

# THE STORYTELLER

## *Week 12: Faithful To the End*

### **Sermon Series:**

We are in the final segment of the Parables: Storyteller series. This winter we have been unpacking Jesus' parables and investigating Jesus' stories from the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. We have been stretched, surprised, confused, and encouraged... but most of all we have been invited. Invited to sit with Jesus and listen to his stories. Now as we draw closer to Holy Week, how do we hear these parables in light of Jesus' movement toward Jerusalem?

The parameters were outlined in the first sermon, Jeff defined a parable as a story that explains our reality giving a new or greater understanding of the world around us. Specifically, parables often reveal something about God and our relationship with God. Key to parables are the layers and depth in the stories, they parallel our own complicated circumstances.

As you dive deeper, remember Jeff's 4 steps to consider: 1. What is the context in the parable is told in? 2. What are the indispensable plot elements? 3. What was the meaning at that moment, in that setting? 4. How does that meaning adapt to our cultural setting today?

The purpose of this sermon series is to draw us in, pique our curiosity, and sit with Jesus. You are invited to pull up a chair ask questions, be confused, wonder, and listen to the parable of Jesus.

### **Message Focus:**

#### ***Faithful To the End***

The Passages: Matthew 24:36-25:46

### **Reflection Questions:**

1.) Reread aloud Mat. 24:36-25:46, if you have enough people split up the reading. As listen, ask yourself, "I am hearing these as parables of faithfulness or as literal descriptions of future events?" How did you answer, why did you answer that way? Do you (we) pay closer attention to Jesus' parables about the end times vs. Jesus' other parables, why or why not? Why are people so fascinated by "the end"? How does our understanding of these parables shift if Jesus' purpose is faithfulness over/above judgment & the end of time?

2.) Not Jesus' focus on readiness and uncertainty, how many times in these parables does Jesus reference readiness? If one has already accepted Jesus into their heart, what do they need to be ready for? If readiness is related to faithfulness, what are you ready for, and how are you ready? What is our church ready for, how is our church ready? How is our readiness observed or known by our community in McCook? Are we more like the sheep or goats, and what needs to change or remain to help us until the very end?

3.) There are 5 parables in this section, which one stands out to you the most and why? Which one makes you think the most and why? Which one do you struggle with the most, and why? How has this Sunday challenged your understanding, and how will read these parables differently moving forward, and why?