

“GOING DEEPER” SESSION FOUR: *The Oil of Intimacy—Part Two*

I. BRIDAL PARADIGM OF KINGDOM MINISTRY AT THE END OF THE AGE—REVIEW

Then the Kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the Bridegroom. 2 Five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3 Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, 4 but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. (Matt. 25:1-4)

- A. Jesus likened Himself to a Bridegroom (Matt. 9:15), His Kingdom to a wedding (Matt. 22:2), described the ministry as those encountering Him as a Bridegroom (Matt. 25:1) and will return in answer to the intercessory prayer of His Church with a bridal identity (Rev. 22:17).

- B. They took their lamps (public ministry) as virgins (born again believers) and went out to meet (encounter) the Bridegroom.

Then the Kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ministries seeking Jesus as the Bridegroom. This refers to the End Times (v. 13). In other words, this is a picture of end-time ministry with the revelation of Jesus as the Bridegroom God.

The foolish virgins took their lamps (ministries), but *took no oil*. In other words, they pursued ways to increase their ministry with greater zeal than to cultivate the “oil of intimacy.” The wise *took oil* in their vessels with their lamps (ministries) as they pursued intimacy more than ministry.

- C. Bridal paradigm: invitation to intimacy with God (1 Cor. 2:9-12)

“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” 10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches (discerns) all things, yes, the DEEP THINGS OF GOD...12 Now we have received...the Spirit who is from God, THAT WE MIGHT KNOW (experience) THE THINGS that have been freely given to us by God. (1 Cor. 2:9-12)

D. Summarizing the bridal message

The Holy Spirit is inviting us to enjoy intimacy with God by allowing us to *experience the deep things of His heart*. The Holy Spirit discerns the deep things of God’s heart (His emotions) that we might know or “experience” them.

God opens His heart wide that we would experience *a lifestyle of active intimacy with His heart*, that energizes our hearts with God’s power (Eph. 3:16-19). This speaks of receiving the anointing of the Spirit to walk in three-fold love (anointing to receive God’s affection for us and to return it to Jesus with an overflow for others).

E. The “oil of intimacy” speaks of cultivating our secret life in God.

This results in our hearts being tenderized (sensitized) to freely feel (receive) more of God’s love and desire for us. Our spiritual capacity increases (tenderized emotions to feel God) as it enlarges our desire for Him and our revelation of God’s desire and beauty. It empowers our emotions with zeal for righteousness.

F. The background of this parable is the well known ancient Jewish custom that involved celebrating a wedding over the course of several nights (ideally seven nights, for a wealthy family).

Each night of the *wedding has celebratory activities with different aspects highlighted*. This parable pointed out how the foolish virgins needlessly missed out on the first night of the wedding celebration.

II. THE PRIMARY MESSAGES OF THIS PARABLE

- A. There is a point that believers can lose out in their anointed ministry opportunities before God.

The tragedy is that ministries can lose decades of *anointed fruitfulness* that they cannot make up for. There is a point that we go too far to escape damage that affects our destiny in God so that we do not experience the *full destiny* of all that God ordained for us.

The “shut doors” of anointed fruitfulness are real. This is not the shutting of the door of salvation, but of our full involvement in the End Times revival.

1. As the ancient Jewish celebration lasted several nights with each evening highlighting something different, so we understand that God is releasing different waves of the Spirit that are building up to the full end-time revival culminating with the Second Coming which is the grand finale (Wedding Supper of the Lamb). God will release strategic waves of the Spirit and corresponding ministry anointing that is building up to a glorious End Times crescendo.
2. The essential point in this parable is that the foolish virgins would needlessly miss out on the first night of the wedding celebration. The principle is that many ministries will also needlessly miss out on part of the “end-time revival wedding celebratory activities.”
3. We must be watchful in order to be ready and equipped to fully participate in each “night” of the end-time revival (wedding celebration). God is now preparing leaders for the future waves of the Spirit. He insists that only prepared vessels with spiritual reality lead each wave. *In other words, a lifestyle of pursuing ever increasing ministry opportunities while neglecting intimacy leads to missing the fullness of anointed opportunities (door of ministry shut).*

- B. What we gain in God today (heart reality and ministry impact) is often lost tomorrow.

Over the years, one may develop a larger ministry profile (they are more popular) yet their heart reality and true ministry impact is decidedly less than it was ten years previously. In this parable, all ten virgins' ministries started off *with oil* and a shining ministry that brought light to others. Foolish ministries did not take time to sustain the "oil of intimacy" in their hearts that they had for a season (verse 1).

- C. God ordained "kingdom order" that no one can acquire the "oil of intimacy" for another. Spiritual preparedness is not transferable. This "kingdom order" is based on Jesus' zeal for our love.
- D. The call to watchfulness (v. 13) or heart connect (v. 1, 6, 10) with the Bridegroom God.
- E. Other messages – God's delay is longer than we expect causing some to lose their watchfulness due to three common giants (mundaneness, pressures, temptations).

We overcome by encountering Jesus as the Bridegroom. They all slept and trimmed lamps (Matt. 25:5, 7) speaks of the natural processes of life (rigor, responsibilities in natural realm).

Also, *God's delay is more challenging than we expect*. Therefore, we have urgency to acquire "oil" knowing it is difficult to stay prepared.

III. WATCHFULNESS – WHAT IS IT?

- A. Watching to see that we establish a *lifestyle of encountering Jesus as the Bridegroom God*.
- B. Watching to see that we *persevere in careful obedience* (anointing for wholeheartedness).

Careful obedience to not step off God's path into compromise will not come automatically in light of the escalating pressures and temptations. We need oil to sufficiently hold our hearts steady in the End Times.

Scripture continually emphasizes the need for careful obedience (Deut. 4:6, 15; 5:1, 32; 6:3, 25; 8:1; 11:32; 12:1, 32; 16:12; 17:10, 19; 19:18; 24:8; 26:16; 28:13; 32:46; Josh 22:5; 23:11; 2 Kings 17:37; 21:8; 1 Chron. 28:8; 33:8; Ezek. 20:21; Titus 3:8; 2 Peter 1:15).

- C. Watching in the sense of seeing (watching) God's activity with *prophetic understanding* (anointed observations) in an eschatological global sense. Jesus rebuked leaders in His generation for not observing the significance of prophetic events (Luke 19:41-44).
- D. Watching to cultivate a *spirit of prayer* – partnering with Jesus in changing history by intercession.
- E. Watching speaks of *spiritual vigilance* (diligence) – giving our full attention to not subtly slip into spiritual lethargy.

IV. END-TIME FORERUNNERS WITH A THREE-FOLD MESSAGE

At midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the Bridegroom is coming: go out to meet Him' (Matt. 25:6)

- A. Midnight is when it is darkest and most difficult to be awake spiritually.

In the midnight of history, just before the Second Coming, God will raise up a forerunner cry that can be heard by those with ears to hear. While most are sleeping, the Lord comes suddenly, "as a thief in night" (Matt. 24:42-44).

B. The three-fold message –

1. “*Behold, the Bridegroom...*” – Jesus must be proclaimed as the Bridegroom God.
2. “*Behold, the Bridegroom is coming*” – He is coming (intervention, breakthrough) with power, thus there will be consequences. Things do not stay the same when Jesus manifests His power. Revival results in the ruin of many ministries content with superficiality before the revival.
3. “*Go out to meet Him*” – make the necessary effort to get up and go out to encounter Jesus. We must make the necessary effort (fasted lifestyle) to get out of bed (they were in bed) and exert energy and make pains to rearrange our lives. This will involve getting the clutter out and often downsizing our position, possessions, ministry reputation and profile. Most of us do not need half of what we have.

V. MINISTRIES RECOGNIZING THEIR LACK OF OIL AND DIMINISHING MINISTRY

The foolish said to the wise, Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out. 9 The wise answered, saying, “No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.” (Matt. 25:7-9)

- A. Give us some of *your oil*, for *our lamps are going out* – the foolish recognize the mistake of their previous neglect.

Ministries that *once* had oil will first burn out *then go out*. The wise answered in an appropriate way in saying “No” – they realized the necessity of refusing ministry opportunities that are not God’s best because nobody can seek this reality for you.

This seems harsh but it is humility. Our pride with a messianic complex sees ourselves as overly necessary to everyone’s deliverance. Spiritual preparedness is not transferable. This answer is based on Jesus’ zeal for our love.

- B. Go buy oil for yourselves – engage in the God-ordained process of getting oil because the wise understand that spiritual preparedness is not transferable.

Our supreme preoccupation in life must be to acquire the “oil of intimacy.” It will take courage to persevere through other people’s disapproval.

I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes (oil of Matt. 25) with eye salve, that you may see. (Rev. 3:18)

- C. The waves of the end-time Bridegroom revival began to break in (first activities of wedding).

While they went to buy, the Bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with Him to the wedding; and the door was shut. 11 Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, “Lord, Lord, open to us!” 12 He answered, “Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.” (Matt. 25:10-12)

1. They “went in” with Him and “knew” Him – intimacy with Jesus in ministry (Song 7:11-13). The wise went in to the wedding celebration (over several nights) referring to the progressive unfolding of end-time revival through successive waves of the Spirit.
2. While the foolish ministries went to buy oil in finally heeding the need to acquire the “oil of intimacy” the move of the Spirit broke out across the land. Therefore, they were too late to be prepared to be an authentic voice or “light bearer” for the first part of the wedding activities (initial waves of the end-time Bridegroom revival). In other words, the Bridegroom came or broke in with a season of God’s manifest presence (wave of revival).

3. *Door shut* (Luke 13:25) – opportunity for ministering with depth in that particular wave of revival was lost. “*Lord, open to us!*” – open the door of anointed opportunity. The Lord answered, “I do not *know* (intimacy) you” in terms of *intimacy in end-time Bridegroom ministry*. This is not a reference to salvation as when Jesus said, “I *never* knew you!” (Matt. 7:23). Jesus did call them *evil* (Matt. 24:48); *wicked and lazy* (Matt. 25:26); *cursed* (Matt. 25:41).

- D. Watching must be the supreme issue in our lives. We must grasp the difficulty in managing the “tyranny of the urgent” to stay the course to go deeper in God and walk out God’s best.

Watch therefore, for you know...the hour in which the Son of Man is coming. (Matt. 25:13)

Going Deeper Session 4 Study Guide Questions

- How can I establish a lifestyle of obedience to stay on the path God has for me?
- What will keep the oil burning in our lamps through the darkest hour of history?