last 1800 years."

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 24

"It was not fitting that the Lamb of God should come to be slain on Calvary privately and silently."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's rationale for why Christ made his final entry into Jerusalem public rather than secret.

"We have a right to expect that prophecies respecting the second advent of Christ will be as literally fulfilled as those respecting his first advent."

WHY IT LANDS Establishes the author's hermeneutical principle that first-advent literal fulfillment guarantees literal fulfillment of second-advent prophecy.

"Nothing in truth is so fickle and uncertain as popularity: it is here today and gone tomorrow; it is a sandy foundation, and sure to fail those who build upon it."

WHY IT LANDS A quotable moral lesson drawn from the crowd's reversal from Hosannas to calls for crucifixion.

"Fruit, fruit, the fruit of the Spirit, is the only sure proof that we are savingly united to Christ, and in the way to heaven."

WHY IT LANDS Summarizes the doctrinal payoff of the fig tree typology for individual believers.

"His success is nothing: they demand his commission. His cures are nothing: they want his diploma."

WHY IT LANDS A memorable line critiquing the chief priests' focus on authority over fruit, applied by the author to later ecclesiastical opposition against revivalists.

"Much has been given to us, and much will be required."

WHY IT LANDS Closing warning applying the parable of the vineyard's judgment on Israel directly to the accountability of privileged nations like England.

25

Section 25

Chapter 22: Matthew 22

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

MATTHEW 22:1-14

SUMMARY

Section 25

This subsection expounds the Parable of the Marriage Feast. The author states the parable "in its first application unquestionably points to the Jews" but argues it must not be confined to them, containing "heart-searching lessons for all among whom the Gospel is preached." The exposition unfolds in four movements: the Gospel salvation compared to a marriage feast (showing the fullness of provision through Christ), the wide and unlimited nature of the Gospel invitation, the reality that salvation is rejected by many through indifference rather than open hostility, and the certainty that false professors will be detected and condemned at the last judgment. The wedding garment is treated as the decisive test at the final day, representing whether one has "put on Christ." The author closes by turning the parable into direct self-examination for the reader, urging readiness for the king's coming inspection.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 25

The Marriage/Wedding Feast

Symbol of "the salvation of the Gospel," a feast of complete spiritual provision, pardon, peace, hope, and glory.

The Son

Christ, for whom the marriage is made; the provision of the feast is "owing to the love of the Son of God."

Those First Bidden (who refuse)

Interpreted as the Jews in the parable's first application, but extended to all indifferent hearers of the Gospel who prioritize "money, their land, their business, or their pleasures."

The Servants Slain, the City Burned

Not separately allegorized in detail in this section beyond the general application to those who reject and persecute the invitation.

Guests Gathered from the Highways ("both bad and good")

Represent the broad, unlimited scope of Gospel invitation extended to all.

The Man Without a Wedding Garment

Represents the false professor / hypocrite within the visible church, exposed at final judgment; the author cites the remark that "one single castaway represents all the rest."

Wedding Garment

Symbol of the righteousness of Christ ("Have we put on Christ?").

Outer Darkness / Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth

Eternal condemnation of the false professor.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 25

Original-language notes

None discussed in this subsection.

Cross-references

1 John 4:10 ("Herein is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us...").

Views engaged

Cites "the remark of a learned divine" (unnamed) on parables as "many-sided precious stones"; cites the remark ("it has been truly remarked") that one castaway represents all the rest (source unnamed).

Doctrinal points

The sufficiency and universality of the Gospel offer; human responsibility for rejecting it; the certainty of a mixed church containing false professors; the necessity of true faith (the wedding garment) versus mere outward profession; final judgment will unerringly distinguish true from false believers.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 25

The parable teaches that the Gospel invitation is full, free, and universal, yet many reject it through indifference rather than outright hostility, and that even among outward professors of religion, only those clothed in Christ's righteousness, not mere outward conformity, will survive the final judgment's scrutiny.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 25

- Matthew 22:1-14 (the parable itself, quoted in full)
- 1 John 4:10
 - Unnamed "learned divine" quoted on the nature of parables
 - Unnamed source quoted ("it has been truly remarked") on the single castaway representing all
 - No dating or historical composition claims made in this subsection

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 25

"In its first application it unquestionably points to the Jews. But we may not confine it to them. It contains heart-searching lessons for all among whom the Gospel is preached: it is a spiritual picture which speaks to us this day, if we have an ear to hear."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's interpretive method: refusing to limit the parable's application to its original historical referent.

"The Gospel, in short, is an offer of food to the hungry, of joy to the mourner, of a home to the outcast, of a loving friend to the lost."

WHY IT LANDS A quotable summary of the author's view of Gospel sufficiency.

"Multitudes will find themselves in hell not so much because they openly broke the Ten Commandments as because they made light of the truth."

WHY IT LANDS Doctrinal point that indifference, not open sin, is the more common cause of damnation, in the author's reading.

"None but true believers shall sit down at the marriage supper of the Lamb."

WHY IT LANDS States the doctrinal conclusion that final judgment distinguishes true faith from mere outward profession.

"Have we put on Christ? That is the grand question that arises out of this parable."

WHY IT LANDS The author's distilled application question for the reader.

SUMMARY

Section 25

This subsection treats the attempt of the Pharisees and Herodians to entangle Jesus with the tribute question. The author frames this as the first in "a series of subtle attacks" during Christ's final days, emphasizing first the flattering, deceptive approach of his enemies, and then the wisdom of Christ's reply. The author draws a sustained warning about the spiritual danger of flattery, citing biblical examples (Samson, Solomon, Hezekiah) of ruin brought by flattery rather than force. The exposition of "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" establishes a doctrine of dual obligation: civil submission in temporal matters and unwavering obedience to God in spiritual matters, with the author acknowledging this as a historically difficult line to draw, referencing the English Puritans under the Stuarts and the church of Rome's dealings with King John as cautionary examples on both sides.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 25

The Tribute Money (a penny bearing Caesar's image)

Used by Christ to establish the principle of civil authority's legitimate claim.

Caesar

Represents lawful civil government and its temporal claims.

God

Represents the higher, spiritual claim that cannot be overridden by civil power.

Render to Caesar / Render to God

The dual-obligation principle, civil obedience in temporal matters, spiritual obedience to God that cannot be compromised.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 25

Original-language notes

None discussed.

Cross-references

Psalm 55:21 ("the words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart...").

Views engaged

No named scholarly positions; historical examples used illustratively (English Puritans under the Stuarts; the church of Rome's treatment of King John) to show both civil overreach against conscience and ecclesiastical overreach against civil power.

Doctrinal points

Christians owe civil obedience in temporal matters but must never obey civil authority when it contradicts Scripture ("If Caesar coins a new Gospel, he is not to be obeyed"); the church must not swallow the state, nor the state the church.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 25

Christ's reply establishes a permanent principle that believers owe distinct obediences: submission to civil government in temporal matters, and unyielding obedience to God in spiritual matters, a distinction the author admits is historically difficult to apply but essential to get right.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 25

- Matthew 22:15-22 (passage quoted in full)
- Psalm 55:21
 - Historical references: English Puritans under the Stuarts (cited as example of civil power encroaching on conscience); the Church of Rome's conflict with King John of England (cited as example of spiritual power overreaching into civil authority)

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 25

"By peace he destroys many."

WHY IT LANDS A concise warning that flattery and ease, not just persecution, are among Satan's chief weapons.

"The believer that is proof against the world's frown does well; but the one who is proof against its flattery does better."

WHY IT LANDS Memorable statement on the spiritual danger of flattery over hostility.

"There is one obedience owing by every Christian to the civil government under which he lives, in all matters which are temporal, and not purely spiritual... There is another obedience which the Christian owes to the God of the Bible in all matters which are purely spiritual."

WHY IT LANDS States the core doctrinal principle drawn from the passage regarding church and state.

"If Caesar coins a new Gospel, he is not to be obeyed."

WHY IT LANDS Sharp, quotable statement of the limit of civil obedience.

SUMMARY

Section 25

This subsection addresses the Sadducees' question about the resurrection, framed around the hypothetical woman married successively to seven brothers. The author treats this as an example of "absurd skeptical objections to Bible truths" being ancient, warning readers that unbelief often entrenches itself in invented hypothetical difficulties rather than engaging the "overwhelming mass of plain evidence." The exposition then turns to Christ's proof-text, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob," which the author treats as demonstrating continued existence of the patriarchs long after their deaths, since God speaks of them in the present tense. Finally, the author expounds Christ's description of the resurrected state, being "as the angels of God," as indicating a real but transformed bodily existence, free from marriage, hunger, sickness, and death, and characterized positively by perfect, unwearied service to God.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 25

The Seven Brothers and the Woman

A hypothetical case the author calls "a story which was probably invented for the occasion," intended to make the resurrection doctrine appear absurd.

"I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"

Christ's proof-text for the resurrection, interpreted by the author as showing the patriarchs remain alive to God despite bodily death.

The Resurrection State ("as the angels of God")

Interpreted as involving a real material body of "very different constitution and different necessities," without marriage, hunger, sickness, or death, and marked by perfect, willing service to God; the author notes Christ "speaks only of the saved... he omits all mention of the lost."

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 25

Original-language notes

None explicitly discussed (the tense argument is made in English without citing Hebrew).

Cross-references

Exodus 3:6 (God's words to Moses at the bush, quoted as the basis of Christ's argument).

Views engaged

The Sadducean denial of resurrection is presented and refuted; the author also engages a general skeptical posture ("an unbelieving mind") that raises hypothetical objections rather than examining plain evidence, though no specific historical or contemporary scholar is named.

Doctrinal points

Affirmation of bodily resurrection and continued personal existence after death; denial of annihilationism ("There is no such thing as annihilation; the idea is a miserable delusion"); the resurrected state involves transformed embodiment without marriage, modeled on angelic existence, though this description in the passage applies only to the saved.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 25

Christ's answer to the Sadducees proves both that the dead continue to exist before God and that the resurrection body will be a real but transformed existence unlike earthly life, refuting skeptical objections that treat resurrection as inherently absurd or contradictory.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 25

Matthew 22:23-33 (passage quoted in full)

- Exodus 3:6 (God's words to Moses, explicitly cited)
- The Nicene Creed, quoted: "I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come."
- No named external scholars cited; no specific dating or historical composition claims made

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 25

"You do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God."

WHY IT LANDS Quoted directly from the passage as the author's launching point for Christ's rebuke of skepticism.

"He said not, 'I was their God,' but 'I am.'"

WHY IT LANDS The author's key grammatical/doctrinal argument for the reality of the resurrection.

"There is no such thing as annihilation; the idea is a miserable delusion."

WHY IT LANDS A direct doctrinal statement rejecting annihilationism.

"the weakest babe of the poorest man shall live forevermore in another world."

WHY IT LANDS Memorable statement on the permanence of the human soul/person after death.

SUMMARY

Section 25

This final subsection covers two exchanges: the lawyer's question about the great commandment, and Christ's counter-question to the Pharisees about David calling the Messiah "Lord." On the first, the author expounds the double command to love God and neighbor as "an admirable summary" of human duty, arguing that love, not fear or reward, is "the grand secret of true obedience." The author then addresses how such love is obtained, arguing it cannot arise naturally but only through faith in Christ producing assurance of forgiveness, and through regeneration by the Holy Spirit producing love of neighbor. On the second exchange, the author interprets Christ's question about Psalm 110:1 as exposing the Pharisees' "low, carnal view" of Messiah, since they could not reconcile Messiah being David's son with David calling him "Lord," a puzzle the author says "could only be explained by conceding the pre-existence and divinity of the Messiah." The subsection, and the chapter, closes with the author turning Christ's implicit question into a direct personal challenge to the reader: "What think you of Christ?"

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 25

The Two Great Commandments (love of God, love of neighbor)

Presented as the summary on which "hang all the law and the prophets."

Psalm 110:1 ("The LORD said to my Lord...")

Central proof-text in Christ's counter-question to the Pharisees, interpreted as demonstrating the divinity and pre-existence of the Messiah.

The Pharisees (in the second exchange)

Represent a "low, carnal view" of Messiah as merely human, exposed by their inability to answer Christ's question.

"Son of David" / "Lord"

The apparent contradiction Christ raises, which the author says can only be resolved by acknowledging Christ's divine, pre-existent nature alongside his human descent from David.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 25

Original-language notes	None discussed.
Cross-references	1 John 4:19 ("We love him because he first loved us"); Titus 3:3 ("born selfish, hateful, and hating one another"); Galatians 5:22 ("The fruit of the Spirit is love"); Psalm 110:1 (David calling Messiah "Lord").
Views engaged	The Pharisees' implicit Christology (Messiah as merely human, "a man like one of themselves") is presented and refuted through Christ's own question; no named scholars are cited in this subsection.
Doctrinal points	Love is the true root of obedience to God and right conduct toward neighbor; such love is impossible without faith in Christ (for love of God) and regeneration by the Holy Spirit (for love of neighbor); the Davidic psalm proves the pre-existence and divinity of the Messiah, a truth the Pharisees' carnal expectations could not accommodate.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 25

The passage establishes that love, not law-keeping from fear, is the true root of obedience, and that this love is only possible through faith in Christ and the Spirit's regenerating work, while Christ's use of Psalm 110 exposes the Pharisees' failure to recognize the Messiah's divine and pre-existent nature, a truth the author presses on the reader as the decisive personal question, "What think you of Christ?"

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 25

Matthew 22:34-46 (passage quoted in full) - Psalm 110:1 1 John 4:19 - Titus 3:3 - Galatians 5:22 - No named external scholars cited; no dating or historical composition claims made

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 25

<i>"Love is the grand secret of true obedience to God."</i> WHY IT LANDS Core doctrinal claim on the nature of true obedience.
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"None works so well as they who work for love: the fear of punishment or the desire of reward are principles of far less power."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's view of the superiority of love-motivated obedience.

"We can never really love him till we are at peace with him through Christ... they love most who feel most forgiven."

WHY IT LANDS Ties the love commandment to the author's doctrine of justification by faith.

"The way to spread true love in the world is to teach the atonement of Christ, and the work of the Holy Spirit."

WHY IT LANDS A quotable doctrinal and practical conclusion linking love to core Gospel doctrines.

"It could only be explained by conceding the pre-existence and divinity of the Messiah."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's Christological interpretation of the David/Lord puzzle.

"What think you of Christ?"

WHY IT LANDS The climactic personal question the author draws from the passage to close the chapter.

26

Section 26

Chapter 23: Matthew 23

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

MATTHEW 23:1-12

SUMMARY

Section 26

This portion opens the chapter the author calls "the most remarkable in the four Gospels," containing Christ's last public words spoken within the temple. The author frames the passage as a warning to the disciples against the false shepherds who would remain after Christ's departure. The exposition draws four lessons from verses 1-12: the duty to distinguish a teacher's office from his personal example, using the scribes and Pharisees sitting in "Moses' seat" as the case study; the special offensiveness to Christ of inconsistency, ostentation, and love of preeminence, illustrated through phylacteries, enlarged garment borders, and love of chief seats; the prohibition against giving any man the titles and honors due to God and Christ alone, particularly the command to "call no man father," which the author qualifies against misapplication using Paul's language toward Titus and the Corinthians; and finally the centrality of humility as the distinguishing Christian grace, contrasted with Pharisaic self-exaltation. The author closes by naming humility as the grace "hardly any" saying of Christ repeats so often as "The one who shall humble himself shall be exalted."

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 26

Phylacteries and enlarged garment borders

Described as "strips of parchment with texts written on them" and the fringes Moses commanded (Numbers 15:38), which the author says the Pharisees enlarged "to attract notice and make people think how holy they were," i.e., ostentation.

"Father" / "Rabbi" / "Master" titles

The author interprets Christ's prohibition as forbidding titles that usurp honor due to God and Christ alone, while qualifying that ministers may still be esteemed highly for their work (1 Thessalonians 5:13) and that Paul's paternal language toward converts is not a violation.

Humility

Identified by the author as the grace that "should distinguish the Christian so much," contrasted with the Pharisees' pursuit of honor.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 26

Original-language notes

None specified in this subsection (no Greek/Hebrew terms glossed).

Cross-references

Acts 23:5 (Paul's respect for the high priest's office); Numbers 15:38 (origin of the garment fringes); John 5:44 ("How can you believe, which receive honour one of another?"); 1 Thessalonians 5:13 (esteeming ministers); 1 Corinthians 4:15 and reference to Titus (Paul's paternal language toward converts); 1 Peter 5:5 (clothed with humility).

Views engaged

The author cites "a great divine" (unnamed) for the formulation "They were to be heard when they taught what Moses taught"; and quotes Baxter: "Church greatness consists in being greatly serviceable."

Doctrinal points

Ministerial office deserves respect independent of the minister's personal conduct; false doctrine and false practice are both denounced in the chapter; believers must guard against both idolizing and despising ministerial office; no human intermediary may replace Christ as mediator; humility is the mark of true grace and conversion.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 26

The author argues that Christ's opening rebuke establishes a permanent principle: religious office must be honored even when its holders are unworthy, but ostentation, inconsistency, love of preeminence, and usurped titles of honor are gravely displeasing to Christ. The chapter's true aim, the author contends, is to press humility as the supreme evidence of true conversion, over against Pharisaic self-exaltation.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 26

Scripture references cited: Matthew 23:1-12; Numbers 15:38; Acts 23:5; John 5:44; 1 Thessalonians 5:13; 1 Corinthians 4:15; 1 Peter 5:5

- Original-language terms discussed: none in this subsection
- External sources or scholars cited: unnamed "great divine" (quoted maxim on Pharisaic authority); Baxter (quoted on church greatness)
- Dating or historical claims: none specific beyond general historical framing of Pharisaic practice

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 26

"Rightly or wrongly, they occupied the position of the chief public teachers of religion among the Jews; however unworthily they filled the place of authority, their office entitled them to respect."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's principle that ministerial office deserves honor independent of the minister's conduct.

"However much we may disapprove of a minister's practice, or dissent from his teaching, we must never forget to respect his office: we must show that we can honor the commission, whatever we may think of the officer that holds it."

WHY IT LANDS Restates the office/example distinction as a general rule for the church.

"It is perfectly possible for a baptized Englishman to be in spirit a thorough Pharisee."

WHY IT LANDS A pointed, quotable warning applying the Pharisees' faults to contemporary Christians.

"They are not priests who can atone for us; they are not mediators who can undertake to manage our soul's affairs with God: they are men of like passions with ourselves, needing the same cleansing blood and the same renewing Spirit; set apart to a high and holy calling, but still after all only men."

WHY IT LANDS Clarifies the doctrinal limit on ministerial authority, denying priestly mediation.

"The one who shall humble himself shall be exalted."

WHY IT LANDS The author's chosen summary verse, called the saying "hardly any" of Christ's is so often repeated.

SUMMARY

Section 26

This section expounds the eight "woes" Christ pronounces against the scribes and Pharisees, delivered publicly in the temple. The author organizes the passage as eight distinct charges: obstructing the kingdom of heaven from others; devouring widows' houses under pretense of long prayer; proselytizing zeal driven by sectarianism rather than love of souls; corrupt casuistry regarding oaths that elevated gold and gifts above the temple and altar; misplaced priority on trivial tithing (mint, anise, cummin) while neglecting "judgment, mercy, and faith"; and the paired charges of prioritizing external purity over internal holiness (the cup/platter and whited sepulchre images) and of hypocritical veneration for dead prophets while embodying the spirit of those who killed them. The author counts the repeated denunciatory language, eight "Woe to you," seven "hypocrites," and other epithets, as evidence of how "utterly abominable" this spirit is in God's sight. The exposition closes with four general lessons: the depth of Israel's spiritual darkness under such teachers, the abhorrence of hypocrisy in God's sight, the extreme danger of unfaithful ministry, and a caution against concluding that all religious profession is suspect because of hypocrites.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 26

Oaths (by gold vs. temple, by gift vs. altar)

The author interprets the Pharisees' distinctions as bringing "the third commandment into contempt" and serving their own financial interest.

Tithing of mint, anise, cummin vs. "judgment, mercy, and faith"

Used by the author to illustrate exalting "trifles in religion above serious things."

Whited sepulchres

Interpreted as the image for outward religious appearance concealing inward "hypocrisy and iniquity."

Tombs of the prophets

Interpreted as evidence of affected veneration for dead saints while the Pharisees shared the spirit of those who killed the prophets, proven by their rejection of the living Christ.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 26

Original-language notes

None specified.

Cross-references

Psalm 119:80 ("Let my heart be sound in your statutes").

Views engaged

None named explicitly as competing scholarly positions in this subsection; the author references general church history ("The annals of church history show...") as illustrative rather than as a named interpretive view.

Doctrinal points

Hypocrisy is uniquely abominable to God; unfaithful ministers bear graver guilt and judgment than ordinary sinners; the existence of hypocrites does not invalidate true religious profession; external ritual observance without inward holiness is condemned.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 26

The author argues that Christ's eight woes expose the full anatomy of religious hypocrisy, opposition to true faith, greed, sectarian zeal, legal casuistry, misplaced priorities, external show without inward holiness, and false veneration for the dead while rejecting the living Christ. The author extends this beyond first-century Judaism as a perpetual warning: "a picture which unhappily has been reproduced over and over again in the history of the church of Christ."

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 26

- Scripture references cited: Matthew 23:13-33; Psalm 119:80
- Original-language terms discussed: none
 - External sources or scholars cited: none named in this subsection (general reference to "the annals of church history")
 - Dating or historical claims: none specific beyond general historical illustration

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 26

"Let us mark that language well. It teaches a solemn lesson. It shows how utterly abominable the spirit of the scribes and the Pharisees is in God's sight, in whatever form it may be found."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's central thesis that this hypocritical spirit is condemned universally, not only historically.

"There is not a point in the character of the scribes and Pharisees, in which it might be easily shown that persons calling themselves Christians have often walked in their steps."

WHY IT LANDS Applies the ancient condemnation directly to the contemporary church.

"These scribes and Pharisees are not charged with being thieves or murderers, but with being hypocrites to the very core. Whatever we are in our religion, let us resolve never to wear a cloak: let us by all means be honest and real."

WHY IT LANDS Clarifies that hypocrisy, not gross sin, is the specific charge, and draws a call to authenticity.

"It is bad enough to be blind ourselves; it is a thousand times worse to be a blind guide. Of all men none is so culpably wicked as an unconverted minister, and none will be judged so severely."

WHY IT LANDS States the doctrinal weight placed on ministerial accountability.

"It does not follow that there is no such thing as true profession because some men are hypocrites. It does not follow that all money is bad because there is much counterfeit coin."

WHY IT LANDS A clarifying caution against abandoning religious profession due to the existence of hypocrites.

SUMMARY

Section 26

This final portion covers Christ's closing words as a public teacher, addressed to Jerusalem in judgment and lament. The author reads the passage as revealing Christ's tenderness even toward those he leaves in unbelief. Three lessons are drawn: first, that God takes great pains with ungodly people, sending "prophets and wise men and scribes" repeatedly rather than judging without warning, a pattern the author extends to God's ongoing dealings with individuals through sickness, sermons, and providence. Second, that God notices and will judge the treatment of his messengers, illustrated through the death of Zecharias and extended to historical persecutions (Roman emperors, Waldenses, Albigenses, St. Bartholomew's massacre, the Reformation martyrs, the Inquisition), all of which the author says "will yet be accounted for." Third, and most extensively, the author addresses the theological problem of human responsibility in reprobation, arguing from "I would have gathered your children together and you would not" that the cause of damnation lies in the sinner's will, not in any lack of willingness on Christ's part or any inherent inability to be saved. The author frames this as resolving a "mysterious subject" often "darkened by human explanations," affirming both that grace is "irresistible" and that man remains a responsible being who resists the Holy Spirit.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 26

Zecharias son of Barachias

Cited as the historical martyr whose dying imprecation ("the Lord look upon it and require it") the author says was vindicated "after 850 years" in the judgment on Jerusalem.

"I would have gathered you...and you would not"

The interpretive crux the author uses to establish human responsibility in damnation, distinguishing man's inability to generate saving faith from his full culpable power to reject Christ.

Man's will

The author's key doctrinal category, "the seat of impotence is his will," used to explain that man cannot will his own conversion but fully wills his own rejection of Christ.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 26

Original-language notes

None specified.

Cross-references

Job 33:14 ("God spake once yes twice but they perceive it not"); Ezekiel 33:11 ("Turn you! Turn you! Why will you die?"); 2 Chronicles 24:22 (Zecharias's dying words); Ecclesiastes 3:15 ("God requires that which is past"); Psalm 58:11 ("there is a God that judges in the earth"); Zechariah 2:8 ("The one who touches you touches the apple of mine eye"); John 5:40 ("You will not come to me, that you might have life"); Acts 7:51 ("You do always resist the Holy Spirit"); Hosea 13:9.

Views engaged

The author references but does not name specific theologians; frames the discussion as correcting views that are "often darkened by human explanations" on the relationship between divine sovereignty and human responsibility, without naming a specific school.

Doctrinal points

God patiently warns sinners before judgment; God will judge all mistreatment of his servants, including historical persecutions; salvation is wholly of God's grace, which the author calls "irresistible," while damnation is wholly due to man's will; man is fully responsible for rejecting Christ despite natural inability to generate saving faith.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 26

The author argues that Christ's lament over Jerusalem reveals both the certainty of historical judgment for rejecting God's messengers and the theological principle that human ruin is self-caused. This section culminates the chapter's theme by asserting, against fatalistic misreadings, that "man's salvation if saved is wholly of God" while "man's ruin, if lost, is wholly of himself," a position the author presents as resolving apparent tension between divine sovereignty and human responsibility.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 26

Scripture references cited: Matthew 23:34-39; Job 33:14; Ezekiel 33:11; 2 Chronicles 24:22; Ecclesiastes 3:15; Psalm 58:11; Zechariah 2:8; John 5:40; Acts 7:51; Hosea 13:9

- Original-language terms discussed: none
- External sources or scholars cited: none named; general historical references to Roman persecution of early Christians, the Waldenses and Albigenses, the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre, Reformation martyrs, and the Inquisition, cited as historical instances of persecution God will judge
- Dating or historical claims: the author states Zecharias's imprecation was vindicated "after 850 years" in Jerusalem's destruction; asserts Christ's prophecies against Jerusalem were "literally fulfilled" (implicitly referencing the historical fall of Jerusalem, though no specific date is given in this section)

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 26

"There was an eye that saw all their doings, there was a hand that registered all the innocent blood they shed, in books of everlasting remembrance."

WHY IT LANDS States the doctrine of divine judgment over the treatment of God's messengers.

"It is an old saying that 'the mill-stones of God's justice grind slowly, but they grind very fine.'"

WHY IT LANDS A quotable proverbial statement on the certainty of eventual divine judgment.

"It shows that Christ has feelings of pity and mercy for many who are not saved, and that the grand secret of man's ruin is his want of will."

WHY IT LANDS Central clarifying doctrinal statement on the cause of damnation.

"We say rightly that a man can do nothing of himself, but we must always remember that the seat of impotence is his will."

WHY IT LANDS Precisely states the author's resolution of the tension between human inability and responsibility.

"Let it be a settled principle in our religion, that man's salvation if saved is wholly of God, and that man's ruin, if lost, is wholly of himself."

WHY IT LANDS The author's summary doctrinal formula, highly quotable, on grace and responsibility.

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

27

Section 27

Chapter 24: Matthew 24, Matthew 24:1-51

SUMMARY

Section 27

This section works through the Olivet Discourse in four parts (verses 1-14, 15-28, 29-35, and 36-51), treating it as prophecy that intertwines three distinct but related events: the destruction of Jerusalem, the second personal advent of Christ, and the end of the world. The author frames the first fourteen verses as general lessons applicable to both the close of the Jewish dispensation and the Christian dispensation, warning against deception and against over-optimistic expectations of peace, doctrinal purity, or universal conversion before Christ's return. The middle section (15-28) is read as primarily describing the Roman destruction of Jerusalem (confirmed by Josephus) but is argued to have a further, not-yet-exhausted application to a future second siege of Jerusalem after Israel's restoration to the land. The section on verses 29-35 is read literally as Christ's actual second coming in glory, not merely a figure for the fall of Jerusalem, and includes an extended argument that the continued distinct existence of the Jewish people is a standing miracle and evidence for Scripture's truth and Christ's coming return. The final unit (36-51) stresses the suddenness and unpredictability of Christ's coming, the danger of misapplying these verses to death rather than the second advent, the coming separation of the godly and ungodly, and the practical duty of watchfulness. Throughout, the author insists prophecy is not speculative but intensely practical, meant to produce holy living, humility, and readiness rather than date-setting or fatalism.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 27

False Christs and false prophets

Historical fulfillment (before Jerusalem's fall) is attested via Josephus, per the author; the author also applies the warning to contemporary movements.

Irvingism and Mormonism

Named by the author as modern movements that have been "only too successfully used as arguments for rejecting the whole doctrine of the second advent of Christ."

The abomination of desolation / destruction of Jerusalem

Interpreted as fulfilled historically in the Roman destruction of Jerusalem forty years later, documented by Josephus, but the author argues (as "more than probable") this also has a further, future application to a second siege after Israel's restoration to the land.

The elect

Discussed as objects of special divine care, both protected from full tribulation and unable to be finally deceived; the author urges self-examination to confirm one's own election.

The Sabbath reference in verse 20

Read by the author as evidence that Sabbath obligation continues for Christians, against those who equate it with the abolished ceremonial law.

The Jews as a distinct nation

Interpreted as a continuing miracle and a "pledge" or witness both to the truth of Scripture and to the certainty of Christ's second coming, comparable to the Lord's Supper as a sign pointing to both past and future events.

"This generation shall not pass"

Presented as Christ's guarantee that these predictions will be fulfilled, tied to the doctrine that Scripture cannot fail.

Days of Noah / the flood

Used as the interpretive type for the world's condition at Christ's return, the author stating this passage gives "a flat contradiction" to views expecting universal conversion or a peaceful world before Christ's return.

"One taken, one left"

Interpreted as describing a final, permanent separation of believer and unbeliever occurring at Christ's return, ending the present intermingling of godly and ungodly.

Watchfulness / the faithful and evil servant

Read as a practical exhortation for continual readiness rather than date-calculation, applied against the misreading of "the coming of the Son of Man" as a poetic reference to death.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 27

Original-language notes

None explicitly discussed (no Greek or Hebrew terms glossed in this section).

Cross-references

2 Peter 1:19; 1 Corinthians 10:11; Isaiah 2:4; Psalm 67:6; Ephesians 5:27; Habakkuk 2:14; Revelation 22:20; Hebrews 4:9; 1 Thessalonians 1:4; Luke 18:7; Numbers 23:9; 2 Peter 3:4; Isaiah 53:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:6; 1 John 3:3; the last chapter of Zechariah; the last chapter of Daniel (both referenced as throwing "great light" on the future application of vv.15-28).

Views engaged

The author engages and rejects views that regard the whole chapter as unfulfilled and thus dismiss the importance of Jerusalem's destruction; engages and rejects the idea of a coming "reign of universal peace" or full conversion of the world before Christ's return; engages and rejects the denial of continuing Sabbath obligation for Christians; explicitly rejects reading "the coming of the Son of Man" in vv.36-51 as a figure for death, calling this "misapplied."

Doctrinal points

Prophecy is to be approached with humility and prayer, not dogmatism. The gospel age will not produce universal peace, doctrinal purity, or global conversion before Christ's physical, literal return. The Sabbath retains binding force for Christians. The elect are specially preserved by God and cannot be finally deceived. The Jewish nation's continued distinct existence is a providential miracle testifying to Scripture's truth and the certainty of Christ's return. Christ's second coming will be sudden, visible, glorious, and will produce a final, irreversible separation of the godly and ungodly. Watchfulness, not date-setting, is the proper response to unfulfilled prophecy.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 27

The Olivet Discourse must be read as containing three genuinely distinct but interwoven prophetic subjects: Jerusalem's destruction (historically fulfilled, per Josephus, with a further future application argued as probable), Christ's literal second coming in glory, and the end of the world. Against symbolic reductions that confine the whole chapter to A.D. 70, the author insists on literal fulfillment throughout, arguing that prophecy is intensely practical, demanding watchfulness, sober expectation, and holy living rather than speculation or date-fixing.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 27

Historical/dating claim

The destruction of Jerusalem is dated as occurring "about forty years after the words we have now read were spoken," with Josephus cited as the historical source documenting the siege's fulfillment of Christ's predictions in detail ("A full account of it is to be found in the writings of the historian Josephus").

Further historical claim
(inferred as author's
argued position)

A future, second siege of Jerusalem is anticipated, to occur after the Jewish people have returned to their own land, supported by appeal to Zechariah's last chapter and Daniel's last chapter, though the author frames this as "more than probable" rather than certain.

Named movements
cited as illustrative of
prophetic deception

Irvingism and Mormonism.

Unnamed citation

"a certain divine" quoted on human bias in interpreting prophecy ("What does not man see, or fail to see, when it serves to establish his own favorite opinions?").

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 27

"These verses begin a chapter full of prophecy: prophecy of which a large portion is unfulfilled; prophecy which ought to be deeply interesting to all true Christians."

WHY IT LANDS States the section's foundational premise that the discourse contains genuinely future, unfulfilled elements.

"Let us not be ashamed to say that we expect a literal fulfillment of unfulfilled prophecy."

WHY IT LANDS A direct statement of the author's literalist hermeneutical stance toward unfulfilled prophecy.

"If the solemn words here used mean nothing more than the coming of the Roman armies to Jerusalem, we may explain away anything in the Bible."

WHY IT LANDS The author's key argument against reducing verses 29-35 to a purely A.D. 70 fulfillment.

"The Jewish nation stands before the world a crushing answer to infidelity, and a living book of evidence that the Bible is true."

WHY IT LANDS States the doctrinal significance the author assigns to continued Jewish national distinctiveness as prophetic evidence.

"Let us not flatter ourselves that the heathen will all be converted and the earth filled with the knowledge of God before the Lord comes."

WHY IT LANDS Clarifies the author's rejection of postmillennial-style expectations of universal conversion prior to Christ's return.

"Let us dismiss from our minds the common idea that unfulfilled prophecy is a speculative and not a practical thing: if the things we have been considering are not practical, there is no such thing as practical religion at all."

WHY IT LANDS A quotable summary thesis insisting prophecy study is meant to produce practical holiness, not idle speculation.

28

Section 28

Chapter 25: Matthew 25

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

Section 28

This section covers the final chapter of Christ's Olivet discourse, which the author reads as continuing the prophetic theme of the second advent and end of the world. The chapter is divided into three parts: the parable of the ten virgins (vigilance), the parable of the talents (diligence), and the description of the final judgment (the great day itself). In the virgins parable, the author argues the church will always be a mixed body of true and false professors, that Christ's return will surprise a complacent world, and that many will discover the value of true religion too late. In the talents parable, he argues that all baptized persons possess "talents" (a term he insists has been wrongly narrowed to mean giftedness), that these are a stewardship from God, that a reckoning is certain, and that inactivity itself, not merely active sin, condemns the unfruitful servant. In the judgment scene, the author identifies Christ himself as the judge, "all nations" as the judged, works as the evidence (though not the ground of justification), and eternal, unending consequences as the outcome. Throughout, the author draws a consistent line: profession without possession, and lamps without oil, are worthless before God, and only "indwelling grace" and practical works of love mark the true believer who will stand safely at the judgment.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 28

The oil

Interpreted by the author as "the oil of the Spirit," i.e., indwelling grace, as opposed to mere profession or "the ordinances of Christianity."

The bridegroom

Christ at his second coming, arriving unexpectedly ("at midnight") to catch the world unprepared.

The shut door

Interpreted as final and irreversible exclusion of the unprepared from Christ's presence, "shut to be opened again no more."

The talents

Explained by the author as everything a person may use to glorify God, "our gifts, our influence, our money, our knowledge, our health, our strength, our time, our senses, our reason, our intellect, our memory, our affections," not merely special ability as in modern usage, which the author calls "a mere modern invention."

The servant who hid his talent

Represents, per the author, a "large class of mankind," including "the baptized Bible-despiser, the prayer-neglecter and the Sabbath-breaker," condemned not for active wickedness but for doing nothing

The Son of Man as judge

Identified explicitly as Jesus Christ himself, the same one born in Bethlehem and crucified, now committed all judgment by the Father.

The sheep and the goats

The two classes into which "all nations" are divided at judgment, distinguished solely by "grace or no grace, conversion or unconversion, faith or no faith," with earthly ranks and denominations abolished.

Works as evidence

The author states works are "the witnesses which will be brought forward," testing the truth of professed faith, though not the ground of justification.

Everlasting punishment / life eternal

Interpreted as strictly parallel and equally unending states, the author insisting "the eternity of God, and heaven and hell all stand on the same foundation."

Sherlock (cited scholar)

Quoted approvingly on the uselessness of earthly "separations" (denominational or social distinctions) at the judgment.

Leighton (cited scholar)

Quoted on the contrast between present partial joy and future full "entering into joy."

Baxter (cited scholar)

Quoted on the moral insufficiency of merely "doing no harm."

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Original-language notes

None explicitly discussed (no Greek or Hebrew terms are analyzed in this section); the author does address the English word "talents," noting its shift in common usage from the parable's original sense of stewardship-entrustment to modern "ability" or giftedness.

Cross-references

Psalm 30:5 ("Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning"); Daniel 5:23 (Belshazzar's failure to glorify God); 1 Corinthians 11:31 (self-judgment to avoid condemnation); John 5:22 (the Father has committed all judgment to the Son); Philippians 2:10-11 (every knee shall bow); Psalm 2:12 ("Kiss the Son, lest he be angry"); James 2:17 ("Faith which has not works is dead being alone"); Galatians 6:8 (sowing to the flesh reaps corruption); 1 Peter 5:5 (clothed with humility).

Views engaged

The author critiques the modern narrowing of the word "talents" to mean special ability as "a mere modern invention," implicitly correcting common usage against the parable's intended scope. No named theological opponents or interpretive schools are engaged in this section; the engagement is with popular misreadings of vocabulary rather than with named scholars holding rival doctrinal positions.

Doctrinal points

(1) The visible church will always be a mixed body of true and false professors until Christ's return. (2) Christ's second coming will be sudden and will catch the majority of the world, and even many believers, spiritually unprepared. (3) Saving religion cannot be acquired last-minute; opportunities neglected in this life are irretrievable. (4) All humans, without exception, are stewards accountable to God for all they have been given. (5) Neglect and inactivity, not only active sin, are sufficient grounds for condemnation. (6) Works serve as evidential proof of genuine faith at judgment, without being the ground of justification, which remains by faith alone. (7) The final judgment produces two, and only two, eternal destinies, with earthly distinctions of rank abolished. (8) The states of eternal punishment and eternal life are equally endless, grounded in the eternity of God.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 28

The chapter as a whole argues that Christ's certain but unpredictable return demands both watchfulness (readiness of heart, symbolized by oil) and diligence (faithful use of entrusted gifts, symbolized by talents), because the final judgment will expose the true state of every soul through works as evidence and will issue in two irreversible and everlasting destinies. This builds on the discourse's continuing theme of preparedness for the second advent, applying it now pastorally to individual heart-religion and practical fruitfulness.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 28

Matthew 25:1-13 (parable of the ten virgins, quoted in full)

- Matthew 25:14-30 (parable of the talents, quoted in full)
- Matthew 25:31-46 (the judgment of the sheep and goats, quoted in full)
- Psalm 30:5
- Daniel 5:23
- 1 Corinthians 11:31
- John 5:22
- Philippians 2:10-11
- Psalm 2:12
- James 2:17
- Galatians 6:8
- 1 Peter 5:5
- External sources cited: Sherlock (quoted on separations availing nothing unless found among Christ's sheep); Leighton (quoted on present versus future joy); Baxter (quoted on "doing no harm" being the praise of a stone, not a man); an unnamed "dying minister" quoted as saying "We are none of us more than half-awake."
- No original-language (Hebrew/Greek) terms are discussed in this section.
- No dating or historical-composition claims are made in this section; the author's focus is entirely on the eschatological referent (the second advent and final judgment) rather than the historical circumstances of the text's composition.

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 28

"We see for one thing that the second coming of Christ will find his church a mixed body, containing evil as well as good."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's core reading of the ten virgins as depicting the perpetual mixture of true and false professors within the visible church.

"It will be too late! It will be too late to be buying oil when the Lord returns. The mistakes that are not found out till that day are irretrievable."

WHY IT LANDS Captures the author's warning that spiritual preparation cannot be improvised after Christ's return.

"In the sense in which our Lord used the word in this parable, it applies to all baptized persons without distinction. We have all "talents" in God's sight: we are all talented people."

WHY IT LANDS Clarifies the author's correction of the common narrowing of "talents" to mean special ability, insisting the parable applies universally to all professing Christians.

"We are not told that the unprofitable servant was a murderer, or a thief, or even a waster of his Lord's money: but he did nothing, and this was his ruin! Let us beware of a do-nothing Christianity: such Christianity does not come from the Spirit of God."

WHY IT LANDS States the doctrinal point that inactivity itself, not only active wrongdoing, condemns before God.

"The state of things after the judgment is changeless and without end. The misery of the lost and the blessedness of the saved are both alike forever: let no man deceive us on this point. It is clearly revealed in Scripture: the eternity of God, and heaven and hell all stand on the same foundation."

WHY IT LANDS A thesis-bearing, theologically significant statement grounding the eternity of both heaven and hell in the eternity of God himself.

"Our works unquestionably will not justify us: we are justified by faith without the deeds of the law; but the truth of our faith will be tested by our lives."

WHY IT LANDS Clarifies the author's careful distinction between justification by faith alone and works as the evidential test of genuine faith at judgment.

29

Section 29

Chapter 26: Matthew 26

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

Section 29

This section covers the whole of Matthew 26, from the anointing at Bethany through Peter's threefold denial, treated as a series of six sub-passages (26:1-13; 14-25; 26-35; 36-46; 47-56; 57-68; 69-75). The author frames the chapter as the hinge of the Gospel, where the narrative turns from Christ's teaching ministry to his sufferings and death, presenting him now as "the great High Priest" rather than "the Great Prophet." Throughout, the author draws practical, devotional lessons from each episode: the primacy of the atonement as "the master-truth of Scripture," the danger of an unconverted heart despite great religious privilege (Judas), the peril of love of money, the eternity of hell as a settled doctrine, the memorialist (non-literal) meaning of the Lord's Supper, the nature and purpose of that sacrament, the mystery and meaning of Gethsemane, Christ's voluntary submission to arrest, his declaration of Messiahship and second coming before Caiaphas, and Peter's denial as a case study in the anatomy of spiritual decline and true repentance. The exposition repeatedly connects Old Testament type (Passover lamb, scapegoat, Day of Atonement) to the events of the Passion, and repeatedly turns typological and doctrinal points into direct pastoral application for the "believer" and "professing Christian" of the author's own day.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 29

The woman with the alabaster box (Bethany)

Interpreted by the author as a model of costly devotion to Christ, whose act is prophetically preserved as "a memorial" and treated as a foretaste of works remembered at the day of judgment.

Judas Iscariot

Interpreted as proof that great religious privilege and outward profession do not guarantee a changed heart; his ruin is attributed specifically to unmortified love of money, not merely native wickedness.

The Lord's Supper (bread and wine)

Interpreted by the author as figurative/emblematic ("This bread represents my body. This wine represents my blood"), explicitly not a sacrifice and not literally transformed, appointed as "a continual remembrance of the sacrifice of Christ's death."

Gethsemane agony

Interpreted as Christ bearing "the weight of the sin of the world... imputed to him... as on the head of the scapegoat," not primarily fear of physical death.

Peter, James, and John's sleep

Read as illustrating "weakness even in true disciples," with the flesh/spirit conflict explained via Romans 7.

Judas's kiss

Interpreted as evidence of the customary affectionate greeting among Jesus and his disciples, showing Christ's "gracious condescension."

The disciple who drew the sword

Occasion for the author's doctrine that "Christianity is not to be enforced by bloodshed."

Caiaphas and the chief priests

Identified as the principal human agents of Christ's death (more than "the Jewish people" generally), used to argue that ecclesiastical office does not guarantee doctrinal or moral soundness.

The false witnesses and mockery scene

Read as fulfillment of Isaiah 50:6, foretold "700 years before they were inflicted."

Peter's denial

Analyzed as a sequence of moral steps (self-confidence, indolence, cowardly compromise, needless venturing into evil company) culminating in the fall, followed by genuine repentance ("wept bitterly"), contrasted with hypocrisy which "falls to rise no more."

Burkett (cited authority)

Quoted approvingly on the doctrine of hell: "have no being, than not have a being in Christ."

Scott (cited authority)

Quoted on the nature of Christ's Gethsemane suffering as comparable in kind, though not degree, to the misery of "condemned spirits."

The Greek Litany / Church of England Homily / Litany

Cited approvingly for liturgical language supporting the author's points on Christ's unknown sufferings and on guarding against blindness of heart.

Doctrine of universal salvation

Engaged and rejected by the author as incompatible with Christ's statement about Judas.

"a love of God lower even than hell" (unnamed false teachers)

Engaged and rejected as a contemporary error minimizing divine justice.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 29

Original-language notes	None explicitly identified as Hebrew/Greek terms in this section; the author references "the genius of the language in which our Lord spoke" regarding figurative expressions like "door" and "vine" but does not cite specific Greek or Hebrew words.
Cross-references	1 John 1:7; John 1:29; Galatians 6:14; 1 Corinthians 15:58; 1 Timothy 6:10; 1 Timothy 6:7; Proverbs 30:8; 1 Timothy 6:9; Mark 9:44; Deuteronomy 12:23-25; Hebrews 10:14; Job 5:7; Job 1:20; 2 Kings 19:14; 2 Corinthians 12:9; Philippians 4:11; Romans 7:23; Romans 4:25; Romans 16:16; 2 Corinthians 10:4; Matthew 10:24; Isaiah 8:20; Revelation 1:7; Daniel 7:13; Isaiah 50:6; John 8:44; Galatians 6:1; Proverbs 14:14; Lamentations 3:22; Psalm 119:117; Leviticus 16:21.
Views engaged	The doctrine of universal salvation, explicitly rejected as incompatible with Christ's statement about Judas; unnamed contemporary teachers who speak of "a love of God lower even than hell," rejected; controversial theology over the Lord's Supper's meaning, described as having "divided the visible church" and given rise to "deplorable superstitions" (implicitly critiquing sacramentalist/transubstantiation-adjacent readings without naming a specific tradition); implicit engagement with views that treat the Lord's Supper as requiring great knowledge or spiritual strength as a qualification for communicants, which the author rejects.
Doctrinal points	The centrality and non-negotiability of the atoning death of Christ; the possibility of great religious privilege coexisting with an unconverted heart; the love of money as a root of ruin; the eternity of hell and rejection of universalism; the memorial/figurative (not sacrificial, not literally transformed) nature of the Lord's Supper; the Supper's benefit being contingent on faith, not formal participation; the danger of ecclesiastical office as no guarantee of soundness; the voluntary nature of Christ's suffering as grounds for trusting him as Savior; the pattern of gradual private decline preceding public falls; the distinction between hypocrites (who do not rise after falling) and true believers (who repent and are restored).

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 29

Matthew 26 marks the decisive turn from Christ's prophetic ministry to his priestly self-offering, and every episode in the chapter, whether devotion, betrayal, sacrament, agony, arrest, trial, or denial, exists to fix the reader's attention on the atoning death of Christ as "the leading fact in the Word of God" while yielding direct moral lessons: watch against covetousness and self-confidence, submit the will to God's will, guard against the Supper's superstitious misuse, and trust a Savior whose sufferings were entirely voluntary.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 29

Scripture references: Matthew 26:1-75 (full chapter, treated in six units); 1 John 1:7; John 1:29; Galatians 6:14; 1 Corinthians 15:58; 1 Timothy 6:10; 1 Timothy 6:7; 1 Timothy 6:9; Proverbs 30:8; Mark 9:44; Deuteronomy 12:23-25; Hebrews 10:14; Job 5:7; Job 1:20; 2 Kings 19:14; 2 Corinthians 12:9; Philippians 4:11; Romans 7:23; Romans 4:25; Romans 16:16; 2 Corinthians 10:4; Matthew 10:24; Isaiah 8:20; Revelation 1:7; Daniel 7:13; Isaiah 50:6; John 8:44; Galatians 6:1; Proverbs 14:14; Lamentations 3:22; Psalm 119:117; Leviticus 16:21.

- Original-language terms discussed: none specifically transliterated in this section.
- External sources or scholars cited: Burkett ("have no being, than not have a being in Christ" on Matthew 26:24); Scott (on the nature of Christ's Gethsemane suffering); the "Greek Litany" (on "unknown sufferings of Christ"); the "Church of England Homily" (on the Lord's Supper, "lest of the memory it be made a sacrifice"); the Church of England litany (prayer "From all blindness, and from hardness of heart, Good Lord, deliver us"); unnamed "poet of our own" quoted ("sharper than a serpent's tooth is a thankless child").
- Dating or historical claims: Isaiah's prophecy of Christ's mockery (Isaiah 50:6) is stated to have been written "700 years before they were inflicted," on the basis of the author's reckoning of Isaiah's date relative to the crucifixion.

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 29

"Without it the Gospel is an arch without a keystone, a fair building without a foundation, a solar system without a sun."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's central claim that the atonement is the indispensable center of Christian doctrine.

"The pathway to lasting honor is to honor Christ."

WHY IT LANDS A quotable summary of the lesson drawn from the woman's anointing of Jesus.

"This saying could never have been used if there was any truth in the doctrine of universal salvation."

WHY IT LANDS Explicitly marshals Christ's statement about Judas against universalism.

"The plain meaning of our Lord's words appears to be this: "This bread represents my body. This wine represents my blood.""

WHY IT LANDS States the author's core figurative interpretation of the words of institution.

"The willing sufferer will surely be a willing Saviour."

WHY IT LANDS Draws assurance of Christ's readiness to save from his voluntary submission to arrest.

"Men fall in private long before they fall in public."

WHY IT LANDS Summarizes the author's doctrine of gradual, secret spiritual decline as the true cause of visible moral collapse, illustrated by Peter.

30

Section 30

Chapter 27: Matthew 27

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

MATTHEW 27:1-10

SUMMARY

Section 30

This subsection covers Jesus's delivery to Pilate and the death of Judas Iscariot. The author reads the handing of Jesus to a Gentile

governor as providential fulfillment of Jacob's prophecy that "the sceptre had departed from Judah," proving Shiloh (the Messiah) had come. The bulk of the exposition treats Judas as a moral case study structured around several lessons: his absence as a witness at Christ's trial proves Christ's innocence (since Judas, more than anyone, would have exposed wrongdoing if any existed); his end demonstrates that repentance can come "too late" (Judas felt remorse but did not repent "to salvation"); his suicide shows that sin brings no ultimate comfort; and his fate as an apostle who had great privileges yet perished shows the peculiar danger of sinning against light and knowledge. The section closes with a direct application to the reader, using Judas as a "beacon" against resting on religious profession, loving money, or presuming on future repentance.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 30

Chief priests and elders

shown handing Jesus to Pilate, fulfilling (in the author's reading) the loss of Jewish judicial authority ("scepter had departed from Judah").

The potter's field / thirty pieces of silver

noted as fulfillment of Jeremy (Jeremiah, as named in the text) the prophet, per the quoted passage.

The penitent thief (referenced, not present in this passage)

invoked as the counter-example, "saved in the hour of death, that no man might despair; but only one, that no man might presume."

Comparative sinners (Achan, Gehazi, Ananias and Sapphira, Lot's wife, Pharaoh, Korah, Dathan, Abiram, Saul)

marshaled as parallel cases of the unprofitability of sin and of sudden judgment on those who sin against light.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 30

Original-language notes

None specified in this subsection.

Cross-references

Genesis 49:10 (Shiloh/scepter departing Judah); Proverbs 1:28 (God not answering those who seek too late); Proverbs 10:2 ("treasures of wickedness profit nothing"); Numbers 32:23 ("your sin will find you out"); Romans 6:21; Proverbs 29:1 (hardened neck, sudden destruction).

Views engaged

The common saying "it is never too late to repent" is engaged and qualified: the author affirms it as true "if repentance be true" but warns that late repentance is often not genuine.

Doctrinal points

Christ's sinlessness confirmed by absence of credible accusers; distinction between counterfeit remorse and true repentance; the special danger of sin against light/knowledge, bordering on sin against the Holy Spirit.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 30

The author argues Judas's end serves two purposes: it is a "plain proof" of Christ's innocence, since even his betrayer could bring no accusation, and it is a moral warning that remorse is not the same as saving repentance. This establishes the section's practical, exhortatory register applied throughout the chapter.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 30

Scripture references: Matthew 27:1-10; Genesis 49:10; Proverbs 1:28; Proverbs 10:2; Numbers 32:23; Romans 6:21; Proverbs 29:1.

- Original-language terms discussed: none noted.
- External sources or scholars cited: Bunyan ("none fall so deep into the pit, as those who fall backward").
- Dating/historical claims: none beyond the biblical narrative itself.

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 30

"The absence of Judas Iscariot at our Lord's trial is one among many proofs that the Lamb of God was without blemish, a sinless man."

WHY IT LANDS States the author's core inference that Judas's silence functions as evidence of Christ's innocence.

"We see for another thing in the end of Judas that there is such a thing as repentance which is too late."

WHY IT LANDS Central thesis distinguishing remorse from genuine, saving repentance.

"One penitent thief was saved in the hour of death, that no man might despair; but only one, that no man might presume."

WHY IT LANDS Classic formulation warning against relying on deathbed repentance.

"He is set up before us as a beacon: let us look well at him, and not make shipwreck."

WHY IT LANDS Summarizes the exhortatory, applicational purpose of the Judas narrative.

SUMMARY

Section 30

This subsection treats Jesus's silence before Pilate, Pilate's washing of hands, and the crowd's choice of Barabbas. The author frames Christ's silence as fulfillment of Isaiah's Suffering Servant prophecies and as the ground of believers' future boldness in judgment. Pilate is presented as the "pitiful" emblem of the unprincipled ruler who privately believes in Jesus's innocence ("he knew that for envy they delivered him") yet capitulates to popular pressure despite his wife's dream-warning, becoming a type of all who sacrifice conscience for the praise of man. The Jewish crowd's preference for Barabbas and cry "His blood be on us, and on our children" is read as demonstrating the "desperate wickedness of human nature," rooted in hatred of righteousness and light rather than any actual wrongdoing by Christ. The section closes with a broader claim about total depravity: that even a perfect person, if seen, would be hated rather than admired, refuting the notion that people's dislike of religion is really only dislike of inconsistency.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 30

Pilate's wife's dream
cited as a "strange and mysterious warning" that Pilate rejected.

Barabbas
noted simply as "a wretched felon" preferred by the crowd over Jesus.

The Jewish crowd/chief priests and elders
their choice and cry ("His blood be on us, and on our children") used to demonstrate humanity's hatred of righteousness and light.

Human nature/total depravity (concept)
the author uses the episode to argue people would "kill God, if they could get at him," rejecting the idea that dislike of religion is only dislike of inconsistency.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 30

Original-language notes
none specified.

Cross-references
Isaiah 53:9 ("he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth"); Isaiah 53:7 ("as a sheep before her shearers is dumb"); Acts 10:38 ("went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil"); Jeremiah 17:9 ("deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked").

Views engaged
The author engages and rejects the popular assumption that "if they saw a perfect person they would love and admire him," and the idea that people dislike only religious inconsistency, not religion itself.

Doctrinal points
Christ's silent suffering fulfills prophecy and grounds believers' confidence at judgment; total depravity is demonstrated by humanity's rejection of a sinless Christ; moral cowardice before popular opinion is condemned as a universal danger for those in authority.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 30

The author argues this passage exposes two forms of depravity: Pilate's cowardly conformity to public opinion against his own conscience, and the crowd's active hatred of righteousness itself. Together these confirm the doctrine of total human corruption, since even perfect holiness, embodied in Christ, provoked hatred rather than admiration.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 30

Scripture references: Matthew 27:11-26; Isaiah 53:7, 9; Acts 10:38; Jeremiah 17:9.

- Original-language terms discussed: none noted.
- External sources or scholars cited: none named beyond scripture.
- Dating/historical claims: none specified.

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 30

"Those silent sufferings fulfilled the words of Isaiah: "as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opens not his mouth" (Isaiah 53:7)."

WHY IT LANDS Ties Christ's silence directly to prophetic fulfillment.

"We see in this miserable man a lively emblem of many a ruler of this world!"

WHY IT LANDS States the author's typological reading of Pilate as representative of cowardly authority in every age.

"The praise of man is a poor, feeble, uncertain thing: it is here today and gone tomorrow."

WHY IT LANDS Memorable exhortation against seeking human approval over principle.

"That single fact goes far to prove the truth of an old saying, that "unconverted men would kill God, if they could get at him.""

WHY IT LANDS Bold doctrinal statement on total depravity drawn from the crowd's rejection of Christ.

SUMMARY

Section 30

This subsection covers the mockery, scourging, and crucifixion of Jesus. The author first dwells at length on "the extent and reality" of Christ's physical sufferings, cataloguing the sequence of abuses (sleeplessness, repeated trials, scourging, the crown of thorns, mockery, crucifixion) and describing crucifixion's mechanics in detail to impress readers with its horror. The theological center of the subsection is the doctrine of vicarious, substitutionary atonement: the author insists every element of Christ's suffering must be read as suffered "not for his own sins, but for ours," walking through each specific abuse (scourging, false condemnation, crown of thorns, stripping, mocking, death) and pairing it with the corresponding benefit believers receive. The section closes with an exhortation to gratitude and to hatred of sin, citing the Church of England Homily of the Passion.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 30

Crucifixion (the method)

described in physical/mechanical detail as a slow death by exhaustion rather than immediate injury to vital organs.

The crown of thorns, scarlet robe, reed, mocking

each treated individually as elements of Christ's vicarious suffering with a corresponding benefit for believers.

Vicarious atonement (concept)

the organizing doctrine of the subsection, that Christ suffered as substitute, representative, "head," "surety," and "proxy" for believers.

Church of England Homily of the Passion

cited approvingly for its exhortation to hate sin.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 30

Original-language notes

none specified.

Cross-references

1 Corinthians 15:3 ("died for our sins"); John 14:30 ("Satan found nothing in him"); 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Peter 3:18; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13; Hebrews 9:28; Isaiah 53:5-6.

Views engaged

none explicitly opposing; the author presents the substitutionary reading as established doctrine "of which the Scriptures speak frequently, and that too with no uncertain sound."

Doctrinal points

Full vicarious/substitutionary atonement doctrine; Christ's sinless endurance of suffering "without a murmur"; the necessity of grasping substitution point-by-point through the passion narrative as "the very key to peace."

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 30

The author argues that every detail of Christ's physical suffering in this passage must be read substitutionally, each specific abuse corresponding to a specific benefit purchased for believers. This builds directly on the doctrine of Christ's sinlessness established earlier in the chapter, now showing that sinlessness made him a fit and effective substitute.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 30

Scripture references: Matthew 27:27-44; 1 Corinthians 15:3; John 14:30; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Peter 3:18; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13; Hebrews 9:28; Isaiah 53:5-6.

- Original-language terms discussed: none noted.
- External sources or scholars cited: "the Church of England Homily of the Passion," quoted.
- Dating/historical claims: none specified beyond general description of Roman crucifixion practice.

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 30

"Never let it be forgotten that he had a real human body, a body exactly like our own, just as sensitive, just as vulnerable, just as capable of feeling intense pain."

WHY IT LANDS Insists on the full physical reality of Christ's humanity and suffering.

"Let us observe in the second place that all our Lord Jesus Christ's sufferings were vicarious. He suffered not for his own sins, but for ours."

WHY IT LANDS States the central substitutionary thesis of the subsection.

"Was he condemned, though innocent? It was that we might be acquitted, though guilty."

WHY IT LANDS Exemplifies the point-by-point substitution method applied throughout the passage.

"The very key to peace is a right apprehension of the vicarious sufferings of Christ."

WHY IT LANDS Doctrinal capstone statement on the pastoral importance of substitutionary atonement.

SUMMARY

Section 30

This subsection treats the darkness, Christ's cry of dereliction, his death, and the accompanying signs (earthquake, opened graves, the rent temple veil). The author isolates three points for attention: the meaning of "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?", the theological weight contained in the simple phrase "he yielded up the ghost," and the significance of the temple veil being torn. The cry of dereliction is read not as mere bodily pain but as evidence that Christ, as substitute, actually bore the Father's "righteous anger against a world's sin." Christ's death is expounded as a full atonement satisfying divine justice, enabling God to be "just and yet the justifier" of sinners. The rent veil is read as a double sign: the termination of the ceremonial law and priesthood, and the opening of direct access to God for all people, Jew and Gentile.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 30

"Yielded up the ghost"

treated as a phrase containing immense theological weight, the moment of completed atonement.

The veil of the temple

interpreted as a sign of the termination of the ceremonial law/priesthood and the opening of the way of salvation to all mankind.

The earthquake, opened graves, resurrected saints

noted as accompanying signs, though not individually expounded beyond being called "wonderful signs."

The centurion's confession ("Truly this was the Son of God")

referenced as part of the narrative but not separately expounded in this subsection's discussion.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 30

Original-language notes

none specified (the Aramaic "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani" is quoted as given in the text but not linguistically analyzed).

Cross-references

Isaiah 53:10 ("it pleased the Lord to bruise him"); Romans 3:26 ("just and yet the justifier"); Daniel 9:24 ("finished the transgression... brought in everlasting righteousness"); Romans 8:32.

Views engaged

The author explicitly argues against reading the cry of dereliction as caused by "mere bodily pain," calling such an explanation "utterly unsatisfactory, and dishonorable to our blessed Saviour."

Doctrinal points

Christ's death as full penal substitution, satisfying divine justice; termination of the ceremonial law/Levitical system at the cross; universal (Jew and Gentile) access to God opened through Christ's death; rejection of "mystery" as the proper character of Christian religion.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 30

The author argues that Christ's cry of forsakenness and the rending of the veil together demonstrate that his death was a literal, complete penal substitution that ended the old sacrificial system and opened direct access to God for all. This deepens the vicarious-suffering doctrine of the prior subsection into its climactic, completed form.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 30

Scripture references: Matthew 27:45-56; Isaiah 53:10; Romans 3:26; Daniel 9:24; Romans 8:32.

- Original-language terms discussed: "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani" quoted with its given translation, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (no further linguistic gloss offered).
- External sources or scholars cited: none named.
- Dating/historical claims: none specified.

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 30

"No doubt they were not wrung from our Lord by mere bodily pain: such an explanation is utterly unsatisfactory, and dishonorable to our blessed Saviour."

WHY IT LANDS Explicitly rules out a merely physical reading of the cry of dereliction in favor of a substitutionary one.

"We can have no stronger proof of the sinfulness of sin, or of the vicarious nature of Christ's sufferings, than his cry, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?""

WHY IT LANDS States the doctrinal payload the author assigns to the cry of dereliction.

"That death was no mere example of self-sacrifice, but a complete atonement and propitiation for man's sin, affecting the condition and prospects of all mankind."

WHY IT LANDS Rejects moral-example theories of the atonement in favor of penal substitution.

"That rending of the veil proclaimed the termination and passing away of the ceremonial law."

WHY IT LANDS Core doctrinal claim about the veil's meaning for the Old Testament sacrificial system.

"To clothe religion now with mystery is to mistake the grand characteristic of Christianity."

WHY IT LANDS Applies the veil's meaning polemically against ritualistic or mystery-laden forms of religion.

SUMMARY

Section 30

This final subsection covers Joseph of Arimathea's burial of Jesus and the chief priests' securing of the tomb with a guard and seal. The author frames the burial narrative as divine provision against future skeptical objections to the resurrection, arguing that the combined testimony of Pilate, Joseph, and the hostile priests (who set the guard) placed Christ's death and burial "beyond a doubt." Two lessons are drawn: first, that Christ has quiet, otherwise-unknown disciples like Joseph who emerge boldly at moments of need though little recorded elsewhere; second, that God overrules the schemes of enemies (the priests' guard and seal) so that their very precautions become unwitting evidence for the resurrection they sought to prevent. This second point is extended into a broader providential principle illustrated by historical examples (the Stephen persecution, Paul's imprisonment, the Marian persecution of English Reformers).

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 30

The chief priests and Pharisees
shown requesting a guard from Pilate; their actions read as unwittingly furnishing proof of the resurrection.

The guard and seal on the tomb
interpreted as ironic, providentially overruled evidence for the resurrection rather than an obstacle to it.

Historical parallels (Stephen's persecution, Paul's imprisonment, Marian persecution)
cited as further instances of God turning the "devices of wicked men" to his own glory.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Section 30

Original-language notes	none specified.
Cross-references	Matthew 8:11 ("many shall come from the east and west... sit down with Abraham"); 1 Corinthians 3:19 ("taken in their own craftiness"); Acts 8:4 (those scattered by persecution "went everywhere preaching the word"); Psalm 76:10 ("wrath of man praise him").
Views engaged	The author anticipates and addresses skeptical/"infidel" objections to the reality of Christ's death and resurrection, arguing the burial details preemptively answer them.
Doctrinal points	The certainty of Christ's death and burial as historically secured beyond dispute; the doctrine of providence, that God turns the schemes of the wicked toward his own purposes; encouragement regarding hidden or unrecognized believers within the visible church.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 30

The author argues that the burial and guarding of Jesus's tomb were providentially arranged, through both friend (Joseph) and foe (the priests), to make the fact of Christ's death certain and to supply unimpeachable future evidence of his resurrection. This connects to the chapter's broader theme of divine sovereignty operating through and despite human wickedness.

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 30

Scripture references: Matthew 27:57-66; Matthew 8:11; 1 Corinthians 3:19; Acts 8:4; Psalm 76:10.

- Original-language terms discussed: none noted.
- External sources or scholars cited: none named; historical references to "bloody Mary" and the English Reformation persecution, and to Paul's imprisonment producing epistles, cited as illustrative historical claims without external sourcing given.
- Dating/historical claims: The author asserts the tomb was one "in which was never man yet laid," per the text, and treats the guard/seal as historically dispositive evidence against fraud; no specific composition dates discussed.

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 30

"It is a fact that can never be questioned. He was really "bruised"; he really "suffered"; he really "died"; he was really "buried.""

WHY IT LANDS Insists on the historical certainty of Christ's death as a matter of settled fact.

"There are some quiet, retiring souls on earth, who know the Lord, and the Lord knows them, and yet they are little known by the church."

WHY IT LANDS Draws a pastoral lesson about hidden faithfulness from Joseph of Arimathea's example.

"They little thought that unwittingly they were providing the most complete evidence of the truth of Christ's coming resurrection."

WHY IT LANDS States the ironic-providence thesis regarding the priests' guard and seal.

"The very things which now seem against us are all working together for God's glory."

WHY IT LANDS Extends the chapter's providence theme into a general pastoral exhortation for persecuted believers.

SUMMARY

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

31

Section 31

Chapter 28: Matthew 28, Matthew 28:1-20

SUMMARY

Section 31

This section covers the two closing passages of Matthew's Gospel: the resurrection appearance to the women (28:1-10) and the bribery of the guards followed by the Great Commission (28:11-20). The author treats the resurrection as the foundational truth of Christianity, the "seal and headstone" of redemption, and argues its evidences are uniquely well-established compared to other facts of Christ's ministry. He reads the earthquake and angel as signs accompanying, not enabling, Christ's own resurrection power, and treats the manner of Christ's rising as a "type and pledge" of believers' future bodily resurrection. The terror of the guards is likewise read typologically, prefiguring the terror of the wicked at the final judgment. In the second passage, the author moves through five sequential doctrinal points drawn from Christ's final words: Christ's universal authority (compatible with, not diminishing, his divinity), the missionary duty to "teach all nations," the necessity of public baptismal profession (while denying baptism's absolute necessity for salvation, citing the penitent thief, and denying its automatic efficacy, citing Simon Magus), the requirement of practical obedience as the true test of discipleship, the Trinitarian baptismal formula as a "great plain text" for the doctrine of the Trinity (to be received, not explained), and finally the closing promise of Christ's abiding presence, which the author expounds at length as comfort for believers in every circumstance of life. This builds on the book's recurring pastoral method of extracting "lessons" for the ordinary believer from each narrative detail.

KEY FIGURES, ENTITIES & CONCEPTS

Section 31

The angel of the Lord

descends, rolls back the stone, and sits on it; author states Christ did not need the angel's help to rise but that God chose to accompany the resurrection with "signs and wonders."

The Roman guards

portrayed as hardened soldiers whose courage "melted at once" at the angel's appearance; author reads their terror as an emblem of the terror of the ungodly at the final judgment.

The chief priests and elders

bribe the soldiers to spread the false report that the disciples stole the body; author frames this as an example of "what absurdities blind prejudice will believe, rather than believe the truth."

The eleven disciples ("some doubted")

author reads this as showing "what weakness there is in the hearts of some disciples, and how slow they are to believe."

"My brethren"

Christ's designation of the disciples in his message via the women; author treats this as deeply significant, showing Christ's condescension and unbroken love despite the disciples' failures, comparing it to Joseph's words to his brothers.

The Great Commission ("go and teach all nations")

the missionary mandate; author states it obligates every disciple "to do all he can in person, and by prayer, to make others acquainted with Jesus."

Baptism

the outward ordinance commanded; author argues it is required as public profession where available but is not absolutely necessary for salvation (penitent thief) nor automatically beneficial (Simon Magus).

"Teaching them to observe all things"

the obedience requirement; author calls this "a searching expression" proving that mere formal religion (baptism, the Lord's Supper, church attendance) is insufficient without practical obedience.

The Trinitarian formula ("in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit")

author calls this "one of those great plain texts which directly teach the mighty doctrine of the Trinity," affirming three co-equal, distinct persons who are yet one, a mystery to be received, not explained.

"I am with you always, even to the end of the world"

the closing promise; author expounds this extensively as comfort covering every condition of the believer's life and death.

EXEGETICAL & THEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

Original-language notes

None explicitly discussed in this section (no Greek or Hebrew terms glossed).

Cross-references

1 Corinthians 15:17; Hebrews 2:14; Romans 8:34; Romans 4:25; 1 Peter 1:3; 1 John 3:2; Revelation 6:16; Psalm 33:12; Philippians 2:9; Hebrews 12:2; 1 John 5:12; Acts 8:23; Mark 8:38; James 2:17, 20, 26; John 15:14; Psalm 23:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:17.

Views engaged

The author notes "some have ignorantly supposed" that Christ's declared authority ("all power is given to me") diminishes his divinity, and rejects this. He also implicitly engages a view that baptism is "a matter of entire indifference and need not be used at all," which he argues is "at variance with our Lord's words in this place," while also rejecting a purely sacramentalist reading that would make baptism absolutely necessary for salvation or automatically effective.

Doctrinal points

The resurrection as proof of completed atonement and justification; bodily resurrection of believers as pledged by Christ's own resurrection; the final judgment and the terror awaiting the unbelieving; Christ's universal authority as Mediator without diminishment of his divinity; the missionary obligation of all believers; the necessity of public profession through baptism, distinguished from baptism's salvific necessity or automatic efficacy; obedience as "the only proof of reality" of faith; the doctrine of the Trinity as revealed but not explicable; Christ's perpetual presence with believers as final assurance.

CENTRAL CLAIM / ARGUMENT

Section 31

The author argues that Matthew 28 establishes the resurrection as the definitive proof and "seal" of Christ's completed redemptive work, and that Christ's closing words constitute five essential, permanently binding truths for the Church: his supreme authority, the missionary mandate, the necessity of public baptismal profession, the requirement of practical obedience, and the Trinitarian foundation of baptism, all sealed by the abiding promise of his presence "always, even to the end of the world."

SCRIPTURE & CITATIONS

Section 31

- Scripture references cited: Matthew 28:1-20 (passage under exposition); 1 Corinthians 15:17; Hebrews 2:14; Romans 8:34; Romans 4:25; 1 Peter 1:3; 1 John 3:2; Revelation 6:16; Psalm 33:12; Philippians 2:9; Hebrews 12:2; 1 John 5:12; Acts 8:23; Mark 8:38; James 2:17, 20, 26; John 15:14; Psalm 23:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:17.
- Original-language terms discussed: none identified in this section.
 - External sources or scholars cited: St. Paul (quoted regarding Philippians 2:9 and Romans texts); no named modern scholars cited in this section.
 - Dating or historical claims: The author notes the false report about the disciples stealing the body "is commonly reported among the Jews until this day," reflecting the text's own claim of a persistent contemporary rumor, but the author does not add independent dating or historical-critical claims beyond this.

KEY CLAIMS & QUOTABLE LINES

Section 31

"It is the seal and headstone of the great work of redemption which he came to do."

WHY IT LANDS The resurrection is framed as the completing proof of Christ's finished redemptive work.

"It would be impossible to prove anything in the world if we refuse to believe that Jesus rose again."

WHY IT LANDS A rhetorically forceful claim asserting the resurrection's evidential certainty exceeds that of any other historical fact.

"He rose with a renewed body, and yet a body, real, true and material. And so also shall his people have a glorious body, and be like their head."

WHY IT LANDS States the typological link between Christ's bodily resurrection and the future bodily resurrection of believers.

"Weak, frail, erring as the disciples were, Jesus still calls them his brethren."

WHY IT LANDS Highlights Christ's enduring grace toward failing disciples as a pastoral comfort.

"That outward baptism is not absolutely necessary to salvation, the case of the penitent thief plainly shows: he went to paradise unbaptized."

WHY IT LANDS Clarifies the author's qualified view of baptism, required as profession but not salvific in itself.

"Obedience is the only proof of reality."

WHY IT LANDS A concise doctrinal statement that practical obedience, not mere profession, verifies genuine faith.