

Monday, 8 August 2016

Matthew 25:1-13

"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.

An extension of my mother's theology to always be ready for the Lord's return and one which she frequently counseled her children saying, "Don't ever be doing something that you would not want to be doing when the Lord returns." She lived a life founded upon the constant expectation of the Lord's imminent return. There was always oil in her lamp.

Is there oil in my lamp?

Tuesday, 9 August 2016

Matthew 25:14-30

"For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' And he who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not,

even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

The question is not how many resources the Lord has bestowed upon me, but is what I am doing with those that I am given. Am I faithful over a little? I am not to compare my mission field with anyone else. It is so easy to look at the responsibilities given to someone else and dream about the plaudits he is getting. I need to recognize that I have been given not a little but a lot. The Lord has said, "Here's your vineyard, now tend it." My response must be to praise Him and get to work.

Wednesday, 10 August 2016

Matthew 25:31-32a

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations,

The Time of the Culmination--The Kingdom of Heaven finally displayed in all its glory--And all nations, peoples and tribes will be present. Present to answer one Question, "Did you believe/trust/commit/obey Me?" All the teachings of the Lord Jesus the Christ come together in one glorious moment. "Do you truly have faith in Me?"

There are only two possible answers. Yes or No! No quibbling or room for equivocation. Yes or No!

Thursday, 11 August 2016

Matthew 25:32-33

Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left.

But wait, the Question won't be asked, it will be answered. The Son of Man, the Lord Jesus the Christ, will separate the yeses from the noes. At last, James 2:17-18 'So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.' becomes the Third Thing, the Gold Standard, the proof of the pudding. The yeses to the right, the noes to the left.

Friday, 12 August 2016

Matthew 25:34-36, 40

Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.'...And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'

Matthew 25:41-43, 45

"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not

welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.'...Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.'

No jury, no defense attorneys, no appeal to a higher court, only the just Judge to issue the ruling. And the evidence is clear; I either did or did not demonstrate my love for Him by my obedience to His Word. (John 14:15) John 14:12-21 is shown as fulfilled. "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you." "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him."

Saturday, 13 August 2016

Matthew 25:46

And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

That moment when the 'Here and Now' becomes 'Forever with the LORD.'

Hallelujah! Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus, come!

A lot has been skimmed over in the last few months as I have looked at what it is to live in the Kingdom of Heaven in the here and now. My prayer is that each of us will continue to seek to apply the words of our Lord to our daily life and encourage each other to do so.

Lord's Day, 14 August 2016

Psalm 119:90

Your faithfulness endures to all generations; you have established the earth, and it stands fast.

Your faithfulness—the great immovable object, Thou changes not, Thy compassion fails not! The Rock that stands, the Beacon that never dims. The Hand that is always reaching out. You are the One True God.

VOICES TOGETHER

Daily Meditations from the Scriptures



August 8-14, 2016

I was dealing with a very difficult and perplexing problem in the spring of 1989 and tackling it by trying to learn everything I could on the subject. One evening, as I continued my studies, God told me very clearly that the root of the problem was that I did not know Him. I put down the book I was reading and picked up a Bible figuring that was where I was going to find Him. That began what has been a 27-year search to know, really know in a John 17:3 way, the Lord, God the Almighty.'

Voices Together has and continues to be, a very important part of that search. It is extracted from my daily meditations and is shared in the hope that others will be encouraged to turn to the Scriptures as a rich source of guidance for prayer and meditation.

It is published daily on the website of the Fellowship of Ailbe, www.ailbe.org; along with material by other writers to encourage and assist in our walks as disciples of Jesus Christ.

These messages can also be received as daily emails or in a monthly printed version by sending a request to:

Pastor John Nunnikhoven
The Church at Prison, Inc.
PO Box 8318
Essex Junction, VT 05452

or at
The Fellowship of Ailbe, voices@ailbe.org
Realizing the presence, promise and power
of the Kingdom of God.

*LORD or LORD, God the Almighty always refers to the Trinitarian God.