

What's Keeping Half of Believers Unprepared for Christ's Return

Lethargy is a huge problem in the church today. This message is so important because of the dullness of people's ears. We need an electric word that acts like a live wire to shake and arouse us from our doldrums and lethargy.

"Those who were foolish took their lamps, but took no oil with them. 4 But the wise took jars of oil with their lamps" (Matt. 25:3-4).

In the parable of the 10 virgins, the fundamental difference in the preparedness of the wise and foolish virgins was that the wise kept extra oil in an added vessel and the foolish did not. Oil, of course, is symbolic of the Holy Spirit. The psalmist of old said, "I shall be anointed with fresh oil" (Ps. 92:10). In other words, oil gets old and stale and we need to be anointed with fresh oil.

Oil is the dividing line between the wise and foolish virgins (Matt. 25:1-13). If we received all the oil we need at salvation, why would we need a parable like this? The point many of us can miss in this parable is that our lives have got to match up to what the baptism in the Holy Spirit has come to do to us, in us and through us.

Do we have a diminishing or a replenishing supply of the Holy Spirit in our lives? That is the dividing line.

"Be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18-19) is God's command. This command was given to believers who were already baptized in the Spirit. The admonition here is to stay filled or maintain the infilling, as the original Greek bears forth the meaning, "Be being filled."

In 1927, Smith Wigglesworth preached a profound prophetic message at Angelus Temple in Los Angeles. By the inspiration of the Spirit he said this:

“There must be a special preparation for the return of Christ, and at least half of all believers will be totally unprepared.”

This agrees with the parable of the 10 virgins.

The standard established by the Lord from the beginning of the church age is the baptism of the Holy Spirit and maintaining that infilling through continually speaking Spirit-inspired utterances.

Even the qualifications for the selection of men to wait on tables in ministry to the widows included being Spirit-filled.

“Brothers, look among yourselves for seven men who are known to be full of the Holy Spirit and of wisdom” (Acts 6:3).

Peter, in rehearsing before the Jews the vision he had of the outpouring of the Spirit upon the Gentiles, said: “As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, as He fell on us at the beginning” (Acts 11:15).

The baptism in the Holy Spirit was a vital and an essential part of the early church.

The church must be careful in not departing from the standard God set from the beginning. The supernatural church is God’s standard. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is where it starts. Even after Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit on a few disciples (John 20:22), they were still commanded to go to Jerusalem and wait for the promise of the Father, which was the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8) in His fullness.

All ministers and saints must humble themselves and unload from their lives the traditions of men that are making the Word of God of none effect (Mark 7:13), give up their worldly

wisdom that is nullifying the manifold wisdom of God from being displayed (Eph. 3:10), and cast off their doubt and unbelief that is short-circuiting the power of God in our generation (Mark 6:5).

Traditions of men, worldly wisdom, doubt and unbelief are some of the weights and the sin that so easily ensnares us and keeps us from running with endurance the race that is set before us (Heb. 12:1). The foolish virgins did not have enough oil to carry them through the midnight hour. Conversely, the extra oil in the added vessel kept the wise virgins ready and carried them through.

We are living in the night season of the church.

“For the darkness shall cover the earth and deep darkness the peoples; but the Lord shall rise upon you, and His glory shall be seen upon you” (Is. 60:2).

“Then the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night. For over all the glory shall be a covering” (Is. 4:5).

These verses tell us that in the night season the glory of the Lord and the fire of God shall be seen on God’s people. We know that this last Scripture was witnessed in Israel during their wilderness journey, but how much more shall this manifestation be enhanced during the days of the outpouring of the Spirit in this church age?

The question is not “Are you saved?” but “Are you being continually filled with the Spirit and burning with the fire of God?”

“Let your waist be girded and your lights burning” (Luke 12:35).

In Bible times, in order to have freedom of activity, men

tucked the skirts of their long robes into their belts around their waist. This signified a readiness of action. But in the night that instruction would not benefit them without also having their lamps burning. When you have no oil, your lamp cannot be kept burning. Not having the fullness of the Holy Spirit in your life is sort of like driving your car at night without the lights on.

Your lamp is the Word of the Lord that burns in your spirit through the infilling of the Holy Spirit.

"The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the heart" (Prov. 20:27).

"And they said to one another, 'Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the way and while He opened the Scriptures to us'" (Luke 24:32).

The point of this parable is that even though the 10 virgins are all saved they were not all ready for the coming of the bridegroom.

"While the bridegroom delayed, they all rested and slept" (Matt. 25:5).

All the virgins were drowsy and fell asleep, and all of them woke up when the cry was made, but only the five wise had enough oil to get their lamps burning and move out to meet the bridegroom.

Wise virgins unload the weights and sin that so easily besets them, and maintain an infilling of fresh oil in their lives that keeps them burning with the fire of God, and prepared for their translation at the bridegroom's return. If death should meet us first, then the way we enter heaven will in part determine our eternal reward and position in heaven.

Paul spoke of attaining unto a certain resurrection, calling it a prize to be gained (Phil. 3:11-14). Even at the end of

his earthly life he pressed into "knowing and gaining Christ" (Phil. 3:8-10). We must do the same and prepare ourselves for this glorious attained place and being ready for our translation.

Here is the rest of that prophetic excerpt from Smith Wigglesworth:

"All the people which are pressing into and getting ready for this glorious attained place where they shall not be found naked, where they shall be blameless, where they shall be immoveable, where they shall be purified by the power of the Word of God, have within them a consciousness of the very presence of God, changing their very nature and preparing them for a greater thing, and causing them to be ready for translation."

May this word stir you and cause you to take great inventory of your life, so that you will undo from your life that which is keeping you from being a wise virgin.

May the earnest reader understand this great mystery.