

# LIVING IN THE REALITY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

(Saturday—Evening Session)

Message Six

## Being Watchful in Life and Faithful in Service

Scripture Reading: Matt. 25:4, 9-10, 14-15, 20-23

### I. For life, we need oil, the Spirit of God, even His filling, that we may be enabled to live the virgin life for the Lord's testimony—Matt. 25:4, 9-10:

- A. "At that time the kingdom of the heavens will be likened to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom"—v. 1:
1. Virgins signify the believers viewed from the aspect of life—2 Cor. 11:2.
  2. Believers, who are the kingdom people, are like chaste virgins, bearing the Lord's testimony (the lamp) in the dark age and going out of the world to meet the Lord; for this they need not only the indwelling but also the filling of the Holy Spirit.
  3. Lamps signify the spirit of the believers (Prov. 20:27), which contains the Spirit of God as the oil (Rom. 8:16):
    - a. The believers shine forth the light of the Spirit of God from within their spirit; in order for the divine light to shine into man's inward parts, God's Spirit as the oil must soak (mingle with) man's spirit as the wick (cf. v. 16) and "burn" together with man's spirit (12:11).
    - b. Thus, the believers become the light of the world and shine as a lamp in the darkness of this age (Matt. 5:14-16; Phil. 2:15-16), bearing the testimony of the Lord for the glorification of God.
  4. The prudent virgins took oil in their vessels with their lamps—Matt. 25:4:
    - a. Man is a vessel made for God (Rom. 9:21, 23-24), and man's personality is in his soul; hence, *vessels* in Matthew 25:4 signifies the souls of the believers.
    - b. The five prudent virgins not only have oil in their lamps but also take oil in their vessels; that they have oil in their lamps signifies that they have the Spirit of God dwelling in their spirit (Rom. 8:9, 16), and that they take oil in their vessels signifies that they have the Spirit of God filling and saturating their souls (cf. 1 Pet. 2:25; Heb. 13:17).
    - c. The word *buy* in Matthew 25:9 indicates that a price must be paid; having the filling of the Holy Spirit is at a cost, such as giving up the world, dealing with self, loving the Lord above all, and counting all things loss for Christ; if we do not pay this price today, we will have to pay it after we are resurrected—cf. Rev. 3:18; 2 Cor. 5:10.
    - d. Our urgent need is to gain more of the Spirit as the consummation of the processed Triune God, to live a life of buying an extra portion of the Spirit to saturate our entire being—Matt. 25:9; cf. Dan. 5:27.
- B. Every day we need to be watchful by paying the price to buy the Spirit as the golden oil so that we may supply the churches with the Spirit for the testimony of Jesus and be rewarded by the Lord to participate in the marriage dinner of the Lamb—Matt. 25:9-10; Rev. 3:18; Zech. 4:6, 12-14; Judg. 9:9:
1. We need to love the Lord above all, having our eyes opened to see His supreme preciousness—Matt. 22:37; Phil. 3:8; 1 Pet. 2:4, 6-7; 1:19.
  2. We need to count all things as loss on account of Christ that we may gain Him, be found in Him, and know Him—Phil. 3:7-10.

3. We need to enjoy the Lord in the Word every day early in the morning to have a new start each day—Psa. 119:147-148.
4. We need to deal with sins thoroughly—1 John 1:7, 9.
5. We need to abide in the fellowship with the Lord daily and hourly—v. 6; 2 Cor. 13:14.
6. We need to redeem our time and spend our energy to be saturated and soaked with God's holy Word—2 Tim. 3:16-17; Col. 3:16.
7. We need to be watchful, on the alert, for our prayer life, redeeming our time to pray—Eph. 6:18; Dan. 6:10; Col. 4:2.
8. We need to redeem the time in these evil days to be filled in spirit by speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, by giving thanks to the Lord at all times for all things, and by being subject to one another in the fear of Christ—Eph. 5:14-21.
9. We should not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by speaking corrupt, rotten (noxious, offensive, or worthless) words; instead, we should speak words of grace to give grace to those who hear—4:29-30.
10. We should not quench the Spirit; instead, we should always rejoice, unceasingly pray, and in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for us—1 Thes. 5:16-19.
11. We need to live, act, behave, do things, and have our being according to the mingled spirit—Rom. 8:4; 1 Cor. 6:17.
12. We need to be filled with the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, as the supply of the Body of Christ, to live Christ for His magnification—Phil. 1:19-21a; Psa. 133; 1 Thes. 5:25.

**II. For service, for work, we need the talent, the spiritual gift, that we may be equipped as a good slave to accomplish what the Lord intends to accomplish—Matt. 25:20-23; cf. 24:45-51:**

- A. "The kingdom of the heavens is just like a man about to go abroad, who called his own slaves and delivered to them his possessions. To one he gave five talents, and to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability. And he went abroad"—25:14-15:
1. Slaves signify believers viewed from the aspect of service—1 Cor. 7:22-23; 2 Pet. 1:1; Rom. 1:1.
  2. *His possessions* signifies the church (Eph. 1:18) with all the believers, who constitute God's household (Matt. 24:45).
  3. Talents signify spiritual gifts (25:15-23; Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:4; 1 Pet. 4:10; 2 Tim. 1:6-7); the filling of the Spirit in life enables us to use the spiritual gift in service (work), and the spiritual gift in service matches the filling of the Spirit in life, that we may be a perfect member of Christ.
  4. *The joy of your master* signifies the enjoyment of the Lord in the coming kingdom as a reward for our faithful service to Him (Matt. 25:21, 23); this refers to inward satisfaction, not to outward position; to participate in the Lord's joy is the greatest reward, better than the glory and position in the coming kingdom.
  5. In this age we must use the Lord's gift to save people and to minister His riches to them—v. 27.
- B. Our inward motive for serving the Lord is our love for Him—Exo. 21:5; Rev. 2:4-5.

- C. Our serving the Lord should always proceed out from Him as the source of blessing, be through Him as the means and the power, and be unto Him for His glory—Rom. 11:36; cf. Num. 18:1.
- D. We need to serve the Lord with our whole being according to the counsel of God by coordinating with the members of the Body—Rom. 12:1-2, 11; Acts 13:36; 1 Cor. 12:14-22.
- E. We need to use the Lord's gift to build up the church by serving others with Christ and ministering Christ as grace to them—Matt. 25:27; 1 Pet. 4:10; Col. 1:7; 4:12:
  - 1. We need to serve as laboring priests of the gospel of God, saving sinners to offer them to God as acceptable sacrifices and eventually present them full-grown in Christ—Rom. 15:16; 12:1; Col. 1:28.
  - 2. We need to supply others with Christ as their spiritual food at the proper time—Matt. 24:45:
    - a. We need to speak Christ to all kinds of people daily in season and out of season—Acts 5:42; 8:4; 2 Tim. 4:2.
    - b. We need to desperately endeavor to build up a habit of speaking in any meeting—1 Cor. 14:26, 4-5, 12, 31.
  - 3. We need to care for people with the loving and forgiving heart of our Father God and the shepherding and seeking spirit of our Savior Christ; love is the most excellent way for us to be anything and to do anything for the building up of the Body of Christ—John 21:15-17; 1 Cor. 12:31b; 13:4-8, 13.
  - 4. We should not mistreat our fellow believers by criticizing, judging, or exposing them; instead, we should admonish the disorderly, console the fainthearted, the “little-souled,” sustain those who are weak in spirit, soul, or body, or are weak in faith, and be long-suffering toward all—Matt. 24:49; 1 Thes. 5:14.
  - 5. Through any involvement in the world, we render the Lord's gift useless, letting it lie waste under the cloak of certain earthly excuses—Matt. 25:18-19.
- F. Our work and labor for the Lord in the gospel are not by our natural life and natural ability but by the Lord's resurrection life and power; resurrection is the eternal principle in our service to God—Num. 17:8; 1 Cor. 15:10, 58; 16:10:
  - 1. The life-giving Spirit is the reality of the Triune God, the reality of resurrection, and the reality of the Body of Christ—John 16:13-15; 20:22; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Eph. 4:4.
  - 2. All those who know resurrection have given up hope in themselves; they know that they cannot make it; everything that is of death belongs to us, and everything that is of life belongs to the Lord—Num. 17:8; 2 Cor. 1:8-9; cf. Eccl. 9:4.
  - 3. We must acknowledge that we are nothing, have nothing, and can do nothing; we must come to the end of ourselves to be convinced of our utter uselessness—Exo. 2:14-15; 3:14-15; Luke 22:32-34; 1 Pet. 5:5-6.
  - 4. The resurrected Christ as the life-giving Spirit lives in us, enabling us to do what we could never do in ourselves—1 Cor. 15:10; 2 Cor. 1:8-9, 12; 4:7-18.
- G. We should always abound in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labor for the Lord in His resurrection life with His resurrection power will never be in vain but will result in the fulfilling of God's eternal purpose—1 Cor. 15:58.