

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's day Prophesying Message Seven : Being Watchful in Life and Faithful in Service

I. Overview:

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. The 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, and that they take oil in their vessels signifies that they have the Spirit of God filling and saturating their souls. The word buy indicates that a price must be paid; having the filling of the Holy Spirit is at a cost. 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. The Lord called the slaves and delivered to them His possessions according to each own ability. We need to use the Lord's gift to supply others with Christ as their spiritual food at the proper time. We should not mistreat our fellow believers by criticizing, judging, or exposing them and we should not render the Lord's gift useless, letting it lie waste under the cloak of certain earthly excuses. Our labor for the Lord by His resurrection life with power will never be in vain.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Explain the significance of the oil within the lamps and vessels with oil.

Oil signifies the Spirit of God. Lamps signifies the spirit of the believers, which contains the Spirit of God as the oil. 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, and man's personality is in his soul. Hence, vessels here signifies the soul of the believers.

B. How do we pay the price that our soul be filled and saturated with the Spirit?

The saturating Spirit that fills our entire being, especially our soul, is not free. It is something that we have to pay the price for, that you have to buy. 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.

Day 2 —

A. How was the parable of the virgins in Matthew 25 revealed to us?

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.

B. Explain the relationship of the watchfulness with your prayer in the New Testament.

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.

Day 3 —

A. How do we experience Ephesians 4:30, "not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God"?

Do not make Him unhappy; we must make Him happy. Because He has really joined us with Him as one, 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. Why have you grieved Him? Because you did not buy Him or did not pay the price for Him as the oil.

B. How do we live a life of buying the oil by not wasting our time?

We may rise up to live a life of always buying an extra portion of the oil by not wasting your time in doing anything. 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.

Day 4 —

A. Why do we need to be renewed from within and to have outward service?

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. We need to be a turned cake.

B. Expound the spiritual meaning in Matthew 25 of the possessions and talents.

The possessions delivered to the slaves include the gospel, the truth, the believers, and the church. In Matthew 25 the talents signify spiritual gifts. 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.

Day 5 —

A. Expound the Lord gave us two categories of things before going to the heavens.

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 we all have to learn to function. For you to speak is to minister food to the Lord's household at the proper time.

B. How will we be a faithful slave to minister the proper food to the Lord's folks?

To cook a nourishing, good breakfast, requires your diligence. We must be diligent in seeking the Word so that we could prepare to serve good food when we come to the meeting. 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.

Day 6 —

A. How should we use the Lord's talent to make money as we are His slaves?

The Lord has given talents to all His slaves. Amen 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.

B. What are the Lord's some important charges for the slaves?

We must do the best not to beat the fellow slaves, the fellow believers. 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.

III. Conclusion:

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. We need 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. Every day we should 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. Slaves signify believers viewed from the aspect of service. God's possessions signifies the church with all the believers, who constitute God's household. Talents signify spiritual gifts; the filling of the Spirit in life enables us to use the spiritual gift in service that we may be a perfect member of Christ. We use the Lord's gift to preach gospel and to minister His riches to others in church meetings and home meetings. These services 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.