

International Training for Elders and Responsible Ones

Warsaw, Poland October 4-6, 2024

GENERAL SUBJECT:
LIVING IN THE REALITY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

(Saturday—Evening Session)

Message Six **Being Watchful in Life and Faithful in Service**

JL Hymns: 908. 910

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

- Matt 25:4 But the prudent took oil in their vessels with their lamps.
Matt 25:9 But the prudent answered, saying, Perhaps there will not be enough for us and for you; go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.
Matt 25:10 And as they were going away to buy, the bridegroom came; and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast. And the door was shut.
Matt 25:14 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.
Matt 25:15 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.
Matt 25:20 And he who had received the five talents came and brought another five talents, saying, Master, you delivered to me five talents; behold, I have gained another five talents.
Matt 25:21 His master said to him, Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful over a few things; I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your master.
Matt 25:22 And he who had received the two talents also came and said, Master, you delivered to me two talents; behold, I have gained another two talents.
Matt 25:23 His master said to him, Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful over a few things; I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your master.

I. For life, we need oil, the Spirit of God, even His filling, that we maybe enabled to live the virgin life for the Lord's testimony—Matt. 25:4, 9-10:

- Matt 25:4 But the prudent took oil in their vessels with their lamps.
Matt 25:9 But the prudent answered, saying, Perhaps there will not be enough for us and for you; go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.
Matt 25:10 And as they were going away to buy, the bridegroom came; and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast. And the door was shut.
- 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 Cor 11:2 For I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God; for I betrothed you to one husband to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.
 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):
Prov 20:27 The spirit of man is the lamp of Jehovah, / Searching all the innermost parts of the inner being.
Rom 8:16 The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.
 - 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).

Rom 8:16 The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.

Rom 12:11 Do not be slothful in zeal, but be burning in spirit, serving the Lord.

- 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.

Matt 5:14 You are the light of the world. It is impossible for a city situated upon a mountain to be hidden.

Matt 5:15 Nor do men light a lamp and place it under the bushel, but on the lampstand; and it shines to all who are in the house.

Matt 5:16 In the same way, let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in the heavens.

Phil 2:15 That you may be blameless and guileless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine as luminaries in the world,

Phil 2:16 Holding forth the word of life, so that I may have a boast in the day of Christ that I did not run in vain nor labor in vain.

4. The prudent virgins took oil in their vessels with their lamps—Matt. 25:4:

Matt 25:4 But the prudent took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

- 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.

Rom 9:21 Or does not the potter have authority over the clay to make out of the same lump one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?

Rom 9:23 In order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He had before prepared unto glory,

Rom 9:24 Even us, whom He has also called, not only from among the Jews but also from among the Gentiles?

Matt 25:4 But the prudent took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

- 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).

Rom 8:9 But you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Yet if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not of Him.

Rom 8:16 The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.

1 Pet 2:25 For you were like sheep being led astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Heb 13:17 Obey the ones leading you and submit to them, for they watch over your souls as those who will render an account, that they may do this with joy and not groaning; for this would be unprofitable to you.

- 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.

Matt 25:9 But the prudent answered, saying, Perhaps there will not be enough for us and for you; go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.

Rev 3:18 I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined by fire that you may be rich, and white garments that you may be clothed and that the shame of your nakedness may not be manifested, and eyesalve to anoint your eyes that you may see.

2 Cor 5:10 For we must all be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ, that

each one may receive the things done through the body according to what he has practiced, whether good or bad.

- 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.

Matt 25:9 But the prudent answered, saying, Perhaps there will not be enough for us and for you; go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.

Dan 5:27 TEKEL-You have been weighed in the scales and found to be lacking.

- 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:

Matt 25:9 But the prudent answered, saying, Perhaps there will not be enough for us and for you; go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.

Matt 25:10 And as they were going away to buy, the bridegroom came; and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast. And the door was shut.

Rev 3:18 I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined by fire that you may be rich, and white garments that you may be clothed and that the shame of your nakedness may not be manifested, and eyesalve to anoint your eyes that you may see.

Zech 4:6 And he answered and spoke to me, saying, This is the word of Jehovah to Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says Jehovah of hosts.

Zech 4:12 And I answered a second time and said to him, What are the two olive branches that are by the side of the two golden spouts, which empty the gold from themselves?

Zech 4:13 And he spoke to me, saying, Do you not know what these are? And I said, No, sir.

Zech 4:14 And he said, These are the two sons of oil, who stand by the Lord of the whole earth.

Judg 9:9 But the olive tree said to them, Shall I leave my fatness, because of which God and men are honored by me, and go to wave over the trees?

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.

Matt 22:37 And He said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."

Phil 3:8 But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ

1 Pet 2:4 Coming to Him, a living stone, rejected by men but with God chosen and precious,

1 Pet 2:6 For it is contained in Scripture: "Behold, I lay in Zion a cornerstone, chosen and precious; and he who believes on Him shall by no means be put to shame."

1 Pet 2:7 To you therefore who believe is the preciousness; but to the unbelieving, "The stone which the builders rejected, this has become the head of the corner,"

1 Pet 1:19 But with precious blood, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot, the blood of Christ;

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.

Phil 3:7 But what things were gains to me, these I have counted as loss on account of Christ.

Phil 3:8 But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ

Phil 3:9 And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is out of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God and based on faith,

Phil 3:10 To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

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.

Psa 119:147 I anticipated the dawn and cried out; / I hoped in Your words.

Psa 119:148 My eyes anticipated the night watches, / That I might muse upon Your word.

4. We need to deal with sins thoroughly—1 John 1:7, 9.
 - 1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from every sin.
 - 1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
5. We need to abide in the fellowship with the Lord daily and hourly—v. 6; 2 Cor. 13:14.
 - 1 John 1:6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and are not practicing the truth;
 - 2 Cor 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
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.
 - 2 Tim 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,
 - 2 Tim 3:17 That the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work.
 - Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to God.
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.
 - Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,
 - Dan 6:10 Now when Daniel came to know that the writing had been signed, he went to his house (in his upper room he had windows open toward Jerusalem) and three times daily he knelt on his knees and prayed and gave thanks before his God, because he had always done so previously.
 - Col 4:2 Persevere in prayer, watching in it with thanksgiving,
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.
 - Eph 5:14 Therefore He says, Awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.
 - Eph 5:15 Look therefore carefully how you walk, not as unwise, but as wise,
 - Eph 5:16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.
 - Eph 5:17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.
 - Eph 5:18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissoluteness, but be filled in spirit,
 - Eph 5:19 Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and psalming with your heart to the Lord,
 - Eph 5:20 Giving thanks at all times for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to our God and Father,
 - Eph 5:21 Being subject to one another in the fear of Christ:
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.
 - Eph 4:29 Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up, according to the need, that it may give grace to those who hear.
 - Eph 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed unto the day of redemption.
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.
 - 1 Thes 5:16 Always rejoice,

- 1 Thes 5:17 Unceasingly pray,
 1 Thes 5:18 In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.
 1 Thes 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit;
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.
 Rom 8:4 That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.
 1 Cor 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.
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.
 Phil 1:19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,
 Phil 1:20 According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.
 Phil 1:21a For to me, to live is Christ ...
 Psa 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is / For brothers to dwell in unity!
 Psa 133:2 It is like the fine oil upon the head / That ran down upon the beard, / Upon Aaron's beard, / That ran down upon the hem of his garments;
 Psa 133:3 Like the dew of Hermon / That came down upon the mountains of Zion. / For there Jehovah commanded the blessing: / Life forever.
 1 Thes 5:25 Brothers, pray also for us.

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:

- Matt 25:20 And he who had received the five talents came and brought another five talents, saying, Master, you delivered to me five talents; behold, I have gained another five talents.
 Matt 25:21 His master said to him, Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful over a few things; I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your master.
 Matt 25:22 And he who had received the two talents also came and said, Master, you delivered to me two talents; behold, I have gained another two talents.
 Matt 25:23 His master said to him, Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful over a few things; I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your master.
 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?
 Matt 24:46 Blessed is that slave whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.
 Matt 24:47 Truly I say to you that he will set him over all his possessions.
 Matt 24:48 But if that evil slave says in his heart, My master delays,
 Matt 24:49 And begins to beat his fellow slaves and eats and drinks with the drunken,
 Matt 24:50 The master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour which he does not know,
 Matt 24:51 And will cut him asunder and appoint his portion with the hypocrites. In that place there will be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.
- 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.
 1 Cor 7:22 For the slave who has been called in the Lord is the Lord's freedman; likewise the free man who has been called is Christ's slave.
 1 Cor 7:23 You were bought with a price; do not be slaves of men.
 2 Pet 1:1 Simon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have been allotted faith equally precious as ours in the righteousness of our God and

- Savior, Jesus Christ:
- Rom 1:1 Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, a called apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,
2. *His possessions* signifies the church (Eph. 1:18) with all the believers, who constitute God's household (Matt. 24:45).
 - Eph 1:18 The eyes of your heart having been enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,
 - 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?
 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.
 - Matt 25:15 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.
 - Matt 25:16 Immediately he who had received the five talents went and traded with them and gained another five.
 - Matt 25:17 Similarly, he who had received the two gained another two.
 - Matt 25:18 But he who had received the one went off and dug in the earth and hid his master's money.
 - Matt 25:19 Now after a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them.
 - Matt 25:20 And he who had received the five talents came and brought another five talents, saying, Master, you delivered to me five talents; behold, I have gained another five talents.
 - Matt 25:21 His master said to him, Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful over a few things; I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your master.
 - Matt 25:22 And he who had received the two talents also came and said, Master, you delivered to me two talents; behold, I have gained another two talents.
 - Matt 25:23 His master said to him, Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful over a few things; I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your master.
 - Rom 12:6 And having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;
 - 1 Cor 12:4 But there are distinctions of gifts, but the same Spirit;
 - 1 Pet 4:10 Each one, as he has received a gift, ministering it among yourselves as good stewards of the varied grace of God.
 - 2 Tim 1:6 For which cause I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.
 - 2 Tim 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.
 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.
 - Matt 25:21 His master said to him, Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful over a few things; I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your master.
 - Matt 25:23 His master said to him, Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful over a few things; I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your master.
 5. In this age we must use the Lord's gift to save people and to minister His riches to them—v. 27.
 - Matt 25:27 Therefore you should have deposited my money with the money changers; and when I came, I would have recovered what is mine with interest.
- B. Our inward motive for serving the Lord is our love for Him—Exo. 21:5; Rev. 2:4-5.
- Exo 21:5 But if the servant plainly says, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free;

- Rev 2:4 But I have one thing against you, that you have left your first love.
 Rev 2:5 Remember therefore where you have fallen from and repent and do the first works; but if not, I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place, unless you repent.
- 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.
 Rom 11:36 Because out from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.
 Num 18:1 Then Jehovah said to Aaron, You and your sons and your father's household with you shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary; and you and your sons with you shall bear the iniquity of your priesthood.
- 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.
 Rom 12:1 I exhort you therefore, brothers, through the compassions of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable service.
 Rom 12:2 And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.
 Rom 12:11 Do not be slothful in zeal, but be burning in spirit, serving the Lord.
 Acts 13:36 Now David, having served his own generation by the counsel of God, did indeed fall asleep and was buried with his fathers and saw corruption;
 1 Cor 12:14 For the body is not one member but many.
 1 Cor 12:15 If the foot should say, Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body, it is not that because of this it is not of the body.
 1 Cor 12:16 And if the ear should say, Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body, it is not that because of this it is not of the body.
 1 Cor 12:17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were the hearing, where would the smelling be?
 1 Cor 12:18 But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, even as He willed.
 1 Cor 12:19 And if all were one member, where would the body be?
 1 Cor 12:20 But now the members are many, but the body one.
 1 Cor 12:21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.
 1 Cor 12:22 But much rather the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.
- E. We need to use the Lord's gift to buildup 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:
 Matt 25:27 Therefore you should have deposited my money with the money changers; and when I came, I would have recovered what is mine with interest.
 1 Pet 4:10 Each one, as he has received a gift, ministering it among yourselves as good stewards of the varied grace of God.
 Col 1:7 Even as you learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow slave, who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf,
 Col 4:12 Epaphras, who is one of you, a slave of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God.
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 fullgrown in Christ—Rom. 15:16; 12:1; Col. 1:28.
 Rom 15:16 That I might be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, a laboring priest of the gospel of God, in order that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, having been sanctified in the Holy Spirit.
 Rom 12:1 I exhort you therefore, brothers, through the compassions of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable service.
 Col 1:28 Whom we announce, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man full-grown in Christ;

2. We need to supply others with Christ as their spiritual food at the proper time—Matt. 24:45:
- 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?
- 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.
- Acts 5:42 And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and announcing the gospel of Jesus as the Christ.
- Acts 8:4 Those therefore who were scattered went throughout the land announcing the word as the gospel.
- 2 Tim 4:2 Proclaim the word; be ready in season and out of season; convict, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and teaching.
- b. We need to desperately endeavor to build up a habit of speaking in any meeting—1 Cor. 14:26, 4-5, 12, 31.
- 1 Cor 14:26 What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.
- 1 Cor 14:4 He who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but he who prophesies builds up the church.
- 1 Cor 14:5 I desire that you all speak in tongues, but especially that you would prophesy; and greater is he who prophesies than he who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, that the church may receive building up.
- 1 Cor 14:12 So also you, since you are zealous of spirits, seek that you may excel for the building up of the church.
- 1 Cor 14:31 For you can all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be encouraged.
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.
- John 21:15 Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs.
- John 21:16 He said to him again a second time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep.
- John 21:17 He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.
- 1 Cor 12:31b ... And moreover I show to you a most excellent way.
- 1 Cor 13:4 Love suffers long. Love is kind; it is not jealous. Love does not brag and is not puffed up;
- 1 Cor 13:5 It does not behave unbecomingly and does not seek its own things; it is not provoked and does not take account of evil;
- 1 Cor 13:6 It does not rejoice because of unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth;
- 1 Cor 13:7 It covers all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.
- 1 Cor 13:8 Love never falls away. But whether prophecies, they will be rendered useless; or tongues, they will cease; or knowledge, it will be rendered useless.
- 1 Cor 13:13 Now there abide faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.
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 are weak in faith, and belong-suffering toward all—Matt. 24:49; 1 Thes. 5:14.
- Matt 24:49 And begins to beat his fellow slaves and eats and drinks with the drunken,

- 1 Thes 5:14 And we exhort you, brothers, Admonish the disorderly, console the fainthearted, sustain the weak, be long-suffering toward all.
5. Through any involvement in the world, we render the Lord's gift useless, letting it lie waste under the cloak of certain earthly excuses—Matt. 25:18-19.
- Matt 25:18 But he who had received the one went off and dug in the earth and hid his master's money.
- Matt 25:19 Now after a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them.
- 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:
- Num 17:8 And on the next day Moses went into the Tent of the Testimony, and there was the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi: it had budded; it even put forth buds and produced blossoms and bore ripe almonds.
- 1 Cor 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace unto me did not turn out to be in vain, but, on the contrary, I labored more abundantly than all of them, yet not I but the grace of God which is with me.
- 1 Cor 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.
- 1 Cor 16:10 Now if Timothy comes, see that he is with you without fear; for he is working the work of the Lord, even as I am.
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.
- John 16:13 But when He, the Spirit of reality, comes, He will guide you into all the reality; for He will not speak from Himself, but what He hears He will speak; and He will declare to you the things that are coming.
- John 16:14 He will glorify Me, for He will receive of Mine and will declare it to you.
- John 16:15 All that the Father has is Mine; for this reason I have said that He receives of Mine and will declare it to you.
- John 20:22 And when He had said this, He breathed into them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit.
- 1 Cor 15:45b ... the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
- Eph 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;
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.
- Num 17:8 And on the next day Moses went into the Tent of the Testimony, and there was the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi: it had budded; it even put forth buds and produced blossoms and bore ripe almonds.
- 2 Cor 1:8 For we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of our affliction which befell us in Asia, that we were excessively burdened, beyond our power, so that we despaired even of living.
- 2 Cor 1:9 Indeed we ourselves had the response of death in ourselves, that we should not base our confidence on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead;
- Eccl 9:4 For there is hope for whoever is joined to all the living—surely a living dog is better than a dead lion -
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 22:32-34; 1 Pet. 5:5-6.
- Exo 2:14 And he said, Who appointed you a ruler and a judge over us? Are you thinking to kill me as you killed the Egyptian? And Moses became frightened and said, Surely the matter is known.
- Exo 2:15 Now when Pharaoh heard of this matter, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from Pharaoh to dwell in the land of Midian, and he sat down by a well.
- Exo 3:14 And God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM. And He said, Thus you shall say to

- the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you
- Exo 3:15 And God also said to Moses, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial from generation to generation.
- Luke 22:32 But I have made petition concerning you that your faith would not fail; and you, once you have turned again, establish your brothers.
- Luke 22:33 And he said to Him, Lord, I am ready to go with You both to prison and to death.
- Luke 22:34 But He said, I tell you, Peter, a rooster will not crow today until you deny three times that you know Me.
- 1 Pet 5:5 In like manner, younger men, be subject to elders; and all of you gird yourselves with humility toward one another, because God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.
- 1 Pet 5:6 Therefore be humbled under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time,
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.
- 1 Cor 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace unto me did not turn out to be in vain, but, on the contrary, I labored more abundantly than all of them, yet not I but the grace of God which is with me.
- 2 Cor 1:8 For we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of our affliction which befell us in Asia, that we were excessively burdened, beyond our power, so that we despaired even of living.
- 2 Cor 1:9 Indeed we ourselves had the response of death in ourselves, that we should not base our confidence on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead;
- 2 Cor 1:12 For our boasting is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in singleness and sincerity of God, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God, we have conducted ourselves in the world, and more abundantly toward you.
- 2 Cor 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not out of us.
- 2 Cor 4:8 We are pressed on every side but not constricted; unable to find a way out but not utterly without a way out;
- 2 Cor 4:9 Persecuted but not abandoned; cast down but not destroyed;
- 2 Cor 4:10 Always bearing about in the body the putting to death of Jesus that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.
- 2 Cor 4:11 For we who are alive are always being delivered unto death for Jesus' sake that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.
- 2 Cor 4:12 So then death operates in us, but life in you.
- 2 Cor 4:13 And having the same spirit of faith according to that which is written, "I believed, therefore I spoke," we also believe, therefore we also speak,
- 2 Cor 4:14 Knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and will make us stand before Him with you.
- 2 Cor 4:15 For all things are for your sakes that the grace which has abounded through the greater number may cause the thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.
- 2 Cor 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart; but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.
- 2 Cor 4:17 For our momentary lightness of affliction works out for us, more and more surpassingly, an eternal weight of glory,
- 2 Cor 4:18 Because we do not regard the things which are seen but the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.
- 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.
- 1 Cor 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

BEING WATCHFUL TO BUY THE OIL

Now we need to see how to be watchful, which means we need to see how to buy the oil. To be watchful is to take care of the oil. When I was a young Christian, I considered that to be watchful was to look to the heavens for His coming and even to figure out when He would come. Later, I began to realize that this understanding was altogether not practical. By reading Matthew 25:1-13 again and again, I discovered that to be watchful is to take care of the oil. A careless driver is not watchful about the gasoline in his tank. He may be driving to a certain destination and then suddenly runs out of gas because he did not watch the gas gauge. Because of his carelessness, he suffers. Today since you are driving your "Christian car," do you care for your "gasoline"? The gasoline in your car is the Spirit, the oil. All the time you have to buy the oil.

Some young Christians indicated to me that they wanted to have some enjoyment in the world, especially since the Lord was not coming back immediately. They also said that the Lord gave us the time to be joyful, which to them meant to enjoy the worldly pleasures. Perhaps when they were over forty-five, then they would begin to love Him, because they were not so sure that He would come back within twenty years. Even if the Lord does delay His coming back, though, do we know when we will die? Probably none of those dear ones who lost their lives when the space shuttle *Challenger* exploded had any inkling that they would lose their lives that day. Does anyone know when he will die?

You may not believe that the Lord will come back in the next twenty-five years or that you will die within this time. Therefore, you may desire to live carelessly as a Christian, loving whatever you like and doing whatever is a pleasure to you. Even if your figuration is right, sooner or later you will die, and you will die in a situation in which you will have never accumulated enough oil in your vessel.

To accumulate a deposit of the extra portion of the Holy Spirit in your being is not an overnight job. In order to grow and develop properly, a human being should be exercised for at least eighteen years to take in the nourishing life supply and to study, learn, and be educated. The more one lives in a loose, unrestricted way, the more he loses the chance and the time to accumulate the proper education in every way, not only in school. To be a proper person, you need to learn things every day. As a man over eighty, I am still learning and acquiring new knowledge. I use my dictionary frequently to pick up new words. I told some of the young saints that I would hate to see that after ten years they are still the same. To pick up things that become a constitution of your proper being is not a matter of one day or even one year. It is a matter of daily business for a lifetime.

I am still concerned that when the Lord comes back or when I die, by that time I will have had a sufficient amount of oil deposited in my vessel. If I die before His coming back, I will go to Paradise in Hades to see Abraham, David, and Paul and to be happy with these brothers, yet some day I will rise up and go to the air to stand before the Lord. Whether or not I will be raptured early remains to be seen. If we are raptured late, we will miss the wedding feast (25:10). In so many things I have the assurance, but in the matter of attending the wedding feast I do not have the assurance.

To be watchful does not mean only to watch for His coming. To be watchful is to prepare yourself every day by buying the oil. Everyday we need to buy some oil. Our spiritual transformation is a daily and lifelong matter. Everyday there should be some accumulation, some deposit of oil added to our being. We have not been that much in the proper exercise every day to exercise ourselves even every minute to buy the oil. A baby becomes a big boy by his daily eating. This boy is an accumulation, a constitution, of the food that he has eaten and assimilated. For us to be qualified to be raptured to enter into the Bridegroom's wedding feast requires our passing through a long period of accumulating the spiritual oil. From the time you become a Christian, you should buy the oil to be deposited in your vessel every day.

I went to a meeting of one particular group of Pentecostal Christians. During their meeting there was much so-called speaking in tongues and prayer, but after their meeting probably no one was

watchful. In every way you could see their looseness. I exercised to be with them in my spirit, and our spirit always would restrict us in what we say and do. I believe that even in that meeting with them I gained more of the Spirit, because by His mercy I was watching by praying to be filled with the Spirit.

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 goodtime 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.

WATCHING UNTO PRAYER

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.

BUYING THE OIL FOR OURSELVES

All ten virgins were raised up from the dead, but their rapture after their resurrection was according to how much oil they had in their vessels. 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. The foolish virgins discovered that they did not have the adequate supply of oil, so they wanted to borrow from the prudent ones (Matt. 25:8). Then the prudent virgins indicated that what they had was sufficient only for themselves (v. 9). Here is a principle—we can never borrow others’ spirituality. One’s spirituality can qualify only himself. You cannot borrow another’s eating, and another person cannot eat for you. It is impossible. You cannot even borrow another person’s study. You cannot ask someone to go to school for you and borrow whatever he learns. The prudent virgins told the foolish ones they had to buy the oil for themselves. When they are going to buy, the ready ones who have the sufficient oil are raptured. No doubt, that is before the tribulation.

The foolish ones were charged to go to those who sell the oil. According to Zechariah 4:11-14 and Revelation 11:3-4, the two witnesses during the great tribulation, the two olive trees and the two sons of oil, will be the oil sellers. That means they will give people more Spirit. The foolish virgins

have to go to these oil sellers in the great tribulation to buy the oil. At that time the entire world will be a place of tribulation. As long as you are there, you are suffering; you are passing through the tribulation. If the foolish ones do not go to these oil sellers in the tribulation, they could never get the oil. This shows us that the foolish virgins will have to pay some price in suffering to get the oil, a price that they had never paid in their entire Christian lives. Even after the resurrection, they will still have to go through the suffering to pay the price for the oil. Finally, the foolish ones came (Matt. 25:11), but their coming, their rapture, was too late. The point again is this—since the time we were saved, every day should be redeemed by us to buy the oil. We all need to rise up from today to buy the oil.

NOT GRIEVING THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD

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.

NOT QUENCHING THE SPIRIT

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.

WALKING ACCORDING TO THE SPIRIT

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 you 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.

BUYING THE OIL TO ANNUL OUR BARRENNESS

The real revival is to be raised up. We do not need to resurrect in the future to discover that we need to go and buy the oil. We need to be raised up today, every day paying the price to buy the Spirit. This is real revival, and I do believe that by being such persons, we will be fruitful. Many of us have to admit that we are barren. I hate to see the barrenness. We can give many excuses for this, such as our having been defamed and criticized. But how much have we been doing in these past few years in the matter of contacting others and speaking the Lord Jesus?

The many missionaries over the past two centuries would never have gone out if they had made excuses. The dear missionaries who went to China could have said, “The Chinese are closed and are too conservative. Even if they would open up their doors, they would not listen to anyone from the West. If I go, I will waste my time.” There are always excuses against the ministry going out. But thank the Lord, these missionaries went, and they went in all kinds of hardships. According to my observation, the Presbyterian missionaries who went to China one hundred years ago were some of the best. Even though they did not know as much truth as we do, have as much light as we have, or have as much growth in life as we have, they had a heart for Jesus, to preach Him to the poor ones. They made

a big success, and even I am here ministering today due to their labor. They did everything to open the door for the preaching of the Lord Jesus. When we grew up, we were under their mission work, and I studied at schools established by the missions. They brought the Bible to China, translated it into Chinese, and passed it on to us. Furthermore, they preached the Lord Jesus. At least they could say in Chinese, "Jesus loves you." Sometimes children would mock them or throw stones at them. Some were really caught by them even though they could only say "Jesus loves you."

Saints, we have no excuse. We do not need to go that far to China. We are in our Jerusalem, which is our neighborhood. We have to go. At least we can go once a week or once every two weeks to a certain neighbor. You could go to visit the same neighbor twenty-six times within one year. I do not believe that nothing will happen if we visit our neighbors in this way. Something will happen. If we all get one this year, all the churches will double.

The increase of some of the churches in the past few years is too low. Is this not a shame? This is due to our not buying the oil daily. If we would buy the oil daily, this will issue in something that cancels or annuls our barrenness. We will surely be fruitful. Just to encourage the brothers to go out to distribute the books is a temporary thing.

LIVING A LIFE OF BUYING AN EXTRA PORTION OF THE OIL

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. We all must rise up.

I believe that I have given you enough deeper truths already. I feel burdened to fellowship with you in this way. 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. Whether or not we will be raptured early to enter into the wedding feast depends upon our daily buying of the Spirit from this moment. This is a lifelong matter, not an overnight matter. To get the proper and adequate education is not an overnight matter. A person needs to begin his study from kindergarten and pass through many grades until he finishes college. Take this fellowship as something serious and solemn. This is not just advice but my serious fellowship with all of you in love. I do hope that we all would rise up to live such a life. I do not like merely to stir up or move people, because that does not work. 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. (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1985, vol. 5, "The Way to Practice the Lord's Present Move," pp. 526-533*)