

Keep Your Lamps Burning!

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. ***We are living in a time where it is important that we are awake in Jesus, and that we cultivate the oil of intimacy with Him.*** World events are changing by the minute, and we need to be awake, aware, and ready for the return of the Lord! ***It is important that we occupy till He comes (Luke 19:12-27).***

II. KEEP YOUR LAMPS FILLED WITH OIL AND BURNING

- A. ***Oil in the Bible speaks of the anointing of the holy Spirit.*** It is what keeps us connected to Christ and fills us with faith and hope, and causes us to walk in confidence before God, not fear and doubt. ***When you run low on oil, you lose the awareness of God's plan and purpose for your life and for the world you live in.***
- B. ***Jesus communicated truth in the Bible by speaking in parables.*** A parable is a story meant to convey a truth about a spiritual reality. Matthew Chapters 24-25 speaks about what is called the “end times” (The time of the Lord’s return to earth) and contains several important elements that we need to be aware of in the important time that we live. ***Have you wondered lately, Jesus— are you getting ready to return now!***

III. JESUS GAVE US SIGNPOSTS TO INDICATE WHEN THE END IS NEAR

- A. ***There are several signs that Jesus described in the Bible to help us see where we are on God's timetable.*** He mentioned great deception, rumors of war, famines, pestilences, earthquakes. Additionally, He mentioned the spirit of offense, betrayal, hatred, false prophets who will deceive many, and lawlessness that will cause the love of many to grow cold (Matt. 24:3-12).
- “Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming and of the end of the age? And Jesus answered and said to them: Take heed that no one deceive you. For many will come in My name saying, I am the Christ, and will deceive many. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled. For all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these will be the beginning of sorrows...” (Matt. 24:3-8).***

IV. THE PARABLE OF THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS (MT. 25:1-13)

- A. ***It is important that we know what we are to do as it relates to the end-times.*** Jesus connected preparation for the end times to intimacy with God. In Matthew 24-25, Jesus taught on the end times (Mt. 24:3-44) then applied his teaching in three parables to those He called to leadership (The Twelve disciples), as well as to us believers today.
- B. ***The greatest revival and the greatest pressure in history will come in the generation in which Jesus returns.*** We are to continue in our ministry to bring in the great harvest and to impact the seven spheres of society. Jesus said that we are to be faithful during the time of His delay!

- C. **“Acquiring oil” is actively connecting with God.** To watch is to have an attentive heart to what the Spirit is speaking to our lives and families, and to be “anointed observers” of what He is doing in the world today, with a response of prayer. **Watching involves cultivating faith that agrees with what the Word and the Spirit says about Jesus’ return and to actively engage with Him.**
- D. **We prepare by watching what the Spirit is saying in Scripture, in circumstances, and in our life.** We watch (search out) what the Bible says about the signs of His coming. With a heart of faith, we watch the sign events and trends that are predicted in scripture progressively unfold.
- E. **“Watching” positions us to receive strength from the Spirit to love God and people.** Watching is the place where we are empowered to obey God and to love as Jesus loved. We cannot do this without being connected to the Holy Spirit through intimacy.

V. THE FIVE WISE VIRGINS: ACQUIRED OIL TO KEEP THEIR LAMPS BURNING

²*Five of them were wise, and five were foolish. ³Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, ⁴ but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. (Mt. 25:2-4)*

- A. **The “oil” speaks of the presence of the Spirit touching our heart as we spend time with God** (2 Cor 1:21; 1 Jn. 2:20, 27). **The oil of the Holy Spirit touches our hearts in different ways: It tenderizes our heart**, enabling us to feel more of God’s heart for us. **It enlarges our desire** for Him by encountering His desire for us. **It illuminates our understanding** with revelation of God’s beauty. **It imparts zeal for righteousness**, which helps us in our struggle against sin.
- B. **The foolish virgins took their lamps (life—ministry) but took no oil.** In other words, they pursued living life in their own energy instead of acquiring oil and relying on Jesus. The wise **took oil** in their vessels with their lamps. **They pursued acquiring oil as their first priority in life, before anything else** (Before relationships, work, family, pleasure).

VI. JESUS EMPHASIZED THE NEED TO CULTIVATE OIL IN THE END TIMES

- A. The foolish ministries recognize their mistake in neglecting oil, but it was too late.
⁸*The foolish said to the wise, “Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.” ⁹The wise answered, “No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.” (Mt. 25:8-9)*
- B. **Many “lamps” will dim in the endtimes because they will lack the spiritual vitality of the Spirit’s oil.** They asked the wise to give them oil to help them survive. Jesus exhorts us however to “buy oil,” that is—to engage with God through intimacy (Prayer, worship, Bible reading, healthy relationships).
- A. **Don’t let your mind and heart be clouded by the confusion and turmoil around you today.** Stay filled up with the Holy Spirit’s presence and the oil of His intimacy. God is moving in a mighty way in this hour in the middle of great conflict and confusion. Do you see it? Are you aware of it? **Ask Jesus today to fill you up with the oil of intimacy!**