

WEEK 7

Being Watchful in Life and Faithful in Service

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

OUTLINE

« DAY 1 »

- 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).

« DAY 2 »

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).

« DAY 3 »

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).

« DAY 4 »

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).

« DAY 5 »

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).

« DAY 6 »

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 weak in the faith, and be long-suffering toward all (Matt. 24:49; 1 Thes. 5:14).
 5. Through our involvement in the world, we should not 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 22:32-33; 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).

<< WEEK 7 — DAY 1 >>

Morning Nourishment

Matt. 25:1-4 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. And five of them were foolish and five were prudent. For the foolish, when they took their lamps, did not take oil with them; but the prudent took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

We have the Holy Spirit in our regenerated spirit, but there is a question as to whether or not we have an extra portion of the Holy Spirit in our soul, saturating our being. The problem was not with the lamps of the virgins. Even the lamps of the five foolish virgins were burning. The fact that their lamps were “going out” (Matt. 25:8) proves that their lamps were lighted, having oil in them, but not having an adequate supply. They did not have the extra portion of the oil in their vessels.

Oil signifies the Spirit of God (Isa. 61:1; Heb. 1:9). Lamps signifies the spirit of the believers (Prov. 20:27), which contains the Spirit of God as the oil (Rom. 8:16). Proverbs 20:27 says that the spirit of man is the lamp of Jehovah. Within the lamp, our regenerated spirit, is the oil, the Holy Spirit. Man is a vessel made for God (Rom. 9:21, 23-24), and man’s personality is in his soul. Hence, vessels here signifies the soul of the believers. (CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, “The Way to Practice the Lord’s Present Move,” p. 501)

Today’s Reading

By reading the context of Matthew 25:1-13, we can see that to be watchful is to be filled with the Holy Spirit. If we are not being filled all day long, we are not being watchful. This is serious....As saved believers, we should be people who are watching all the time by being filled with the Spirit. Every day our lamp is burning, and every day our soul, our being, is filled with the extra portion of the Holy Spirit. This Spirit is the saturating Spirit, which we need to allow to saturate our entire being from within our spirit to reach and even to penetrate our soul. Then we are surely watchful persons, getting ourselves ready for His coming back. We Christians have two kinds of statuses before the Lord—we are virgins in life, and we are slaves for our service to the Lord. We must be watchful in life and faithful in service to be ready at our Lord’s return.

If we do mean business with the Lord’s present-day move, we must be filled with the Spirit every morning of every day. We need to confess our sins, but we also need to pay the price. The Spirit who came into our spirit was given freely, but the saturating Spirit to fill our entire being, especially our soul, is not free. It is something that you have to pay the price for, that you have to buy. When we as sinners repented and confessed our sins and believed in the Lord Jesus, we immediately got regenerated, and the Spirit was given to us freely. But daily we need His filling, His saturating, from our spirit to penetrate our soul. We need to pay the price. We love ourselves so much, and we love to sleep so much in the morning. Many of us love our beds more than the Lord. In our daily life we may love a lot of things. Even though these things may not be sinful, yet they are replacements of the Lord. We may not give our first love to Him but to many other things. Now we have to drop all these other things, which means that we have to pay the price to get ourselves ready.

No doubt, your lamp is burning because you have been saved, but is there an extra portion of oil in your vessel, your soul, your being? Has your being been saturated with the Spirit?...Are you living? Are you being filled? Are you watching all day? Are you praying? Are you getting into His Word every day and remaining in fellowship with Him? You may say that you are tired and that you do not have the time, but you may have a lot of time to make phone calls and to gossip. Why would you not spend ten minutes for prayer? You may talk on the telephone for over an hour and yet not have five minutes for prayer. (CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, “The Way to Practice the Lord’s Present Move,” pp. 503, 505)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, “The Way to Practice the Lord’s Present Move,” ch. 7; Life-study of Matthew, msgs. 63-64

<< WEEK 7 — DAY 2 >>

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 6:18 ...Praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints.

5:18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissoluteness, but be filled in spirit.

16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Every morning we need a time to be with the Lord. We need to pray, “Lord, I take You as my sin offering and trespass offering. I am so thankful to You that Your precious blood still washes me this morning. Lord, I need to be filled up with Yourself, with the all-inclusive Spirit within and without. I need You! I need Your saturation! I need Your soaking!” Could you not pray in this way every morning for a short time? Have you been doing this? This is a serious matter...Are you watching today? We do not have yesterday or tomorrow. We Christians have only today. Every day is a today to us. Are you watching today? (CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, “The Way to Practice the Lord’s Present Move,” p. 507)

Today’s Reading

The Christian life is not a matter of legalities concerning watching television, reading the newspaper, going to sporting events, or indulging in worldly pleasures. It is not a matter of merely whether or not something is scriptural. The Christian life is a matter that concerns our buying of the oil. You may not pray, yet you will watch television. You may not pray, yet you will read the newspaper. You may not pray, yet you will play sports. There are a lot of “yets” in your daily life. You just do not pray. You may not do anything sinful, but this parable of the virgins does not indicate that the Lord will judge us according to how much sin we have committed but according to how much oil we have in our vessel. To receive the Holy Spirit into our spirit, our lamp, is free. But to have the Spirit saturating our soul is not free. If you are going to get the Holy Spirit to saturate your soul, you must pay the price in dealing with your soul.

I have had to deal with my soul in many ways to buy the oil. When it seemed like it was a good time for me to joke with a person and I joked with a few sentences, I got condemned. I am not a piece of marble but a living person. Every living person has his opinion, but many times when I tried to express my opinion, I was stopped by the buying of the oil. Many times this view has affected my daily living. Could I get more Spirit by exchanging words with my wife? Could I get more Spirit by going to a certain place? I may want to go to a certain place, but I do not have the peace within me. The point is this—every day should be a day for us to pick up the oil in every way. We need to pray from the time that we wake up every morning, “Lord, I do not like to do anything that is not under my being watchful, that is not under my buying of the oil. I like to buy the oil at any time and in any instance. Otherwise, that will be a waste of my time.” This should be our prayer and even our prayerful attitude. Many nights I regretted that I did not spend all my time to be in the spirit.

In the New Testament watchfulness is wrapped up with prayer. Ephesians 6:18 tells us that we should be those watching unto prayer. We need to be watchful, on the alert for our prayer life. Watching unto this in verse 18 refers to prayer and petition. There is no other way to get the oil except by praying. If you do not pray, it means that you do not pay the price to buy the oil. Through prayer we receive more Spirit. Every time we pray, we have the deep sensation that some amount of the Spirit has been gained by us in our prayer. To spend our time for prayer rather than for so many other things means to pay the price to get the oil.

Our initial receiving of the Spirit at regeneration is not a ticket for us to enter into the wedding feast. The sufficient oil, the adequate oil, will become our entry, our ticket, to the wedding feast...We can never borrow others’ spirituality [cf. Matt. 25:8-9]. One’s spirituality can qualify only himself. (CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, “The Way to Practice the Lord’s Present Move,” pp. 528-530)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, “The Way to Practice the Lord’s Present Move,” ch. 8

« WEEK 7 — DAY 3 »

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed unto the day of redemption.

1 Thes. 5:16-19 Always rejoice, unceasingly pray, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit.

Every day in the morning you must go to the Lord, saying, “Lord, thank You that I am here. Fill me up. Saturate me. Soak me. I want to be soaked in You and with You.” We need such a prayer. It is not too much to have this kind of prayer three times a day. I advise the young people to have this prayer ten times daily. The more we pray this way, the better. People may teach you that you should not eat so much, but no one has ever taught you not to breathe too much. Your breathing should not be reduced. Rather, you had better exercise to have more breathing and to breathe deeply. To pray in this way is to gain the oil in your vessel. (CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, “The Way to Practice the Lord’s Present Move,” p. 510)

Today’s Reading

Ephesians 4:30 tells us not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God. Do not make Him unhappy. The Holy Spirit who is now sealing us unto the redemption of our body is in us. We must make Him happy. Because He has really joined us with Him as one (1 Cor. 6:17), when we are unhappy, this indicates that He is unhappy. If you do not come to the meeting, or if you come and do not function, this makes the Spirit unhappy. At the end of the day you may not feel so good, but when you come to the meeting and function in it, you feel so happy. This means that the Holy Spirit is happy within you. If you do not feel happy, this is an indication that you have grieved Him. Why have you grieved Him? Because you did not buy Him. You did not pay the price for Him. He is the oil.

First Thessalonians 5:19 says, “Do not quench the Spirit.” Sometimes we even go further not only to grieve Him but also to quench Him. Sometimes we may tell the Lord to tolerate us for a certain time and not to inspire us. We may know that the Spirit is moving within us, but we may not like it. To quench the Spirit is to reject the buying of the oil. In many things we do not buy the Spirit, so we miss the chance to accumulate more and more of the Spirit in our being.

Nearly the last charge in the entire New Testament is to walk according to the spirit (Rom. 8:4), which is our human spirit mingled with God’s Holy Spirit (cf. v. 16), our mingled spirit. To walk means “to live, to act, to behave, to do things, to have our being.” We have to have our being according to the spirit, and this is to buy the Spirit. Our thinking and our speaking, the expression of our attitude, should be according to the spirit. If you are having your being according to the spirit, this is to buy the Spirit. But to walk, to have your being according to the spirit, needs us to pay a great price. You may need to stop your excessive talking on the telephone and stop your further reading of the newspaper from the first page to the next.

My burden is to fellowship with you that you may rise up to live a life of always buying an extra portion of the oil by not wasting your time in doing anything. If you do something, and you feel that it is a waste of time, you had better stop doing it. Use that time to contact the Lord, to pray. This is to watch unto prayer. To be watchful is not to let your time go, not to waste your time, but to take every time as a chance to buy the oil. To buy the oil is the best way to redeem our time, for the days are short....All of us need to live such a life of buying the oil daily, even hourly. We need to buy the oil in the way we dress, shop, talk, and live. In everything we must be serious and consider the solemn parable given by the Lord Jesus in Matthew 25:1-13....This is a lifelong matter, not an overnight matter....The one thing that the Lord needs and that we need is to rise up to pay the price to buy the oil all the time in all the matters in our daily life. (CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, “The Way to Practice the Lord’s Present Move,” pp. 530-533)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, “The Way to Practice the Lord’s Present Move,” ch. 9

« WEEK 7 — DAY 4 »

Morning Nourishment

Matt. 25:14-15 For 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.

Concerning the believers, there are two aspects: the aspect of watchfulness and readiness and the aspect of faithfulness and prudence. The believers...have a dual status. The first aspect of this dual status is related to life, and the second aspect is related to service....Regarding life, we are virgins; regarding service, we are slaves....In watchfulness we are virgins. This relates to what we are....In faithfulness we are slaves. This relates to what we do.

Although we may like the term “virgins,” we may not like hearing that we are slaves. Nevertheless, we are not only virgins, but also slaves. To the virgins, the Lord is the Bridegroom, but to the slaves, He is the Master. Thus, not only we have a dual status, but the Lord also has a dual status. On the one hand, He is our pleasant Bridegroom and, on the other, our strict Master. Sometimes He is very pleasant with us, but at other times He deals with us in a strict way. (Life-study of Matthew, p. 758)

Today’s Reading

The virgins need something inward—the inward filling of the oil in the vessel. The slaves, however, need something outward—the spiritual talent. The infilling of the Holy Spirit is inward, but the talent, the spiritual gift, is outward. As vessels we need the oil inwardly, and as slaves we need the talents outwardly.

The oil that fills the vessel reaches the very bottom of the vessel. It is from within that the renewing of our being takes place, and it is from within that transformation transpires. There is a great lack of this inward working among Christians today. Rather, many Christians are striving to improve their outward appearance in order to make a show. Religion is concerned with outward show, but God’s grace in the infilling of the Holy Spirit gets into us and transforms us from within. The inward oil is very different from outward makeup. Makeup changes our complexion immediately. But God’s way is that we drink of the Spirit and let the Spirit saturate our being. Then our appearance will change from within. For example, I eat and drink well, and nourishing food saturates my being. This gives me a healthy complexion.

The fact that we need to be renewed from within does not mean that we do not need outward activities. The one who received five talents traded with them diligently and gained another five talents. This indicates that we need both the inward renewing and the outward service, the inward growth and the outward actions. We need to be deeply impressed with this principle. Regarding the aspect of life, we need to be renewed from within, and regarding the aspect of service, we need to be very active outwardly. Sometimes we may be so active outwardly that we neglect the inward renewing. But at other times we may care so much for the inner life that we do not work adequately. To be like this is to be an unturned cake (Hosea 7:8). On one side we are burned to charcoal, and on the other side we are raw. Neither side is good for eating. We need to be a turned cake. If we work too much, the Lord will tell us to rest. But if we rest too much, the Lord will tell us to work.

[Matthew 25:14] says that this man delivered his possessions to his slaves....I believe that the possessions delivered to the slaves include the gospel, the truth, the believers, and the church.

Verse 15 says, “To one he gave five talents, and to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability.” While oil in the parable of the virgins signifies the Spirit of God, talents in this parable signify spiritual gifts (Eph. 4:8; Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:4; 1 Pet. 4:10; 2 Tim. 1:6). For life we need oil, the Spirit of God, even His fullness, that we may be enabled to live the virgin life for the Lord’s testimony; for service, for work, we need the talent, the spiritual gift, that we may be equipped as a good slave for the accomplishment of the Lord’s work. (Life-study of Matthew, pp. 758-760)

Further Reading: Life-study of Matthew, msgs. 65-66

« WEEK 7 — DAY 5 »

Morning Nourishment

Matt. 24:45 Who then is the faithful and prudent slave, whom the master has set over his household to give them food at the proper time?

1 Cor. 14:31 For you can all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be encouraged.

In what way should we be faithful in the service?...First, in Matthew 24:45-51 we are told clearly that the Lord commissioned us to take care of His household. His household refers to the believers (Eph. 2:19), who are the church (1 Tim. 3:15). The church today is the Lord's house and also the Lord's household, what we refer to as the folks....The Lord charged us, commissioned us, to minister something to His household, that is, to the believers in the church.

According to Matthew 24:45, what we minister is food....At the proper time we have to minister food, the life supply, to the Lord's people. Do not say that others have a gift of teaching to teach you the Word of God and minister spiritual food to you but that you do not have such a gift. There is not such a thought here. All the Lord's servants received the gift for their commission. (CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, "The Way to Practice the Lord's Present Move," pp. 514-515)

Today's Reading

The Lord, before going to the heavens, delivered to us His church with all the believers. If He had given to us only the talent to minister the life supply, then to whom would we minister? However, He gave us two categories of things: one is His possessions, the other is the talents. Today we have the church with all the believers as the possession, the portion to us, to which we can give something, and we have the talents as the spiritual gifts. You cannot say you are not gifted. Actually, you are much gifted. For this reason I have always encouraged you to function. Some may consider this merely to be my practice. They may say that in all of Christianity they only saw the practice of good preachers speaking to a crowd. They never saw a meeting with so many standing up to speak....One after another stands up like popcorn popping. It is very good to have a "popcorn meeting." This is altogether what we expect to have. This is not my teaching; this is the Bible's teaching (1 Cor. 14:24, 26, 29-32). We all have to learn to function....For you to speak is to minister food to the Lord's household at the proper time.

Whoever serves food knows the proper time. If you are serving food every day, you have to make breakfast, lunch, and dinner. To buy a cup of coffee and a doughnut for breakfast is the lazy way. If we are like this in the spiritual realm, we will be poor slaves to minister the life supply to the master's folks at the proper time. The proper time in the morning is breakfast. Also, good wives prepare the best sandwiches for their husbands to bring to the office for lunch at the proper time and are accustomed to preparing a big dinner for their family.

In like manner, whenever we meet together, this is one of the proper times, the appointed times, for you to minister the proper food to the Lord's folks. Suppose, however, that I was sloppy, not reading the Word. If I did not labor adequately in the Word and came to speak to you, I would just be ministering to you "a cup of coffee and some doughnuts." To cook a nourishing, good breakfast, requires your diligence. According to the context of this parable, the faithful one is the diligent one. Faithful in Matthew 24:45 equals diligent, and slothful in 25:26 equals lazy. We must be diligent in seeking the Word so that we could prepare to serve good food when we come to the meeting. The eating time is the proper time, and the meeting time is the proper time....The meeting times are the proper times when we all have to minister some portion of the life supply to our folks, to our fellow believers, to our possessions.

The Lord has given us the church as the object for us to serve, and He has also given us the ability, the skill, the gift, to care for our obligation. (CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, "The Way to Practice the Lord's Present Move," pp. 515-516)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, "The Way to Practice the Lord's Present Move," ch. 10

« WEEK 7 — DAY 6 »

Morning Nourishment

Matt. 24:49 ...[An evil slave] begins to beat his fellow slaves and eats and drinks with the drunken.

25:18-19 But he who had received the one went off and dug in the earth and hid his master's money. Now after a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them.

All of us should be those who are feeding the Lord's people at the proper time (Matt. 24:45) and using the Lord's talents in full (25:20, 22). On the negative side, we should not be those beating our fellow slaves (24:49). You may not do your duty to perform your service, but instead you are criticizing and sometimes even strongly opposing the brothers. You are not doing the work but beating the fellow slaves.

Although I have no intention of exposing anyone, many are exposed by the light in the messages I release. That is not my job but the Lord's work. We all have to stop our criticizing, judging, opposing, and murmuring as a kind of beating. We must spend our time, our energy, and our everything to do a positive service for the Lord's interest. (CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, "The Way to Practice the Lord's Present Move," pp. 539-540)

Today's Reading

Furthermore, we should not be one who "eats and drinks with the drunken" (Matt. 24:49). This is to drift away further, a further fall from beating the fellow slaves. You have fallen away to the world and have become a world lover. The worldly people are drunk and even drugged with worldly things. They are stupefied with the present age. To eat and drink with them is to enjoy what they enjoy.

We should not eat and drink with the drunken, nor should we dig in the earth and hide the Lord's talent (25:18). The earth signifies the world, so to dig in the earth signifies getting into the world. Any association, any involvement, with the world, even a little worldly talk, will bury the Lord's gift to us.

The way to be faithful is to scatter the Lord's word, which is food to every hungry one. The Lord's household is composed not only of believers but also of sinners. Who will go to feed the hungry, sinful people? We all have to say, "Me!" We have to go....We must do everything that we can to spread the Word of God.

Many Christians are nearly void of the truth; they have the Word of God, but they do not care for it, nor do they realize how much is in it. In this age of apostasy the Lord, by His mercy, has opened up His Word to us. Many of the divine riches have been printed and published....Why do we not go out with these riches?...This is one of the ways to feed the Lord's people.

The Lord has given talents to all His slaves....Everyone was required to trade, to do business, to make money for the Lord's kingdom. In order to do this, we have to feed His people at the proper time. Every day is a proper time, a meal time....There is someone ready to eat everywhere, so we need to be those using the Lord's talent in full.

Also, by His mercy and through His grace we must do the best not to beat the fellow slaves, the fellow believers. Do not criticize or murmur about them. Do not speak anything negative about them, because you do not have the time to do it. Your mouth was not made for criticizing but for speaking forth Christ. To criticize the brothers is to beat the fellow slaves. This will cause us to be punished. We should also not go into the world to enjoy ourselves with the stupefied, drugged, and worldly people. We have to be the sober ones. We should not dig into the earth to bury or hide our talent. We should have a job to maintain our living, but we should not dig into it. We are different from the worldly people. I encourage all my grandchildren [and all the young people in the churches] to do their best to get the highest education, but [not to] "dig into" their education just to become an expert....Do not dig a hole that buries the talent the Lord gave you. We all need to be faithful in the Lord's service. (CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, "The Way to Practice the Lord's Present Move," pp. 540-541, 544-546)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, "The Way to Practice the Lord's Present Move," chs. 8, 10

<< WEEK 7 — HYMN >>

Hymns, #1307

1 The day approaches; Jesus soon is coming.
Redeem the time; it must not slip away.
Lord, make us ready for the cry: "Behold Him!"
By using every moment of each day.
When Jesus comes, will we go in to meet Him?
When Jesus comes, will we from self have ceased?
He's coming soon to take the wise ones with Him.
Oh, let us not be left outside the feast.

2 Lord, help us to redeem these golden moments;
Our vessels fill with ointment from above;
Help us amen each trial and tribulation;
Increase in us; make us abound in love.
He's coming soon—these moments are so precious.
The oil is here—Oh, let us buy the more.
Amen the trials and welcome tribulations—
The kingdom's ours through these afflictions sore.

3 Lord, ever turn us from our soulish pleasures
To gaze upon Thy tender, loving face.
Oh, keep us running forth to meet the Bridegroom
And patiently attending to the race.
When Jesus comes, will we be in His presence?
When Jesus comes, will we His face behold?
Oh, let us not return to sloth and folly,
But jealously His loving presence hold.

4 As His dear bride, let us go forth to meet Him,
Our lamps well-trimmed, our fires burning bright,
Our vessels filled, our eyes set on His glory,
To be with Him completely satisfied.
Yes, satisfied—Christ and His bride together.
Yes, satisfied—throughout eternity.
Oh, what a rest, what joy, what love, what favor
To be His bride when He comes to His feast!