



# **Luther's Works Volume 68: Sermons on the Gospel of St. Matthew, Chapters 19-24 (Luther's Works (Concordia))**

*Martin Luther*

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As a professor for Old Testament, Martin Luther never wrote out a full commentary on Matthew. He preached on it regularly, however, both in the traditional texts of the church year, and especially in his sermon series on Matthew 18–24 (begun in Luther's Works Volume 67 and continued here), preached to the people of Wittenberg over the course of four years (1537–1540).

In July 1537, Johann Bugenhagen (1485–1558), the pastor of St. Mary's Church in Wittenberg, departed for Denmark to organize the reformation there, and Luther began preaching in Bugenhagen's stead, on Sundays as well as on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Luther's Wednesday sermons on Matthew's Gospel, 56 in all, probably began on July 11, 1537. The last sermon in this series on Matthew was preached on September 19, 1540. Luther thus continued preaching even after Bugenhagen's return in July 1539, though he moved his Matthew sermons to Sunday afternoons beginning in August.

Luther's preaching here is joined closely with the events of 1537–1540. In his exposition of Matthew 18–24, Luther both explains the text and takes the occasion from it to warn his hearers of the dangers he sees threatening the Reformation, such as the temptation to engage in former superstitions, to compromise with the pope, to take advantages of one's neighbor through usury and greed, and to neglect the role of the Law in the life of the believer. Amidst his teaching from Matthew on the forgiveness of sins, divorce, infant Baptism, repentance, the divinity of Christ, the marks of the church, the resurrection, and the end of the world, Luther also seeks to strengthen his hearers to endure persecution—from imperial troops loyal to the pope or from Turkish armies—which he sees approaching just over the horizon.

These are earnest sermons of biblical exposition, antithesis, and admonition, in the attempt to guard the people from the devil and all temptations that would snatch them away from Christ.

Features:

- Commentary on Matthew 19–24
- Detailed footnotes explaining historical and theological context
- Fully indexed
- Clear, accurate translation in modern American English

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