

# The Finality of the Lord's Coming (Part 6)

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Matthew 25:1. Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a cry: Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him. Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise: Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out. But the wise answered, saying: Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves. And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying: Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered: Truly, I say to you, I do not know you. Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

We are studying the end times. And as I said to you from the beginning, I don't want to go into the difficulties of Revelation, Daniel, Ezekiel. I wanted to look at concepts, at texts, passages of God's Word, that show us very plainly about who the true people of God are, who the true Israel is, about what the end looks like. Not in the difficult passages of prophecy, apocalyptic texts, very difficult and shrouded prophecies which historically the best Bible scholars have wrestled with. But I wanted to just take us to the plain teachings of our Lord. And I know there are some things that our Lord says that are not so plain. But I wanted to look at some of the things that are plain. Him, His apostles, what they have to say, just the plain words. Brethren, the only safe method for interpreting your Bibles is always to start with the plainest teaching on a subject. Always. Not to run to the most difficult first, but the most straightforward teaching first. I believe that what we have in Matthew 25 - I will not argue with you if you say: Wait, Matthew 24 has some things that are difficult to figure out. Yes, yes. And I hope to get there. But that's not where I want to start. I want to bypass 24, I want to go to 25. Because I want you to see some clear, very clear teaching here about the end times. We have the parable of the ten virgins, verses 1 through 13, the parable of the talents, verses 14 through 30, and then we have a picture of Jesus Christ coming in the final judgment, dividing like a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats.

This chapter can be naturally broken up into three sections. I hope to deal with one today, and, Lord willing, the next two in the next two weeks. What all three of these deal with, all three deal with the same thing. They are all three pictures of the coming of Jesus Christ. You say: How do you know that? Well, just for starters, I want you to see something. Look at verse 10. While they were going to buy, the bridegroom came... You can see that there. Look in 19. Now after a long time the master of those servants came. Verse 31 When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then he will sit on His glorious throne. All three deal with His coming.

Now, this is a parable. This is a parable. What is a parable? Let's break it up into its component parts. "Para" - Anybody know what this prefix is? Alongside. "-ble" "para-ble" I know it's a "b-l-e", but it's abbreviated. You may have heard the word "παράβολή". What is the "bal"?

What does "bal" mean? It means to throw. We think of bowling. You know in cricket, they don't call the guy that launches the ball a pitcher, like we do. In cricket it is a bowler. Bowling is to throw. And so, what is a parable? It means: to throw alongside. What a parable is, is when I'm trying to teach on something, I take a story, an illustration, and I throw it alongside that teaching. Why? What's the purpose there? What's my objective? Well, the objective is this: The objective is: I'm trying to teach you about the second coming, spiritual truths that you are not familiar with, and so I want to help you. This is what Jesus does. I want to help you and so I throw alongside... That's parable: alongside, throw. You throw alongside that truth a story. That's what parables are. They are stories that are thrown alongside some spiritual truth. And what they do, is: They are typically a story of something physical, that we are familiar with, that is going to help us to understand this spiritual truth that we are not so familiar with. That's what it's all about. A parable. The very nature of a parable is that it has to be interpreted. If you don't have the interpretation, it doesn't help.

Now, I think, the truth is, with a lot of parables, the meaning is pretty obvious. In some of them they're not so obvious. I mean, we might wish that our Lord had come along and interpreted every single parable for us, just like He does some of them. But I think the reason that He does some of them for us and not all of them is to show us in the ones that He does interpret how we ought to be interpreting these things. He gives us some examples of interpretation. And without the interpretation, these things don't help us. You know, the disciples, you remember them? They would hear His parables, and then when they would go home they'd say: Lord, explain to us what that meant. And He would say things like: Well, the field is the world. The one who casts seed is the Son of Man. You see you have to know what they really mean for it to help you. You can't just let it stay in the realm of allegory. We have to pull the true meaning out. Well, Jesus doesn't specifically interpret this one for us, so we need to decipher the meaning. We need to look at this.

That's what I want to do. But before we get into actually trying to see what things signify here, let's just think about the parable as it is. Let's think about the story itself, the illustration. What do you have? I mean... this is a wedding. Is that clear to everybody? If it's not clear to you, you just have to notice there is a bridegroom. Anytime we talk about a groom, we're talking about a wedding. And it's not too mysterious. You get down to verse 10, you get a marriage feast. Obviously this is a marriage ceremony. Now, the idea with the parable is to take something that is common to us and throw it alongside a spiritual truth not so common to us. We would all have to admit this: Whatever is happening here, this is a form of ceremony that we are not so familiar with. Jesus wasn't speaking directly to us. He is speaking to us, but He was directly speaking to His Jewish disciples 2000 years ago.

Now, even if we go to the Middle East, even if we were to ask some of the folks that have observed weddings like, say, in India. You might ask the Dees', what are weddings like over there. You know when you go to other countries, you go to other times in history, weddings have not always been just perfectly according to our American 21st century model. I mean, we know what a typical wedding should look like. But you get a lot of the same components. You've got virgins there, that's basically the bridesmaids. This is not a wedding tradition that we are familiar with so much, but you know, it's not a whole lot different. Let me tell you basically what happens, you can kind of glean this from the parable itself. What you had, and if you look at this

and you just search out historically, you can find and in fact they may do this still in other countries. But you can find that what would happen is you would have the groom, and he would have his groomsmen with him. And they would go to the home of the bride and the bride is waiting there with her bridesmaids, the virgins. And he would go there with his entourage and show up at her door. And the bridesmaids would have lamps. They would do this typically after dark in the evening. I mean he might take off when it was still light but the whole objective is they would parade through the streets. They go get all the ladies from the bride's house and then they would parade through the streets, all the ladies having their lamps and they would go to where the actual marriage was going to take place, where the vows would happen, actually a lot of times where the consummation would take place, right at the father's house. And then there would be this marriage feast and sometimes this feast went on for days. That's the basic picture that you have.

You'll notice this: There is no bride mentioned. It's not necessary. I'll say more about that in a second. Another thing you want to notice is: We have eleven individuals specifically named in this parable. We have eleven and only eleven. And they all fit into one of three categories: You have the bridegroom, he is in a class by himself. And then you have a second category: Five wise virgins. The third category: Five foolish. It's just a basic overlay of what we are dealing with here in the parable.

So let's think about the interpretation. Look, the overarching theme of this parable is the second coming of Jesus Christ. Nobody should be in doubt about that at all. Brethren, would you please just let your eyes drift back into chapter 24. Let's just hit this rapid fire. Matthew 24:37 As were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Any question what's being dealt with there? Not at all. The coming of the Son of Man. Look at verses 38, 39. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, ... You may remember we dealt with these verses from Luke's gospel last week. ... and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.

This is about the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Verse 42 Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. Any doubts there? We're dealing about the Lord's coming. Verse 44 Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. It's the coming of the Son of Man. Verse 46 Blessed is that servant whom His master will find so doing when He comes. Verse 50 ... the master of that servant will come ... You see this is about the coming of Christ. ... come on a day when he does not expect Him and at an hour he does not know ... And you know what: There is no chapter break between chapters 24 and 25 in the original. There is no chapter break there. This is the same discourse. Our Lord immediately goes into this parable. And He talks about when the bridegroom comes. And then you have the parable of the talents. And He talks about the master of those servants is going to come and settle accounts. And then you have this glorious final picture of this last judgment there in verse 31. When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, Brethren, there is no question, we are dealing with the second coming of Jesus Christ. And so, here is the thing, here is what this ought to make obvious to us. Since it's crystal clear that the parable is dealing with the second coming of Christ, and since the one who comes in our parable, verse 10, is the bridegroom, it ought to be really clear to all of us that the

bridegroom is Christ. I know this is very simple, but this is how you want to go about interpreting Scripture. It's obvious.

Yes. The bridegroom is Christ. The bridegroom is the Lord. Brethren, don't you love the imagery? Because, here is the thing. We get different pictures of this second coming. Remember last week, just like you saw there at the end of chapter 24. It's like it was in days of Noah and Lot. It's a time of judgment. He is going to come and destruction is going to fall upon people when they don't expect it. When you look at the parable of the talents, it's like a master who is entrusting things to his servants. And brethren, don't you love the picture here? It's the bridegroom. It's the Bridegroom coming to take His people in to the wedding feast. What a picture! I love that imagery. In the book of Revelation, you find the same sort of imagery. Let us rejoice... Revelation 19:7 "Let us rejoice and exult and give Him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure" --- for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." You know what it brings to our minds? It brings to the minds the love of a husband for a bride. What is that? Particular and special. That's what it brings to our mind here.

It speaks, think of a wedding. There is anticipation, there is anticipation of the intimacy. There is joy. We had a wedding last weekend. I mean, at weddings there's lots of smiles, there is lots of joy. That's the picture here. It's the husband bringing the bride to himself, fulfilling the intimacy. That's the picture. It's one of the most glorious pictures of the second coming, as it regards the church. It speaks of that union forever. I mean, just think: It's the Bridegroom, the perfect Lover, the perfect Husband, the perfect Friend. And it's a picture of: we are going to go under His arm forever. I mean that's what we have. Right now, we're betrothed. Paul said to the Corinthians: I feel a divine jealousy for you, since I betrothed you to one Husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. Betrothed now.

What does it mean to be betrothed? Well, you know, there is a covenantal agreement there that's binding. Christ has pledged Himself to it and will never break that covenant. It is not like our engagements. That can be broken. It is not like that. But you know a betrothal falls short of the full intimacy of the marriage and that is what is going to happen when He comes. It is going to be the consummation and the feast. The fullness of intimacy is yet reserved for us at that great day. When the bride, the Lamb's wife is going to be presented to her Husband without spot and blemish. Brethren, it says it: O how blessed, blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Let's direct our focus to the virgins. Some might say: Hey, the parable has no bride. And you would be exactly right. You say, but, wait, we see that the church is the bride. And the church is prepared as a bride and we are betrothed to Christ. He is a Husband, He is the Bridegroom. Where is the bride? You have to understand this: Our Lord is wanting to give us a parable about some who are ready and some who are not ready. Can you imagine if He tried to do that with a wife? You would really have to have ten wives. Five are ready and five are not ready. Or at least two. If what you want to manifest, if what you want to bring out, draw out, is that you have some who are ready and some who are not ready you don't want to do that with wives. Otherwise what? You're gonna end up with some kind of parable that's going to have

polygamist overtones, right? You don't want to go there. The virgins, the bridesmaids is a perfect way, it's a perfect way to display exactly what our Lord wants to display.

There are ten, there are ten bridesmaids who are waiting for the bridegroom. They are waiting for the wedding feast. So who are they supposed to represent? You have five that are wise, five that are foolish. Look, it's not very difficult to look at this and recognize that when Jesus comes He takes five in with Him and five are shut out. I think it's pretty clear. That what you have is you have the saved and they go in with Him. And the ones that are outside are lost. The ones that go in with Him are true Christians. The ones that are left out are not Christians. I think that's pretty obvious.

But I think we want to define them a little more precisely than that. I don't believe our Lord is just painting a generic picture here of saved humanity over against lost humanity. I think what He's painting a picture of are professing Christians who are sitting in the church right now. Some are saved, some are not. I do not believe this is a picture generically of all mankind. You say: Why? Why would you not think that? Why do you think that this has to do with people who profess Christ? True Christians and false Christians who are in the church right now? Why do you think that? Here is why I think it: Because for one, when our Lord paints the picture, He doesn't say: Well you have these virgins over here that are involved in the wedding, and then you have the onlookers. You now, the people that watch the parade go by, who aren't even involved. What you have is you have virgins. They're all virgins. They're all dressed for a wedding. They all have lamps. You know what? On the outside they all look pretty much the same. That's why I think that. That's one reason. The second is this: They're all waiting for the Bridegroom. They're not Muslims, who are denying the fact that a bridegroom is even coming, who is Christ. They're all waiting for the Bridegroom. The third thing here is you know when He says in verses 11 and 12, when those virgins, the five foolish are shut out? Listen to what's said: Afterward the other virgins came also, saying 'Lord, Lord, open to us.' But He answered, 'Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.' What does that sound a whole lot like? Sounds like Matthew chapter 7. And you know what you have there? You have wise and foolish as well. You have the wise who built their house on a rock, and who are they? They hear the word of God and do it. Over against the fools. What do they do? They hear the Word and they don't do it. Again, they're not the Muslim who doesn't hear the Word. These are people who sit there under the preaching. They have a Bible. They hear what Christ says, and they don't do it. These are the people, who say: "Lord, Lord, we did many mighty works." And He said: "I never knew you." You see, it's the same terminology. I believe that's what we have.

You know what? This parable has to do with us. This isn't us and them. This is us. This is you and me. There is an us and them right here within these walls. There are the wise and the foolish right here. That's the picture. We have the wise and the foolish. And we wait. That's the picture. Waiting. Notice verse 5: The bridegroom was delayed. That's what we're at. The Bridegroom is not here. We wait. We are these virgins. We are waiting. Waiting. What are we waiting for? We are waiting for Him to come. It hasn't happened as soon as we might have expected. Notice, down in the next parable, in verse 19: Now after a long time the master of those servants came... There are places in our Bibles where we get the idea He's coming quickly, right? He says it. "I'm coming quickly." We don't want to say there is a contradiction. Here it says after a long time, and delayed. O, a day with the Lord... Brethren, the time frame of

our Lord is not always according to our time frame. And what is quick and what is slow? But we do get this idea. After a long time. 2000 years is a long time. But that may not be as long as what a long time is. It could be 10,000 years. I don't know. You don't know. It seems like in every generation, there's been those who expected Him to come and those who expected Him not to come. It's the same now. But we're waiting. We're waiting. There is a delay.

Now, notice this: They sleep. You see that in verse 5? They all became drowsy and slept. Look, I don't think we necessarily need to read anything negative into that. It doesn't sound good. When you hear these exhortations to stay awake, stay awake, watch, watch! And then you see them fall asleep. Here is the reason that I don't think you want to read too much into their falling asleep is because even the wise virgins fell asleep and it didn't make them any less ready to enter in when the bridegroom came. You see that? They both did it. I don't think the sleeping here is the point of this parable. Because they both do it. It seems to be more like life is going on. Remember how it was before? As in the days of Noah? You have marriage, and giving in marriage. In the days of Lot, they are buying and selling. I think it's the same kind of thing. You're getting this picture of the wise and the foolish, and they're doing the same thing. They go to sleep. I don't know that you want to read anything specifically negative into it. If there is anything foolish about falling asleep here it's going to sleep when you're not ready for Christ to come. That's the thing that's foolish about this.

The difference between the wise and the foolish is not the sleep. They both do that. You see what the difference is. The difference between the wise and the foolish is the oil. One has reserves of oil and the other does not. Let's think about this oil for a second. The oil. What's represented by this oil? We see it here, right? In 4: The wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. Oil. In verse 8: The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' The oil. What is it? I tell you this: Those who go into the wedding feast have it. And those who are shut out don't. This is what makes the difference. Beloved, you do not want to get shut out. You must have oil. So, what is it? The oil is what makes the lamp burn. That you can see. That's obvious. Oil is essential if the lamp is going to do what the lamp ought to do. Seems like the foolish virgins and the wise virgins initially had lamps that were burning. I mean, notice how the foolish virgins say what they say in verse 8: 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' Sometimes when people want to interpret this, they almost paint the picture that the lamps of the foolish were never lit.

That's not the feeling that you get. You know, the feeling that you get here, is that all of their lamps were lit in verse 1, when they went out. You see they were expecting - and you can imagine this. I mean, if you just think about this. You think about a wedding like this. If the groom and his groomsmen are going to come over and they're going to get these ladies and they're going to parade through the street and they're going to go back and actually they have a ceremony and have a feast, you'd probably like to do it early in the evening. You don't want to come at midnight. Because if you come at midnight by the time you get them and then you go where you have to go and now and then it might be 12.30, one o'clock, and you get there, and now what? You're gonna have a wedding and then, after that, when your feast is going on at three, four, five o'clock in the morning. That's probably not the ideal time to come. It's probably expected when you have weddings like this, they're typically in early evening. The bridegroom comes and that would be a fairly obvious time. The kind of picture you get here is they went out

to meet him. They're prepared then. Right at the beginning it seems like they are ready. They have their lamps, it seems like all their lamps are burning. But you know what happens? He doesn't come when they expect. And so, by the time He does come, at midnight, what do you get? In verse 8? 'Our lamps are going out.' Not that they were never lit. 'Our lamps are going out.' What's the difference between them? The reservoir. The wise ones have flasks. It means they have a reserve. They have something to keep filling their lamp with. That's the picture that we get here.

There is something very implicit to this whole parable. And it's this: If you are a virgin, it is expected that you will have a lamp that stays lit. That's obvious. Because when those virgins find that their lamps are starting to go out, rather than just saying: O, well, there will be enough light, your five have yours, so ours don't work, we'll just leave them here and we'll go on anyway. You can tell, this was essential. They recognized it was essential. So, what did they do? They start crying out: Give us some of yours! Suddenly the cry comes. Bridegroom! Uh oh... We are not ready. That's the idea. Bridegroom's tarried, now He's here, foolish virgins realized they are not ready. Their oil is running dry. Their lamps are going out. We're told the oil must be purchased. There is simply no time to go for it now. It's too late. It's too late! Can you imagine? Look, this is dealing with people who profess to be Christians. They think it's ok. And suddenly, it's too late. It's too late. There is simply no time to go and buy. The Lord is at hand.

What is this? Some have said the oil is the presence of God. Some have said the oil is the Spirit of God. Some have said it's true wisdom. Some sincerity. Some the Word of God in our hearts or its understanding. Matthew Henry says the oil is grace. Here is the thing: If you really take... If you really look at the parable, and it seems like their lamps were lit and now they're going out. I think you run into a lot of problems if you try to dissect this too closely. I think one of the reasons that guys are all over the place on what this is, is because what it is is not essential to getting the drift of this parable.

Brethren, I don't think oil is critical to the primary message here. The primary message that the Lord wants to send you and me here, when He gets to the end, verse 13, He says this: Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour. This has been the recurring theme. As much as the second coming has hit us again and again and again and again. If you jump right back into the end of Matthew chapter 24, look at what He keeps saying about the second coming. Verse 36 of chapter 24: Concerning that day and hour no one knows. Verse 39 They were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Verse 42 Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know... What? When! You don't know on what day your Lord is coming. Verse 44 Therefore you must be ready, ... Why? ... for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. You see the idea here is readiness. Why? Because He is coming when you don't know. You're not gonna have time to prepare when He comes. You have to be ready now. You do not know when death is going to take you. You do not know when Christ is going to come. You have to be ready now. And it's possible to be dressed like the virgin, and have a lamp like a virgin, and be waiting for the Bridegroom like the virgin, and to be where they are, and to not be ready when that hour comes. That is the issue. It is being ready. It is being ready! Verse 50 The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know.

The primary issue about this parable is not what the oil is. It is, that whatever it is... It is that which is essential for you to be ready. And those five foolish virgins were not ready when the hour came. They weren't ready. You say, "but, I go to church." So did they. And they were not ready. They weren't ready. Why? Because they do not possess what must be possessed to be ready when the Lord comes. And here is the thing. You see no evidence that they are concerned about it until it's too late. That is not the right time to figure out you're not ready.

Our Lord knows multitudes. Multitudes fit this category. This is why He warns us. If you think: Well, it's not gonna happen to me. What do you think it is that makes a foolish virgin? It's that kind of attitude right there. Won't be me! Not me! That was why these five virgins are so foolish. What did they do? They picked up their lamps, they rush off and they are not ready. And then they slumber and fall asleep and they are not ready. And when the Bridegroom comes and the cry rings forth, suddenly they find they have no oil. And they are not ready. Not ready. Not ready. They never troubled themselves about getting the oil and being ready.

You know what the trouble with the foolish virgins is? There they are. They assume everything is ok. Why? Lord, Lord, ... We did what your people do. We did many mighty works. We were prophesying right along with them. We were casting out demons right along with them. We heard the Word of God right along with them. He says, "I never knew you." Why? They weren't ready. They weren't ready. Just taking everything for granted. Their everlasting soul is at stake and they're not making certain they're secure. When somebody would come along in the church and say: Brother, sister, test yourself! Are you sure? Are you sure? They got aggravated. They got upset. They hated you holier-than-thous. Don't press me with your strictness. I have Christian liberty. Don't tell me about what music I do listen to, I have Christian liberty. Don't tell me about what I'm doing with my life. Don't tell me that you're concerned that you see I love the things of the world too much. Don't tell me that. Don't tell me that I seem too greedy or too possessed by the things the world is all obsessed with. Don't tell me that. You Christians are just too strict. You people of Grace Community Church. You people. There's kind of a separation. I don't like those people. Because when they come around they ask me those questions and I don't like those questions. Let me live my life. I'm a Christian too. And they get upset with that. Their eternal soul is at stake. They won't examine themselves. They do not prove their own selves. God's word says examine your own self whether you are in the faith. But they don't want to do it. And they hear messages that cut to the heart but they just say: No, it's not me. Nope, it's not me. Yeah, that makes me feel uncomfortable, but that's not me. Why is it not you? Well because I made a decision and I claim to be a believer in Jesus Christ. Yeah, you're right there along with the other virgins. Whatever the oil is I'll tell you this: It's what you have to have to enter in. And you know what? This book from one end to the other describes to us what God's true people look like. You know what they wouldn't do? They wouldn't come and look in the mirror of this book and see if all is well. They didn't want to go there.

Why? Because men love to believe a lie. What's one of the chief lies they love to believe? They have a form of godliness but they deny the power thereof. You see, they love to have a form of godliness that convinces them deceptively so that they're going to heaven, but they have no power of it, which means that they live in the powerlessness of the rest of the world. They're controlled by their lust. They are slaves to sin, they just go along. But they have religion. You see, they have a religious appearance, these five foolish virgins. O, well, I go to



church, I do this, I do that... Now, I'm not out there with the carousing hordes. I'm not a Muslim. I'm not a Hindu. I don't do those things. You see, that's what they were saying in Matthew 7. Lord, Lord, we did this, we did that. And that's typically how the five foolish virgins just go on being so foolish. That's just a checklist of some things what they do or don't do. But the reality's in the heart.

When you go look at Scripture, you see fellowship. You see Christ manifesting Himself to His people. You see that there is a sweetness in the relationship. You see people who are made into praying men and women. Men and women who become controlled by the Spirit of God. And they begin to love in ways they never loved before. From the heart. They become these true Jews. Something changes. The life of God is in their soul. Suddenly they're not like those gentiles anymore. They're new men, they're new creations. Old things pass away. Suddenly their eyes behold the beauty in Christ, and they know it. They can hear His voice in ways they couldn't before. And they know it.

And you know what? The five foolish virgins get around people that talk that way, and they don't want to hear. Holier-than-thou, that's what they are. They're self-righteous. I don't like people like that. Why are they always talking to me about my sin? It seems like they look at me just a certain way. God gives us a love for the brethren and I'll tell you this: When you fall in love with Christ and you haven't been in love with Christ, and then, suddenly, you get around other people that are in love with Him, you tend to be able to pick up on that. When you get around people that are worldly... Yeah, they're virgins, they're sitting there in the church. But you know you just... You can sense there's no oil. But they're heedless, they're thoughtless, they don't examine themselves... Someone might say to them: Are you sure you're ready? You're sure you have oil? Examine yourself! Be sure! Everything is at stake! What happens? Foolish virgins, they resent it. They resent that. They are uncomfortable. I don't like to go where those people are. They make me uncomfortable. I'm afraid... I mean, if you are in a place where you are afraid to be around the godliest people that ought to tell you something.

And listen... Jesus, at the end of this, says: Watch! Because you don't know when He's coming, watch therefore! This isn't a picture. You don't get the feeling from this parable that this is a picture of a man, who goes up on his rooftop, and day and night stands looking at the horizon for when the sky is gonna break open. You know what you're to watch? The whole idea in watching is that you need to be ready. You need to watch your walk, watch your relationship, watch the Scriptures. Where are you at? Watch that you be not deceived. Watch! If you show up at that wedding feast and the door is shut, do you recognize it is all over? It is eternal loss. You have lost everything. My brothers and sisters, this eschatology that's out there that wants to teach you that there is going to be a rapture first, and then you can get things right, then there is going to be a seven year tribulation, and you can get things right, and then Jesus Christ is going to return and set up His 1000 year kingdom, and then you can get things right... That is a lie. This tells you in no uncertain terms: When Jesus Christ comes it's over. That door is shut and if you are on the wrong side of it there is no seven year tribulation to get it right. You're undone. You are undone forever. Brethren, regeneration is real. It is real. Listen, they had to buy the oil, and Jesus says: you buy from Me without price. There is a time in every true virgin's life where bankrupt they come to Christ. They must do business with Him, but they have nothing in their hand. Lord, I don't have anything but my sin. Lord, I've botched this thing from the beginning. I

can't do this. I don't have the power. Lord, my sin is going to sink me into the depths of hell. I can't do a thing about it. If I run to Sinai, it condemns me. If I try I find my best works are just filth. I can't do it. Lord, help me! Lord, save me!

And you know what Scripture says? That justifying faith is always accompanied by a change of life, new creation. The old things pass away. Brethren, those are the indicators that we possess that oil. All those things that the men historically have thought it means, all those things are real if you're a true virgin. You have the Spirit, you have the presence of God, you have an anointing, you have an understanding, you have a wisdom, your eyes are made open, you have grace. All of those things are true. Brethren, this book describes true Christianity. If you look and there are questions, look, there is one place to go: Always and only: To Christ. If there's questions, if there's doubts, if you need help, if you are uncertain: It's to Christ. You flee to Christ.

I was just hearing yesterday Spurgeon. You might think: Oh, I wish I could have the kind of assurance such a one as him. In the middle of his ministry being used tremendously he got so discouraged and began to doubt where he was, even if he was saved, if he was called to the ministry. He couldn't go on. He couldn't preach. He just left. Somebody else had to fill the pulpit. He left to go out to the country and to the fresh air. He went to Essex to where he was from. He's quietly crept in, little baptist church, sat in the back row. Nobody knew he was there. You know what he heard? He heard this little country preacher preach one of his sermons. As he heard his own sermon being preached, it was just... It was Christ. It was Christ. His hope was there. He came up to that preacher afterwards. The man saw him, you know, he was embarrassed. Just hung his head. Just plagiarized his sermon. Spurgeon didn't care. He just rejoiced. He rejoiced. He said as he sat there just hearing - I don't know if he even recognized it was his own sermon till the guy said it, but, I'd hardly know one of mine from the past. But it was Christ. It was all Christ. He saw it: My only hope is there. He saw it in the simple man's words, in his own message.

Brethren, that's it! I'll tell you, whatever the oil is: If you're clinging to Christ and your hope is there, you have it. Your only hope there. There is finality coming. The door is going to be shut, and if you're on the wrong side, that's not the time to get concerned you have no oil. It's too late. It's too late. Today Jesus Christ says: It's free. Come, get it. Come to Me and you can have it. I think regularly about sinners in hell. They just walked everyday past that door, and it was wide open. It is open. Can you imagine men's and women's souls are at stake and they count that door so light a matter? But when it shuts... So what if they give all their attention to it then? It's too late. It's too late.

Father, I pray: Awake, awaken the fools! Awaken them, Lord! Even so, come Lord Jesus! Amen.