

# The Parable of the Ten Virgins.



**A brief excerpt of the study:** In this study we examine the salvation of God that is mainly demonstrated through the process of building a house, from its foundation to its expected usefulness. Paul said, “You also have been **put to death to the Law through the body of Christ**, for you to belong to another, **to the One having been raised out from the dead, so that we should bear fruit to God.**” Romans 7 verse 4. And it is this expectation of fruit which is according to the New Nature that is addressed in the Parable of the Ten Virgins. As such the parable illustrates the responsibility of each believer to pursue the things of the Spirit, and the pitfalls that await those who are negligent.

**We will begin with a prayer:** We thank You, Father, for this opportunity, our prayer is for Your word to go out in the power of Your Spirit so that it might bring repentance to the knowledge of the truth to those who hear, we pray this in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The main text of our study is from Matthew 25 verses 1 to 13, which reads, “Then the kingdom of the heavens **will be likened to ten virgins, who, having taken their lamps, went forth to meet the bridegroom.** And five of them were foolish, and five wise. **For the foolish, having taken their lamps, took no oil with them; but the wise took oil in vessels with their lamps.** And the bridegroom tarrying, **they all became drowsy and were sleeping.** And at the middle of the night, **there was a cry: ‘Behold, the bridegroom! Go forth to meet him!’** Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, **‘Give us of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’** And the wise answered, saying, ‘No, lest it might not suffice for us and you. Go rather to those selling, and buy for yourselves.’ And while they are going away to buy, **the bridegroom came, and those ready went in with him to the Wedding Feast. And the door was shut.** And afterward, the other virgins come also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’ And answering he said, **‘Truly I say to you, I do not know you.’** Therefore watch, **for you do not know the day, nor the hour.**”

Now the Parable of the Ten Virgins was given as part of the answer the Lord was giving to the questions His disciples asked Him saying, “Tell us, **when these things will be? And what is the sign of Your coming, and the consummation of the age?**” Matthew 24 verse 3, which He mainly addresses in chapter 24. However, chapter 25 He covers the 2nd half of that answer, beginning with the catching away of the Church when the Lord returns to take to Himself those who belong to Him,

which the parable of the Ten Virgins addresses. And He closes His discourse by describing two main judgments of God. The first is in respect to those that belong to Him, and the second has to do with the final judgment of the consummation of the age.

Now, the Lord Himself describes His return saying, “And **they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. And He will send His angels with a great trumpet call, and they will gather together His elect** from the four winds, from the ends of the heavens to the ends thereof.” Matthew 24 verses 30 to 31. And He described “the catching away” of the elect in these terms, “So also will be **the coming of the Son of Man. Then two will be in the field: one is taken, and one is left.**” Matthew 24 verses 39 to 40. The general point the Lord was portraying was that, as the elect are removed from the earth as it relates to Noah from the flood, by the same measure destruction will fall upon those who are on earth, which John describes at the sounding of the Sixth Trumpet in Revelation 9 verses 13 to 18. So the point of labour for us to understand is that the elect are first removed from the earth before the judgement of God falls.

However, in Chapter 25 the Lord relates the “catching away” in a more refined form through the Parable of the Ten Virgins, as it relates to the hope of the inheritance of the Kingdom of God. As Paul and Jude also used the example of Israel coming out of Egypt into the wilderness to express a similar point. That is, even though some have come out of Egypt with the hope of a land flowing with milk and honey, yet they fell in the wilderness through unbelief. As Jude writes, “Now I want to remind you, you having known all this, **that Jesus, having saved at one time a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward He destroyed those not having believed.**” Jude 1 verse 5. [Hebrews 3 verses 16 to 19.] The separation from the same group of people is given more substance when we consider those who entered the promised land were their children, representing those that walk according to the new nature, while the parents represented the old man of the flesh. So, all those with the mentality of Egypt which is of slavery to Sin and of the flesh, gave no regard to the power of God and fell. And God charged them saying, “Because all these men **who have seen My glory and the signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have put Me to the test now these ten times, and have not heeded My voice, they certainly shall not see the land** of which I swore to their fathers, **NOR shall any of those who rejected Me see it.**” Numbers 14 verses 22 to 23. However, those with a new outlook through faith in the power of God crossed over to possess the land with Joshua. Likewise, the ten virgins are a portrayal of people who have the same hope of heaven, through a relationship with God in Christ Jesus, which sets them apart from the unbelievers of the world. But even from this group there is a separation, the wise to have entered in and the foolish that were left behind.

Now, the first important point we need to establish is that, we have to be assured this parable is applying to the Church, otherwise, we will miss the warning contained and it becomes ineffective. And the main point that proves this parable is aimed at the Church, is the fact that the Bridegroom came to gather the elect to the Wedding Feast. That is to say, the marriage supper of the Lamb that is held in heaven, as John writes, “**The marriage of the Lamb has come, and His bride has made herself ready.** And it was given to her that she should be clothed in bright, pure, fine linen.” **For the fine linen is [the righteous acts of the saints.]**” Revelation 19 verses 7 to 8. So, when the announcement was made at midnight proclaiming, ‘**Behold, the bridegroom! Go forth to meet him!**’ It is in reference to the shout of the Archangel, which Paul described saying, “**The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a loud command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we, the living remaining, will be caught away together with them in the clouds for the meeting of the Lord in the air; and so we will be always with the Lord.**” 1 Thessalonians 4 verse 16 to 17. The next point that proves this

parable is intended for the Church is the term, **“watch, for you do not know the day, nor the hour,”** which is a statement that is used in reference to the day of rapture. As the Lord said, **“And concerning that day or hour no one knows,** not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, **but only the Father. Take heed; watch; for you do not know when the time is.”** Mark 13 verse 32 to 33. Therefore, we can be assured the Parable of the Ten Virgins is referring to the Church.

And the reality of the catching away of the church is illustrated in the teaching of Pastor Joseph Prince, through the analogy of the story of Isaac and Rebekah. **“Then Rebekah and her maids arose,** and they rode on the camels **and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and departed.** Now Isaac came from the way of **Beer Lahai Roi,** for he dwelt in the South. And **Isaac went out to meditate in the field in the evening; and he lifted his eyes and looked,** and there, the camels were coming. **Then Rebekah lifted her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she dismounted from her camel;** for she had said to the servant, **“Who is this man walking in the field to meet us?”** **The servant said, “It is my master.” So she took a veil and covered herself.** And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done. **Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah’s tent; and he took Rebekah and she became his wife, and he loved her.”** Genesis 24 verses 61 to 67. Here, we have Rebekah who represents the chaste virgin bride of Christ following after the Unnamed Servant, that is the Holy Spirit. As Paul says, **“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God,** these are sons of God.” Romans 8 verse 14. And Isaac coming to meet them in the field, represents the Lord Jesus Christ coming with the clouds of heaven to receive His bride. Finally, the Holy Spirit explicitly wants us to know, Isaac took Rebekah to his mothers Sarah’s tent, which according to Paul represents the heavenly Jerusalem, as he says, **“But the Jerusalem above is free, who is our mother.”** Galatians 4 verse 26. So, it is within this frame of mind the rapture of the Church is expressed, as the angel said to John, **“Blessed are those having been invited to the supper of the marriage of the Lamb.”** And he says to me, **“These are the true words of God.”** Revelation 19 verse 9. Then it is very important for us to know, why some are taken from the Church, and why some are left?

Now, the first important thing we need to understand about the Ten Virgins, is that they have all established themselves on the truth of the Word of God, having the same expectation of Heaven. And this concept is portrayed in the fact that both the foolish and the wise virgins held fast to the Lamp, which is a reference to the Word of God. As the writer of Psalms says, **“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”** Psalm 119 verse 105. This is to say, the Wise and the Foolish virgins have a sound understanding of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, as to set their foundation firmly upon the Rock. And this is also evident in the fact both the foolish and the wise are all described as virgins, meaning they are without fault, as Paul said, **“For I have betrothed you to one husband, to present a pure virgin to Christ.”** 2 Corinthians 11 verse 2. The next common feature we need to explore is the fact both the wise and foolish were asleep, and this is to signify the Parable of the Ten Virgins is not about the work we do for the Kingdom. Sleeping is a term that is used in respect to work, which we can infer from the parable of the wheat and tares, when the Lord said, **“while men slept,”** and again, **“night is coming when no one will be able to work,”** both of which was in reference to being engaged in the work of the kingdom. [Matthew 13 verse 25, & John 9 verse 4.]

Now, the distinguishing feature between the Wise and the Foolish virgins was the Oil which the wise carried in their vessels. Oil in the bible always represents the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament kings and priests were anointed with oil to represent the Holy Spirit coming upon them to help them fulfil their God given duties. But Oil in the New Testament is a fundamental aspect of our New Nature. So when the Lord says, **“the wise took oil in vessels with their lamps,”** that is to say, the wise were filled with His Holy Spirit in their body, through whom we know Him and are known by Him. The

point being, the wise from the beginning of their journey made a point to walk by the Spirit of God. Now, here it must be pointed out that, anyone who believes the truth of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, that has redeemed us from sin once and for all, has the Holy Spirit. For which reason all the lamps of the Ten Virgins had light. However, when the day comes for Christ to receive His bride and the Church is taken up, then the light of the foolish virgins will go out. That is to say, when the Church is caught away to meet the Lord in the air, this in itself is a signal that the Holy Spirit Himself has left the earth. As Paul says, “For the mystery of lawlessness is working already; **there is only the One at present restraining it, until He might be gone out of the midst.**” 2 Thessalonians 2 verse 7. For which reason it is worth to note, in the days of tribulation that are to follow there will not be a sweeping great revival, but an utter darkness that will cover the whole earth. The only light in the world during that time will be in the land of Israel through the ministry of the two witnesses described in Revelation 11, with the purpose of gathering the children of Israel from the nations.

Now, the main difference between the Wise and the Foolish Virgins, is in respect to the pursuit of life by the Spirit of God through the knowledge of Truth. So, even though both the foolish and the wise walked together in the truth of the Lamp, one was rejoicing in the forgiveness of sins, while the other made the practice of the pursuit of righteousness by the Spirit of God to be the primary aspect of their Christian walk. As Paul said, “Therefore, **having left the beginning teaching of the Christ, he should go on to maturity.**” Hebrews 6 verse 1. The result of which was that only the latter inherited the kingdom of God, while the former were left outside. We have to understand, there is a difference between being saved from the kingdom of darkness by the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the inheritance of the kingdom of God which is by the Spirit of God. The main point being when the Lord returns there will be two types of Christians, which is determined by the manner they constructed their lives, be it by the Spirit of God, or that of the pursuit of the things of the flesh.

In the Parable of the Sower in respect to the one sown among the rocky ground, and in the Parable of the House and its Foundation in respect to one that built his house on sand, the main issue had to do with failure to understand the foundational truth of the faith, that is the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ in Redemption. And Pastor Joseph Prince, teaching on this parable pointed out the Lord's response to those that failed to grasp the fundamentals of the faith was that, “**I never knew you; depart you from Me, those working lawlessness.**” Matthew 7 verse 23. In that, by saying, “Never,” the Lord is making it clearly known that these people were not even saved from sin, for which reason He calls them, “Workers of Lawlessness.” So, the main objective of these parables was to illustrate the test of the genuineness of faith through the knowledge of the truth of God.

However, the Parable of the Ten Virgins, takes it for granted that both the wise and the foolish virgins are established on the foundational truth of the faith. Therefore, the point of concern has to do with the practice of faith, as it relates to the manner we hold our body. As Paul said, “Now **if anyone builds upon the foundation using gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw**, the work of each will become manifest, **for the day will disclose it, because it is revealed in fire**, and the fire itself will prove the work of each, what sort it is. **If the work of anyone that he built up will remain, he will receive a reward. If the work of anyone will be burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, but so as through fire.** Do you not know that you yourselves are God's temple, and the Spirit of God dwells in you? **If anyone [defiles] God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is holy, which you are.**” 1 Corinthians 3 verses 12 to 17. The point Paul was trying to make was that the house represents the manner we live life in the body, that exhibits the nature of Jesus Christ having been set free from the kingdom of darkness. That is, the main objective of God in saving us from the state of being in the flesh that was bound to sin, was that we may resemble His

Son. Paul writes, “Those whom He fore-knew, **He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son**, for Him to be firstborn among many brothers.” Romans 8 verse 29. And again, “**We all may attain to the unity of the faith** and of the knowledge of the Son of God, **unto a complete man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.**” Ephesians 4 verse 13.

And the process by which this is to be accomplished is described by Paul as, “**You are to have put off, concerning the former way of life, the old man**, which is being corrupted according to its desires of deceit, and to be **renewed in the spirit of your mind, and to have put on the new man, having been created according to God in righteousness and holiness of truth.**” Ephesians 4 verses 22 to 24. [Colossians 3 verse 9 to 10.] Remember, in the story of Israel the old generation that was accustomed to the ways of Egypt had to be put aside, in order to give way to those that acquired a new frame of mind that walked in the ways of God. That is to say, the foundation that is set in the death and burial of the Lord Jesus Christ, must be raised above ground in the manifestation of the life of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is through the knowledge of Him. [2 Corinthians 4 verses 10 to 11.]

So, the question now becomes, how is this life of Jesus to be manifested in our mortal body, be it by our own strength or that of the Spirit of God? And the answer to this question is illustrated in the material by which the house is built, which is divided into two categories, one is of incorruptible materials, such as gold, silver, and precious stones. This represents the work that is done by the Spirit of God through the provision of His Grace, in the knowledge of the truth of the Son of God which bears fruit, 30, 60, or 100 fold. As a result this will stand the test of fire, which is of proven faith. [1 Peter 1 verse 7.] The other is of corruptible materials, such as wood, hay, and straw, which represents our own efforts in the flesh, and none of these will pass the test of the fire of faith. The basic rule being, “**All flesh may not boast before God.**” 1 Corinthians 1 verse 29. The point is, the house has to do with what we have allowed our body to be used for, for which reason at the end of his statement, Paul said, “**If anyone [defiles] God’s temple, God will destroy him; for God’s temple is holy, which you are.**” So, the central point of Paul’s statement has to do with the means by which we are to present our vessels to God in sanctification and honour. [Romans 12 verses 1 to 2.]

And Paul describing the New Nature said, “**Now you are not in flesh but in spirit**, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you; **but if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not of Him**. But if Christ is in you, **the body is indeed dead on account of sin**, but **the spirit is life on account of righteousness.**” And this is where we generally stop when it comes to our understanding of the salvation of God. However, Paul follows this with, “**And if the Spirit of the One having raised up Jesus out from the dead dwells in you**, the One having raised up Christ Jesus out from the dead **also will give life to your mortal bodies, on account of His Spirit dwelling in you.**” Romans 8 verses 9 to 11. Please note the process, our spirit is first given life in righteousness when Christ comes to dwell in us by His Holy Spirit, having purified our souls from an evil conscience by His own blood. But this is not where He stops, which is followed by the purification of our body that was dead in sin through the Spirit of God who has come to dwell in us, which Paul describes saying, “**If by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.** For as many **as are led by the Spirit of God**, these are sons of God.” Romans 8 verses 13 to 14. Paul is saying, the fruit of the practice of righteousness which is by the Spirit of God in the knowledge of truth, ought to bear the fruit of Sanctification. Which he affirms in another place saying, “**Now I say, walk by the Spirit, and you should not gratify the desires of the flesh.**” Galatians 5 verses 16. The main point being the salvation of God applies to both Soul and Body, so that He may present us to Himself without spot or blame. Then, the point becomes, either we build our house by the Spirit of God and live, or we seek to do so by the strength of our own might, and suffer loss.

As such, there are two main components that work together that explain the condition of the Five Foolish Virgins. The first and most important one is that, the Foolish virgins have put the goal post at the forgiveness of sins, as a result they have become neglectful of the pursuit of the new life by the Spirit of God in respect to righteousness, which has to do with being sanctified by the Holy Spirit through faith. That is to say, many Christians have the word, and they know of the forgiveness of sins, but this is where they stop, and have not given heed to the pursuit of a life of righteousness by faith. These are the ones illustrated in Luke 14 in the Parable of the Banquet, as well as the Seed sown among the thorns and thistles, in the parable of the sower. All of whom were busy in the pursuit of the things of the world, the cares of this life, the deceitfulness of riches taking precedence, the result of which was that the word was made without effect. So, on the account of their own neglectfulness, in failing to be actively engaged in word, prayer, and the worship of God, they fail to bring forth fruit. The consequence of which was that they missed out on the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, like the five foolish virgins,

The Second has to do with the process by which the house is to be built, in that, they understand the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ when it comes to the forgiveness of sins, but when it comes to a life lived in the body, they have resorted to their own strength in the flesh, to the neglect of the Grace of the Holy Spirit. We have to understand, there is Grace when it comes to deliverance from the kingdom of darkness through the forgiveness of sins, that is Redemption. And again, there is Grace when it comes to the work of the Spirit in righteousness to sanctify our walk, and that is Sanctification. But if you do not understand the latter, and seek to build your house by your own might in the flesh, then you have failed the same way as the Rocky Ground. The fruit of the work of the flesh is no fruit at all, for which reason it is burned. In fact, we can even say, God hates the works of the flesh, because it is of self-righteousness. For which reason, Paul asked, “Are you so foolish? **Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being perfected in the flesh?**” Galatians 3 verse 3. That is to say, having set the foundation by faith in the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, are we now seeking to build the house by the strength of our might? And anyone who seeks to operate by the flesh brings himself under law. As Paul says, “**But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law.**” Galatians 5 verses 18. Then we can apply the inverse and say, when you operate in the flesh you are under the law, and anything that is done in the flesh, will produce pride and conceit. So, Paul speaking in contrast to the flesh, said, “**If we live by the Spirit, we should also walk by the Spirit. We should not become boastful, provoking one another, envying one another.**” Galatians 5 verses 25 to 26. That is to say, if the work is done by the Spirit of God, then we have absolutely nothing to be boastful about in ourselves, nor do we have cause to envy another.

So, the main underlining problem that affected all that failed in the Parable of the Sower, is failure to know purpose, and the means of the pursuit. The one sown in the rocky ground neglected the Word in purpose and pursuit, and was rejected. Please note, it was not that they did not know the Lord, but what they knew of Him, and how they applied the truth which became the problem. Likewise, the one sown among the thorns and thistles, neglected the Spirit of God in purpose and pursuit, and was left behind. So, we may know of the Holy Spirit, but if we do not know the purpose for which He has come, and the work He intends to do in our body as we are led by Him, then we have a similar problem.

There are two parts to the fullness of the Salvation of God, the first has to do with sanctification by the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ which is in respect to sin. The second has to do with sanctification by the Spirit of God which is in respect to righteousness, which has to do with the conduct of our life.

So, Paul says, “Therefore much more, **having been justified now by His blood, we will be saved by Him from wrath!** For if, being enemies, we were **reconciled to God through the death of His Son,** much more, **having been reconciled, shall we be saved in His life!**” Romans 5 verse 9 to 10. The issue that is illustrated in the Parable of the Ten Virgins has to do with the latter part of these verses. That is to say, we do not give equal place to the Sanctification by the Spirit of God, as we do to Redemption by the Blood of Christ, through which we count the work of the Holy Spirit to be inconsequential for salvation. However, if we carefully examine the word of God, Salvation is always expressed as Sanctification by the Spirit of God on the account we have been justified from sin by His Blood. Paul said, “God has chosen you from the beginning **unto salvation in the sanctification of the Spirit, and by faith of the truth;** to this also **He called you through our gospel** to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 2 Thessalonians 2 verses 13 to 14. And Peter also says, “[Elect] according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, **by the sanctification of the Spirit** unto the obedience and **sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.**” 1 Peter 1 verse 2. And there are many more verses that declare this truth to us directly and indirectly, such as, John 3 verse 3 to 6, John 4 verses 23 to 24, Romans 5 verse 21, Romans 8 verses 13 to 14, 1 Corinthians 6 verse 11, Titus 2 verses 11 to 14, Titus 3 verses 3 to 5, and many more.

As such, the issue of modern Christianity is that, we speak of the inheritance of the Kingdom of God to be a forgone conclusion, through which many are deceived to settle for the forgiveness of sins, and fail to see the importance of the pursuit of righteousness by the Spirit of God for Sanctification. The consequence of which is that many will be left behind. To the world, the primary message is, “**Christ Crucified,**” for which purpose the ministry that is aimed at the world is called, the Ministry of Reconciliation, as Paul says, “**God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not reckoning their trespasses to them,** and having put into us the word of reconciliation.” 2 Corinthians 5 verse 19. And again, “**For if, being enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son.**” Romans 5 verse 10. Please note, reconciliation is in respect to the world, as it relates to the death of the Son of God, while we were still enemies of God. However, to the Body of Christ who are already reconciled to God, it is the pursuit of the things of the Spirit, that is the Life of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is by Grace in Righteousness, for which reason the primary message to the body of Christ is, “**As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.**” Romans 8 verse 14.

Now, this statement will shock many Christians. The New Covenant is not about the forgiveness of sins, but the Ministry of Righteousness which is by the Spirit of God. [2 Corinthians 3 verses 8 to 9.] Please do not misunderstand this, the foundation is set on the Ministry of Reconciliation, that is the death of the Son of God. However, the house is built upon the Ministry of Righteousness, and this has to do with the Life of the Lord Jesus Christ, that is the Holy Spirit. As such the primary goal of the New Covenant is not about the forgiveness of sins, which is already established in the death of Christ, but the process by which the life of the Lord Jesus Christ is meant to be manifested in our mortal bodies, as we grow in His likeness through the knowledge of Him. Consider, when God delivered Israel from the bondage of slavery, He established His Covenant of the Law at Mount Sinai by the blood of calves and goats, so that Israel may walk according to the precepts of the Law in order for them to inherit the Promised Land. [Jeremiah 11 verses 4 to 5.] The basis of which was that, “**The man having done these things will live by them.**” Leviticus 18 verse 15.

Likewise, the Ministry of the Spirit of God was established by a greater sacrifice, that is the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the purpose of inheriting the Kingdom of God. As Paul says, “**He is the mediator of a new covenant,** so that, **death having taken place for redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant,** those having been called might receive **the promise of the**

**eternal inheritance.**” Hebrews 9 verse 14. That is to say, the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is the means by which the precepts of the New Covenant are established, in that, the Blood is intended to point us to the Spirit of God. So just as the Law was meant to direct the way Israel ought to live according to the flesh, now the “Helper” has also come to guide the manner we are to live according to the spirit in the worship of God. And this is the primary concept that distinguishes the wise virgins from the foolish. In that, the majority of the Body of Christ know the means by which the New Covenant was established, that is the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. However, we are sadly lacking when it comes to the promise of the New Covenant, which has to do with the work of the Spirit of God, that is the Oil. When we are focused on the forgiveness of sins, that is to say, to know Christ after the flesh, this serves to purify our Soul from the consciousness of evil. [Hebrews 9 verse 14.] However, Paul said, “Therefore from now, we regard no one according to the flesh. **Even though we have regarded Christ according to flesh, yet now we regard Him thus no longer.**” 2 Corinthians 5 verse 16. By saying this, Paul is trying to bring our focus to the new, that is the Spirit which Christ represents in the present. And the Spirit is the expression of the nature of the righteousness of God being manifested in our mortal body.

As such, the New Covenant, which is of the Ministry of Righteousness can be defined by this simple statement, “**And we all having been unveiled in face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as from the Lord, the Spirit.**” 2 Corinthians 3 verse 18. Basically meaning, the Holy Spirit works to transform us into the image of the Lord Jesus Christ we have come to know in His Word. Remember, the main objective of God in saving us from sin was that we may grow according to the image of His Son. And Paul describing the working of the Holy Spirit to this one objective, and says, “**For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us that, having denied ungodliness and worldly passions, we should live discreetly and righteously and piously in the present age, awaiting the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all lawlessness and might purify to Himself a people specially chosen, zealous of good works.**” Titus 2 verses 11 to 14. Here, Paul describes three main components to the salvation of God. First, He redeemed us from Lawlessness. Second, He purified us to Himself. Third, He prepared us for good works. Now, the Parable of the Ten Virgins has to do with the second part of Salvation, that is the work of the Holy Spirit teaching us to deny ungodliness that we may live in the present age, discreetly, righteously, and piously. The point is, Paul describes the Salvation of God, making a clear distinction between the work of Christ in justifying us from Sin through His Blood, to that of the work of the Holy Spirit in sanctifying our walk according to His own Nature.

And Paul throughout his letters earnestly laboured to portray to us the great importance of holding our body in honour. However, we generally understand how our spirit can be blameless, and we can even be persuaded that our soul can be free from the consciousness of evil, but we struggle with the thought that our body can be kept without spot or blame. But Paul tells us, the conduct of our body must be in alignment with our spirit and soul, which is achieved by the working of the Holy Spirit through His Word, and says, “**Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved, entirely blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The One calling you is faithful, who also will do it.**” 1 Thessalonians 5 verses 23 to 24. That is to say, the Spirit of God has specifically come to sanctify our walk, that is the conduct of our body through the renewing of our mind in the knowledge of Him. As he says in Colossians, “**You may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding to walk worthily of the Lord: pleasing in all, bringing forth fruit in every good work, and growing in the knowledge of God,**

being strengthened with all power according to His glorious might.” Colossians 1 verses 9 to 11. And the will of God is expressed as, “**For this is the will of God, your sanctification:** You are to abstain from sexual immorality; each of you to know **how to win mastery over his own vessel in holiness and honor**, not in the passion of lust, **as also the Gentiles, not knowing God.**” 1 Thessalonians 4 verses 3 to 5. So the manner we hold our vessels by the Spirit of God is the main issue that the Parable of the Ten Virgins is addressing.

However, the issue we have is that we do not make a distinction between sanctification that has to do with the Blood, to that of the Spirit. We need to consider why God repeatedly says He sanctified us by His Spirit, if the Blood has already sanctified us once and for all. Then, what purpose does the Holy Spirit serve? We have to understand, the overwhelming central message of the New Covenant is expressed as the work of the Spirit, be it directly or indirectly. That is, the Blood sanctifies us from the world in the forgiveness of sins. However, the Spirit according to His own Nature, that we may be partakers of His Holiness, that is the Life of the Lord Jesus Christ may be manifested in our mortal body, which is the fruit of righteousness. [1 Peter 1 verses 13 to 16.] The error we make is that, we make salvation to be a product of the Cross alone, without giving due regard to the purpose the Holy Spirit was given. And if we do not understand the reason the Holy Spirit is given, as for us to walk in Him bearing His fruit of Sanctification, then our condition is not any different from those that did not understand the Word in respect to redemption and withered away.

Paul said, “Pursue peace with all, and **holiness, without which no one will see the Lord**, observing lest **any be failing of the Grace of God.**” Hebrews 12 verse 14. Now, if we know the fruit of righteousness is sanctification, as Paul said, “For just as you yielded your members [that is the body,] in bondage to impurity and to lawlessness unto lawlessness, so now **yield your members in bondage to righteousness unto sanctification.**” Romans 6 verse 19. And again he says, “But now, **having been set free from sin, and having become slaves to God**, you have **your fruit unto sanctification, and the end is eternal life.**” Romans 6 verse 22. Then it stands to reason, we can read Hebrews 12 verse 14 as, “**without the fruit of righteousness no one will see the Lord,**” since, the fruit of righteousness is sanctification, that is holiness. And he reveals how this fruit is meant to be achieved by the working of the Spirit of God and says, “**Observing lest any be failing of the Grace of God.**” The main point we need to realise is that, the fruit of holiness which is by the working of the Holy Spirit is imperative to the inheritance of the Kingdom of God. That is, God expects us to submit our body to Him in order to bear the fruit of righteousness. As Paul says, “I exhort you, brothers, through the compassions of God, **to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy to God**, well-pleasing, **which is your reasonable service.**” Romans 12 verse 1.

So, it is essential for us to know the central promise of the New Covenant, which is the Ministry of the Spirit in Righteousness for the purpose of the fruit of Sanctification. As such the substance of what we believe, and the outworking of the truth we have received, all of which will have consequences. Paul, when he admonished the believers, did not once argue with them in respect to the validity of them being delivered from the kingdom of darkness in the forgiveness of sins, not even once. However, he vehemently warned against their expectation to inherit the kingdom of God, based on their conduct in their flesh. As he said, “**I forewarn you, even as I warned before, that those doing such things will not inherit God’s kingdom.**” Galatians 5 verse 21. As well as in, 1 Corinthians 6 verses 9 to 10, 2 Corinthians 13 verses 1 to 5, Ephesians 5 verses 5 to 7, 2 Thessalonians 4 verses 3 to 8, and many more. And it is in regard to this central issue Paul encouraged Timothy saying, “But you, O man of God, **flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness.** Fight the good **fight of the faith. Lay hold of the eternal life to which you were called**, and also did

confess the good confession before many witnesses. **I charge you before God, the One giving life to all things, and Christ Jesus, the One having testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate, for you to keep the commandment, without stain, above reproach, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.**” 1 Timothy 6 verses 11 to 14. The one commandment Paul saw fit to stress to Timothy, was to be diligent in the pursuit of the things of the Spirit, which he charged him in the presence of God and Christ, which he also saw fit to remind him in his second letter. [2 Timothy 2 verse 22.]

And Paul specifies two main components in respect to the pursuit of a life of righteousness, which requires us to be actively engaged. In his letter to the Ephesians he said, **“Do not be foolish, but understand what is the Lord’s will, and not to be drunk with wine in which is debauchery. Instead be filled with the Spirit, speaking to each other in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks at all times for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to the God and Father.”** Ephesians 5 verses 17 to 20. It is important to note here, Paul gives being filled with the Spirit in contrast to being drunk with wine, which dulls our senses resulting in all manner of sinful actions. The main point of which is that, we are able to hold our body in honour when we are filled by the Spirit of God. And in his letter to Colossians he writes, **“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing each other in all wisdom, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with grace in your hearts to God. And all, whatever you might do in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”** Colossians 3 verses 16 to 17. The Ephesians and Colossians statements are more or less identical with one exception, in one he says, “be filled with the Spirit” that is the Oil, and the other he says, **“let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,”** that is the Lamp. That is, Paul equates being filled with the knowledge of God’s grace to be the same as being filled with the Holy Spirit.

And he explains how the Spirit works by the Word to sanctify us, and says, **“Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water by the word, so that He might present to Himself the church in glory, not having spot or wrinkle or any of the such things, but that it would be holy and blameless.”** Ephesians 5 verses 26 to 27. After which he describes the same process from the perspective of the Holy Spirit and says, **“He saved us, not by works in righteousness that we did, but according to His mercy, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by that grace, we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”** Titus 3 verses 5 to 7. The point is, the washing of the water of word is defined as an act which the Holy Spirit Himself accomplishes.

And the inseparable working of the Spirit of God which is by the Word is expressed in the statement, **“Now I commit you to God and to the word of His grace, being able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all those having been sanctified.”** Acts 20 verse 32. In saying “the Word of His Grace,” Paul combined the working of the Spirit of God to the truth of His word, which is proclaimed in Grace. That is to say, the New Covenant is all about appropriating the Grace that has come to us in the Holy Spirit, for the purpose of the inheritance. Meaning, there is an abundance of Help that is provided by the Spirit of God to the one who is submitted to the Word of His Grace, in order to live a life free from all manner of idolatrous practices, and immorality. [1 Corinthians 10 verse 13, Hebrews 2 verse 18, & Hebrews 4 verse 16.] As Proverbs says, **“God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”** Proverbs 3 verse 34. The important point for us to realise is that Sanctification is by the Grace of God, which means it can only be achieved by faith. [Romans 4 verse 16.] That is we must believe God by His Holy Spirit seeks to purify our body, the same way He has cleansed our soul by faith in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. As the Lord says, **“They may receive**

**forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those having been sanctified by faith in Me.”** Acts 26 verse 18.

For which reason we need to realise the indispensable part the Scriptures play in the process of our Sanctification. The Spirit works by grace through faith in the knowledge of the truth. For which reason Paul says, **“Every Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for instruction, for conviction, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, having been fully equipped toward every good work.”** 2 Timothy 3 verses 16 to 17. So, we are expected to partner with the Spirit of God in order to bring forth the fruit of Sanctification. That is to say, the Spirit of God, will give us the desire for His word, the desire to pray, and the desire to give, but He will never force us. So, we either respond to the prompting of His Spirit to the fulfilment of His purpose, or we quench Him in the pursuit of the things of the world, to our own detriment.

The Lord said, **“The kingdom of God is thus, as a man should cast the seed upon the earth, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should sprout and grow—he not knows how. Of itself, the earth brings forth fruit—first a plant, then an ear, then full grain in the ear.”** Mark 4 verses 26 to 28. So, it is expected of us to sow the seed of the knowledge of the Son of God in our hearts, that we may grow to resemble Him. As Peter said, **“Like newborn babies, crave pure reasonable milk, so that by it you may grow up in respect to salvation.”** 1 Peter 2 verse 2. Please consider, the rain can fall in the richest fertile soil, but if there is no seed sown, the earth will produce no fruit. So, the Lord says to us, **“abide in Me and My words abide in you.”** John 15 verse 7. We reap what we sow, and if we sow the things of the Spirit sparingly, then we will also reap sparingly, and if we have abundantly encompassed ourselves in the things of the world to the detriment of the things of the Spirit, then from the world we will reap destruction. [2 Corinthians 9 verse 6, & Galatians 6 verses 7 to 8.]

Now, if the state of our mind being renewed in the knowledge of the will of God, is a determining factor for the effective working of the Holy Spirit to sanctify our body, then it is evident that a present active engagement is a necessary aspect of our faith. For which reason John exhorts us to be active in the practice of righteousness for the purpose of purifying ourselves, saying, **“The one practicing righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous.”** 1 John 3 verse 7. And again, **“Everyone having this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”** 1 John 3 verse 3. In that, John associated the obtaining of the glorified body in the likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ to the condition of purification. By which we can apply the same principle which Pastor Joseph Prince used when addressing the foundational issues of the faith to the Parable of the Ten Virgins, in regards to the Lord’s response to the Five Foolish Virgins, which was, **“Truly I say to you, I do not know you.”** Matthew 25 verse 12. That is by saying, **“I do not know you,”** the Lord is illustrating a present day reality, in respect to those that have not continued to walk with Him in His Spirit for the purpose of Sanctification, even though they have known Him to be saved from sin.

The last point we will address in respect to the Parable of the ten Virgins is that, the importance of being diligently engaged in prayer. The Lord said, **“And take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts ever be burdened with dissipation and drunkenness and the cares of life—and that day would come upon you suddenly as a snare.”** Then the Lord says, **“Watch also at every season, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to come to pass and to stand before the Son of Man.”** Luke 21 verses 34 & 36. The one thing the Lord saw fit to warn the church, as the day draws to a close is the importance of an active life of prayer. The effect of which, He described in the Gospel of Matthew saying, **“Watch and pray, that you do not enter into temptation. For the**

**spirit is willing, but the flesh weak.**" Matthew 26 verse 41. The Lord is making the point that, it is through prayer that we draw strength from God, so that the things of the world will not have mastery over us. And Jude also encourages us saying, "But you, beloved, **building up yourselves in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God,** awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ **unto eternal life.**" Jude 1 verses 20 to 21. The Spirit of God, works by Grace through Faith in the knowledge of Truth, that we may bear the fruit of Sanctification. However, if we lack the diligent application of the truth of the word of God in His grace, and fail in our responsibility to be active in the engagement of prayer and worship, then we render the Spirit to be without effect in our lives. That is to say, we are the foolish ones and we did not even know it.

And the main stumbling block for modern Christianity is our misunderstanding of what it means to be born again. In that, because we have not quite understood the original creation of mankind, we have misapplied what it means to be a New Creation, which we supposed to mean the Human spirit to be reborn anew. However, if being born again was anything other than having the Holy Spirit to dwell in us, as to have a recreated human-spirit, then none of the virgins would have been left behind. The Lord said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless **anyone be born of water and of the Spirit,** he is not able to **enter into the kingdom of God.**" John 3 verses 5. The main point of which was that when we say, "Born of Water," this has to do with dying to the nature of Sin, which is redemption. But when we say, "Born of the Spirit," this has to do with the expression of the Life of the Lord Jesus Christ in our mortal body through the Holy Spirit, and that is Sanctification. And both parts have to be true if we are to see the Kingdom of God. As Paul says, "We should draw near with a sincere heart, in full assurance of faith, **our hearts having been sprinkled clean** from an evil conscience and **our body having been washed with pure water.**" Hebrews 10 verse 22.

Paul said, "**The body is dead because of sin,**" then he says, "but **He by His Spirit will give life to your mortal bodies!**" So, a body that is not given life, as to be purified by the Spirit of God, will be left behind to face destruction. The principle of which is that, Paul said, "**Deliver such a one to Satan for destruction of the flesh,** so that **his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.**" 1 Corinthians 5 verse 5. People that miss out on the rapture, being enamoured by the things of the world, or having not sought to walk by the Spirit of God in truth, are effectively delivered into the hands of the enemy. The Lord said to those that were negligent of His invitation to live ready, "**For I say to all of you that not one of those men having been invited will taste my supper.**" Luke 14 verse 24. Meaning, they will be left behind on earth to face the consequences of their choices. Being subject to the trial and tribulation that will come upon the whole earth, when Christians will be subject to great persecution, even to the assurance of death.

For which reason we need to be exhorted of our responsibility to be ever more vigilant in the pursuit of righteousness by faith, as Paul says, as we see the day approaching. The requirement to practice the righteousness of God purely for the purpose of sanctification is a teaching that is of paramount importance to the Body of Christ of any age, but how much more to those upon whom the day is to come suddenly. And this is not in any way apart from the Grace of God, but in recognition of truth with clear warnings of the pitfalls that awaits those that are negligent of this call. Redemption is by Grace, and Sanctification is by Grace, and each is through the knowledge of Truth! And we need both if we are to see the kingdom of God.