

THE PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS

(PART 2)

Jon Macon

We previously studied about the parable of the ten virgins, and some of the important lessons that it teaches us. Among these lessons, we noted that the parable is applied particularly to Christians. We also learned that each individual Christian is responsible for preparing for Christ's coming. Finally, we examined the main lesson of the parable, which is the warning for us to make ready. We continue our study of this parable in Matthew 25:1-13 with consideration of the urgency of our making ready, and the fact that this life is our one and only chance to make ready for the return of our Lord.

The right time

After the wise and ready ones went in for the marriage, Matthew 25:10 adds that "the door was shut." There is time *right now* to get ready, but we have no promise of any additional time. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev 3:20). "Any man" may open the door for the bridegroom now. But when he comes, that door will be permanently shut. The five foolish virgins came after the door was shut and said, "Lord, Lord, open to us" (Matt 25:11). But the bridegroom replied, "Verily I say unto you, I know you not" (Matt 25:12). This is a powerful and sobering message to Christians. We must be ready for Christ's coming, "or else." Jesus said, "When once the master of the house is risen up, and has shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity" (Luke 13:25-27). Like the five foolish virgins, there will be Christians who have the door shut upon them eternally because they were not prepared to meet the Lord. One unmistakable lesson taught here is that the doctrine of "once saved always saved" is a fallacy, and only *discourages* people from watching and being ready. Once saved does *not* mean always and forever saved. We must watch and be ready, or the door will be shut on us!

Only one opportunity

Also, this parable emphasizes the point that there is no "second chance"

THE PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS

(PART 2)

(continued)

at salvation. We have this one opportunity in this life. There will be no “purgatory” or “baptism for the dead” or “reincarnation,” or any other kind of second chance to be saved. Hebrews 9:27 declares that “*it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.*”

The primary lesson Jesus is teaching us in the parable is to prepare ourselves and be ready for his coming at any time. That is the context beginning in Matthew 24:35, and Jesus concludes the parable by reiterating its main point: “*Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man comes*” (Matt 25:13). Mark 13:35-37 similarly says, “*Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house comes, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch*” (see also Luke 12:35-48; 17:22-37; 21:33-36; 1 Thes 5:1-11; 2 Pet 3:10-14; Rev 16:15). Watching and being ready for Christ’s return means “doing” his will at all times (Matt 24:46). We need to put on the spiritual armor he has given us (1 Thes 5:1-10), and stand against the devil and overcome (Eph 6:10-18). Those who overcome will inherit all things (Rev 2:7,11,17,26; 3:5,12,21; 12:11; 21:7). As a Christian, we are “constrained” by the love that he had for us to die for us to live only for him and not anymore for ourselves at all (2 Cor 5:14-15). The life of Christ is our light (John 1:4), and we are saved by his life (Rom 5:10). In his life, Jesus did not do his own will, but only the Father’s (John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38). He did nothing of himself, but always and only what pleased the Father (John 5:19,30; 8:28-29). Jesus glorified the Father on this earth and finished all the work that He gave him to do (John 17:4). He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death on the cross (Php 2:6-8). We must arm ourselves with his mind (Php 2:5; 1 Pet 4:1) and live *the rest of our time in the flesh* doing God’s will (1 Pet 4:2). If that is what we are truly doing *all* the time, then at whatever point we die, or if Jesus comes first, then we will be ready. Jesus will save all those who *obey* him (Heb 5:9). That is what it means to “watch” for his coming. That is the main lesson of the parable of the ten virgins.