



Matthew 25

Matthew 25
Tape #8025
By Chuck Smith

Shall we turn in our Bibles to Matthew's gospel chapter twenty-five, as we look at the events at the return of Jesus Christ. This whole discourse was triggered by the question of the disciples concerning the signs of the coming of the Lord and the signs of the destruction of the temple, and the signs of the end of the world, the end of the age. And having given to them the prophetic signs that would precede His coming, He then, in a series of parables, begins to explain the conditions that would exist at His coming again. And basically His coming was to be an any moment event, though you're asking for signs, just know that it's going to catch a lot of people by surprise. So the main thing is to be watching, and to be ready. And a series of parables were given with the thrust of watching and being ready.

Now I believe that most of the parables have one major emphasis. I think that many times we make the mistake in trying to read into a parable the symbology of all of the aspects of the parable. And I think many times we lose the real thrust of the parable, and that is to illustrate a particular point. For instance, the parable of the prodigal son makes a fantastic story to illustrate how that when a son has gone astray, the father's primary concern is the restoration of that son. And how that when this young prodigal had wasted everything, when he finally came to his senses, decided to go home, how that the father seeing him afar coming home, ran to meet him, placed the family ring, ordered the party and all, and we think, oh what a beautiful picture of God receiving the prodigal back. And surely it is, but that is not what the parable is about. The parable was designed against the Pharisees because of their attitude concerning the many people who were lost in their sins but now were receiving salvation.

And Jesus gave actually a series of parables to the intent that the natural response and the natural reaction to finding something that is lost is rejoicing. And that they were not having really a natural response in that which was lost being found. And so He spoke about the lost coin of the widow, and how that when she found it she rejoiced and said, Rejoice with me, I've found my lost coin. How the lost sheep when it is found, there's great rejoicing because the lost has been found, and now the lost son having been found, but now He puts the real thrust of the whole series of parables as He talks about this older brother who did not come to the party but was outside sulking. And his dad went out and said, What's wrong, son? Come in and join the party. And he said, I didn't run away, I didn't waste my inheritance on riotous living, you've never thrown a party for me. Now this reprobate brother of mine comes home, you throw a party and all. And his attitude was really what Jesus was getting at in the whole parables. The Pharisaic attitude.

Now, especially when we get to the parable of the ten virgins here, as it is one and the last in this series of parables, whose emphasis is to watch and be ready. By taking and seeking to spiritualize certain aspects of the parable, you can make it read almost anything. You can get all kinds of fanciful truths out of the parable by symbolizing and by spiritualizing. Now, I am reluctant to spiritualize the scriptures because many times, in that very spiritualizing of them, you lose the basic meaning of the scripture when you seek to spiritualize it. For the most part, God said what He meant and He meant what He said. I do not really subscribe to all kinds of little hidden meanings that can be discovered by the spiritualizing of the text. You see, you can take almost any story and spiritualize it and read into it a whole new idea and thought. O mother Hubbard went to the cupboard, to get her poor dog a bone. Can you see this old woman now? Heading for the cupboard, there is the hungry dog at her feet. And the old woman represents the Christian whose life has become barren and they're not even aware of it. She thinks that there's something in the cupboard. And you can go on and just spiritualize the thing and read all kinds of things into it. You never thought of that poor old lady before, did you?

So as we get into chapter twenty-five and we get the final of the series of parables on the thrust of watching and being ready, Jesus gives this fascinating parable, then when? When Jesus comes again, when He comes again,

Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were wise, five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. And while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. But at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps have gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there not be enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went away to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him (25:1-10)

Now there's the thrust of the parable, "they that were ready went in with him"

to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. [And now, the punch.] Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh (25:10-13).

He does not give to us that day or hour that He's coming for us. Thus, the thrust over and over is to just watch. And be ready, because we don't know. They that were ready went in. The others were left without. Therefore, watch.

In the ten virgins we see several similarities. They were all virgins, they all had lamps, they had all gone out to meet the bridegroom, and they all slumbered and slept. They were all awakened by the same call, and they all began to trim their lamps. Now we see the difference. Five of them were wise, and five were foolish. The foolish had their lamps but no extra oil with them; and the five took their lamps as well as the oil, the wise ones. Note, "while the bridegroom tarried." Here again I think that Jesus is giving an indication of the fact that His coming was not going to be as immediate as they were expecting it to be. I think that He was more or less prepping them for the fact that He was going to delay or tarry His immediate return, "while the bridegroom tarried." There came really a loss of the excitement, the awareness of the return of Jesus Christ and the establishing of the kingdom. They all slumbered and slept until the cry went forth, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh." The fact that the five said, Give us oil for our lamps have gone out, would indicate that at one time their lamps were burning. They have gone out. The chief emphasis though is, they that were ready went in with him to the marriage.

Oil, throughout the scripture, especially the anointing oil, was representative of the Holy Spirit, a symbol of the Holy Spirit, the anointing oil. There's much about this parable that we do not know and it is of no value to really speculate, and that is, where did they go to buy the oil? When they came back, did they now have the oil and were their lamps now burning? You see, there's just a lot of unanswered things and you can't really go in and work out each little detail. The main purpose of the parable is just to say to you, Look, you don't know when He's coming, be ready, watch. Be watchful.

In another place, Jesus said, there in the Sermon on the Mount actually, "Not all who say unto me, Lord, Lord, are going to enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of the Father. Many will come to me in that day saying, Lord, Lord, [and they will tell Him the works that they had done in His Name] have we not done many marvelous works in thy name? Casting out of devils, the healing of the sick. And He will say to them, depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you" (Matthew 7:21-23). So you have sort of a similar thing. In that day, that is the day when the Lord comes again to judge, there will be many who will be as the foolish virgins who will be outside seeking entrance as they are saying, Lord, Lord. But He denies ever knowing them. It is interesting with the five foolish virgins who are also outside seeking entrance, He doesn't deny ever knowing them, He just declares I know you not.

I believe that the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer is that which keeps us watching and keeps us ready. Therefore, I think that the parable is just saying to us, we need to be walking in the Spirit, we need to be living in the Spirit, we need to be led by the Spirit, that He is really that supply for us. You remember the oil in the book of Zechariah, in the temple, where he saw this vision of the two olive trees, pipes coming out of it right into the cups of the lampstand there, and the Lord said, You see that? Yeah. What is it? I don't know. "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, Not by might, nor by power but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zechariah 4:2-6). So I do believe that in this parable there is that emphasis of the necessity of being alert, being ready, being watchful, and also walking in the Spirit, having the life of the Spirit.

As we go into the second section of chapter twenty-five, again we are dealing when the Lord comes again.

And the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey (25:14,15).

Now it is very obvious what Jesus is talking about. He's going away into heaven, travelling to a far country, and to his servants, to the church, He delivers unto them His goods. He imparts unto us His resources. "To one five, to another two, to another one; according to their several ability. And then He took His journey."

[While He is gone] the one that received the five talents went and traded the same, and made them other five talents. And likewise he that had received the two, also gained another two. But he that had received the one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. (25:16-18)

Notice the talent is money. In those days, talent was a weight and so it was a talent of gold, or a talent of silver. And you read in the scripture of a talent of gold or a talent of silver. It's a certain weight like we would say a pound of gold or a pound of silver, or an ounce of gold. It's a weight and thus, it was the money that was entrusted to them. "He digged in the earth and hid his lord's money."

After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them (25:19).

Notice again, after a long time, I believe that this ties together concerning the bridegroom tarrying. "But as the bridegroom tarried, they slumbered and slept." Now after a long time. I think that Jesus is trying to get across to the disciples the fact that they needed to occupy until He comes, you can't just sit and wait for the Lord to return. He doesn't expect us to just say, The Lord is coming in the next year, you might as well quit college, you might as well just sell everything and let's just live it up because the Lord will be here soon, we don't have to worry about the future. I don't think that that is any attitude that God ever intended us to have. I think that He intended us to live with the realization that He could come at any time but that was not really a reason for slothfulness, but really a reason for diligence because He's coming at any time. However, it may not be within the timeframe that we're expecting. And with the disciples, here He's talking about a long time. "The lord of those servants comes and he reckons with them."

At the coming of the Lord, it will be a time of reckoning with His servants. The Lord will hold us accountable to use those things that He has entrusted into our care and we will have to answer to Him for what we have done with what He has given to us. The believer will stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Paul in Second Corinthians chapter five, as he is talking about the resurrection and the resurrection body, he said, "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, while we are at home in these bodies, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, and not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that" (2 Corinthians 5:6,9),

Now you see, my desire is to be absent from this body and to be present with the Lord, therefore, what do I do? I labor that "whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him" (2 Corinthians 5:9). I am laboring, I am using that which God has entrusted to me, because my desire is to be accepted by Him.

"For we must all [he said] appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10). We're going to have to face the Lord, give an answer, give an account. "Knowing [he said] therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men" (2 Corinthians 5:11);

So Paul's warning and his own response to the fact that he knows he's going to appear before the judgment seat of Christ, he labors. He uses that which God has given to him in order that he might be accepted by the Lord. Romans fourteen, beginning with verse nine, "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and the living. But why do you judge your brother? or why do you set at nought your brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ" (Romans 14:9,10). Paul has been warning the Romans here that we're not to judge each other, leave that to the Lord. You're not my servant, therefore, it isn't mine to judge your service. You're the Lord's servant, He's going to judge you. And Paul says that God is able to make us to stand, we're really not to judge but we will all be judged by our Master. "For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,

every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give an account of himself to God" (Romans 14:11,12). The day of reckoning. You will be required to give an account unto the Lord. Might as well prepare for that and recognize that God isn't judge going to accept as all as one big mob or group into heaven, but individually. Salvation is an individual thing. Your relationship with the Lord is an individual thing. Your service to the Lord is an individual thing and you will have to give an account unto Him for that service.

In First Corinthians chapter three, he said, "Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work will be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is" (1 Corinthians 3:12,13). Our works are going to be tried by fire. "And if any man's work abides [that is, the trial by fire] which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward" (1 Corinthians 3:14).

Much of the work that is done is done with improper motives. Much of it is done just to be seen by men or to be recognized and acknowledged by men. You want the praise and the glory of man. You do things in such a way as to draw attention to yourself while you're doing it, so people will know how generous you've been or how sweet you are or how kind you were. You sort of broadcast your good deeds. And Jesus said, "Take heed, that you do not your righteousness before men to be seen of men." Don't let that be the motive. For He said, "Then you have your reward." And those works that were done to be seen of men, and to be acknowledged by men, to received man's glory, hey you've already got your reward. You've already got it in the recognition by man and in the praise that has come from man and in the plaque that you have there on the wall that tells of your great contributions. Just look at it, enjoy it, because that's all the reward you're going to get. You say Lord, I did all, didn't you see all those plaques on my wall? All of the things I did for the community and all? Where's my reward? You had it. So our works tried by fire, those which are pure will remain. You'll be rewarded for them.

"But if any man's work shall be burned, he will suffer the loss: but he himself will be saved; yet so as by fire" (1 Corinthians 3:15). "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that which he has done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10).

And the servants are brought to give an account to the Lord for what they had done with what God had given to them.

And to the one that had received the five talents, he came and he brought other five, saying, Lord, you delivered unto me the five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (25:20,21).

If you're not faithful in the little things that God has entrusted to you, then how would you ever expect Him to entrust you with the big things of the kingdom? Here you see his place in the kingdom was to be in relationship to his faithfulness to that which God had entrusted him with now. This is the proving ground. This is the place of testing. This is where the metal is being tested. And your reward, and your place in the kingdom will be related to your faithfulness and your diligence in the things that God has entrusted into your hands now. Beautiful reward. "Well done, thou good and faithful servant," the approbation of our Lord, beautiful. "You've been faithful in few things, now I will make you ruler over many: enter into the joy of the Lord." "Kingdom of God is not meat or drink but righteousness, peace, joy" (Romans 14:17). "Enter into the joy of the Lord."

So he that had received the two talents came and said, Lord, you delivered unto me the two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them (25:22).

And the very same words of commendation were given to him.

Well done, good and faithful servant; you've been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord (25:23).

Same reward. Same words of approval. Nice to know that it isn't how great a ministry we might have or how little a ministry we might have, the reward is the same if we are faithful to that which God has placed in our keeping. That's sort of wonderful to know. "Unto whom much is given," the scripture said, "much is

required.” So if God has given you more, then the responsibility and the obligation is greater to use that for His glory. The reward was for the faithfulness in using what God had entrusted.

he one talent came and said, Lord, I know thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strowed: And I was afraid (25:24,25),

These were excuses that he was offering but offering on the basis of a misconception. I know you’re a hard man. You’re a hard taskmaster. You’re a demanding master. Jesus said, “My yoke is easy.” He didn’t say I’m hard, He said, “My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” There are many people who shy away from serving the Lord because they fear that He is hard, that He is a driver. But God will never call you to do anything but what He doesn’t equip you to do it, and enable you to do it. The New Testament says, Paul said, “For it is Him who works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.” That’s what makes serving the Lord such a delight. Because He puts it in your will first, and thus He gives you the desires of your heart. He is the One who creates those desires in your heart for Him and for the things of His service and thus, you’re just doing what’s delightful, it’s not hard. His yoke is easy, His burden is light because He writes His law right in the fleshly tablets of our heart, both to will, and then the capacity to do.

So false conceptions. It would be totally dishonest to reap where you have not sown. He accuses the Lord of that. But the Lord is not dishonest. He gives his conception of the Lord, uses that for the basis of his excuse for having done nothing. I was afraid and therefore, I hid the talent in the earth. And here it is intact.

The lord answered and said unto him, You wicked and slothful servant (25:26),

Laziness. And Jesus nails it. He said, I was afraid. Lord said, No you’re lazy. Wicked because of your concept of the Lord, but lazy and it is the laziness that kept you from doing anything with what I entrusted to you. You might go through the Proverbs and read the things that Solomon said about the slothful man or the lazy man, in the twenty-sixth chapter of Proverbs, he sort of gets on a roll and he said, “The slothful man saith, There is a lion in the way, a lion is in the streets.” And so he doesn’t go out to work because I might get devoured by a lion out there. And then he said, “As a door turns upon his hinges, so doth the slothful man upon his bed.” He says, like the door. But then this is really bad. “The slothful hideth his hand in his bosom and it grieves him to bring it again to his mouth.” He’s so lazy, he won’t even eat. I mean, that’s bad. And then he said, “The desire [this is in twenty-one], the desire of the slothful killeth him, for his hands refuse to labor.” You have the desire but you won’t work for it. And so your desire just destroys you. So Jesus orders that, well He told him, If you thought this of me, then you should have at least put the money in the bank, I could have received interest on it. And then He ordered that they

Take the talent from him, give it to him which has the ten. For unto every one that hath shall be given (25:28,29),

You prove your faithfulness to the Lord and He will then increase the responsibilities. You will have more, more opportunities. If you’re not doing anything with what God has, Well I’m just waiting on the Lord, that’s a good excuse to do nothing. And you’ll be waiting the rest of your life. He wants you to use what He has given you. Begin using what He has given you, may only be one talent, use it. And then to him that has, more will be given.

but he that has not shall be taken away even that which he hath (25:29).

And then he ordered that

Cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: [and Jesus describes it as a place where] there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth (25:30).

Jesus speaks of this place where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. In Matthew 8:12, He says that the Jews who really were the prime inheritors of the kingdom will be cast out because of course their rejection of Him and the Gentiles will be brought in. And when they see the Gentiles partaking of the kingdom, they will be cast into the furnace of fire, I mean, the children of the kingdom shall be cast into outer darkness. That is, the Jews who have rejected Jesus as Messiah. And there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. In Matthew thirteen, there was the parable of the tares that were sown with the wheat. And the tares in the last days, and again, this judgment that will come when the Lord comes and we have to give an account of ourselves, the tares will be cast into a furnace of fire and there will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. And then, the guests who seek to come to the wedding feast, who are not clothed in the right garment.

Not clothed in the righteousness of Christ, trying to come into the heavenly scene apart from the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Matthew 22:13, then said the king to the servants, “Bind him hand and foot, take him away, cast him into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” The wicked servant, who said my Lord delays His coming and began to beat the other servants and mistreat them, and misuse his position of authority, the Lord comes when he’s not watching and will be cut him asunder and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites and there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. The slothful servant here now who buried the Lord’s talent joins them, “Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Now we come into the final heart of the chapter in which Jesus talks of the judgment that will come upon the world when He returns. The world is going to be going through this period of great tribulation when God will judge the world for its wickedness and for the rejection of Jesus. And the world’s population will probably be decimated during this period of God’s wrath and great tribulation that will come upon the earth. But there will be those who will survive and will be alive on the earth when Jesus comes again in clouds and great glory with His saints to establish God’s kingdom upon the earth. But the fact that you survived the great tribulation does not guarantee or insure that you’ll be allowed to live on into the kingdom age.

When the Lord returns with His church, then shall He gather together the nations to judge. And He will separate them at that time, those which will be allowed to enter into the kingdom and those that will be cut off at that point. Won’t even be given the privilege of entering into the kingdom age. So there will be those who will survive the great tribulation, and who will live still on into the kingdom age when our Lord returns with His church in glory, in the glory of His power and majesty. So He’s talking now about the judgment of the nations that will take place when He returns. He talked about the judgment of His servants, they will be judged. Now there will also be a corresponding judgment on the world.

So when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory (25:31):

[Glorious coming again of Christ, in majesty, power, sitting upon the throne, taking the authority over the earth. When the kingdoms of this world will now be the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Messiah and He shall reign and He establishes now the throne of David once again, sits upon that throne to begin His rule over the earth in the kingdom age.

Before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world (25:32-34)

This was God’s desire from the beginning, this was God’s purpose that the earth live under the government of God, a righteous kingdom and you’re going to have the privilege now of entering into this kingdom that God has purposed from the beginning, God’s original purpose. God’s original intent for man was not the world as we see it today in rebellion against God with all of the crimes and assaults and misery and junk that is here. Pain, sorrow, death, suffering—God didn’t intend that. And so we’ll have the privilege of living on the world as God’s intended the world to be, a world that is in harmony with God, a world that is in subjection to the authority of the reign of Jesus Christ.

For [He said] I was hungry, and you gave me meat: I was thirsty, you gave me to drink: I was a stranger, you took me in: I was naked, and you clothed me: I was sick, and you visited me: I was in prison, and you came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when did we see you hungry, and fed you? or thirsty, and gave you to drink? When did we see you as a stranger, and took you in? or naked, and clothed you? Or when did we see you sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you’ve done it unto me (25:35-40).

A cup of cold water given to a prophet in the name of the prophet, you will receive the prophet’s reward. Jesus wants us to be kind and considerate towards the least of our brethren. And inasmuch as you do it unto them, you do it unto the Lord. He takes it as unto Him.

Then shall he say also to those on His left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was hungry, and you gave me no meat: I was thirsty, you gave me no drink: I was a stranger, you did not take me in: I was naked, you did not clothe me: I was sick, and in prison, you did not visit me. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, in prison, and did not minister unto you? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as you did it not unto the least of these, you did it not to me. And all of these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous to life eternal (25:41-46).

The great division, the dividing. Now Jesus in the kingdom parables, Matthew thirteen, gave a parable, beginning with verse thirty-seven, of the field in which the wheat was planted, the good seed that was sown in the field. And this parable of the kingdom and the tares growing with the wheat is related to these parables of the end of the age and when the Lord comes and the things that will happen at that time. And so when He gave the parable of the tares, how that they'd sown the good seed, let's read it, verse twenty-four, "Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while the men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where did these tares come from? He said unto them, An enemy has done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? He said, No; lest while you gather up the tares, you root up also the wheat with them. Let them both grow together until the harvest: and in that time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, bind them in bundles to burn them: but then gather the wheat into the barn" (Matthew 13:24-30). The separation and the judging of, again, the church, the servants. Judgment begins at the house of God.

Now the disciples asked Him to explain that parable when the multitude was gone. It's interesting He had given several parables, this is the one that puzzled them, this is the one they wanted explained.

They said, "Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels" (Matthew 13:36-39). So Jesus is laying the whole thing out, He's telling you and giving you what each one is. And thus, you don't have to wonder about the symbolism here, He tells you exactly what it is. Field is the world, good seed are the children of the kingdom, tares are the children of the wicked one. The enemy, Satan, has sown the tares. And the harvest is the end of the world. And the reapers are the angels. "As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be at the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. And then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. And who hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Matthew 13:40-43).

Day of judgment, day of reckoning is coming, not only for the church, but for the world itself when the Lord returns to establish His kingdom. When the Lord does establish His kingdom, you will either be in and a part of the kingdom, or you will be outside of the kingdom where there is weeping and wailing, gnashing of teeth. It's serious. It's your future. It's your eternal destiny. But you see, tonight you are either in the kingdom of God or you are outside of the kingdom of God. It is possible that you are in church but you have no oil for your lamp. It is possible that you are in church but you are not using what God has entrusted to you. You've buried the talent. Just being in church will not guarantee your being in the kingdom of heaven. You may be a tare, a terror. And so let a man examine himself for if we will judge ourselves, we will not be judged of God. We will give an account, there will be the day of reckoning. And then will be determined whether or not we are privileged to live in the glory of His kingdom, inherit the kingdom that was prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Or, on the other hand, those that will be cast out into outer darkness, into everlasting punishment for their failure. So, serious business, all I can do is warn you. It is your obligation to seek the Lord and to seek Him for your service, what would you have me to do, Lord, for the kingdom of God? How would you have me to use that which You have entrusted into my keeping? How

can I multiply, Lord, that which You have done and entrusted with me that it might be used for Your glory?

Father, we thank You for the privilege and the opportunity of being a part of the body of Christ. Thank You Lord for that which You've entrusted into our keeping. May we be diligent, may we be faithful, using that Lord which You have entrusted to us that it might be multiplied, that we might be able to lay at Your feet that which is Yours plus that which we've been able to gain through what You have given us. May we be diligent about the things of the kingdom, not slothful, but diligent, Lord. In Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.