

## **Danger Zone**

### ***Delay***

Matthew 25:1-13

February 23, 2020 am

HDBC

**A Danger Zone** is an area in which there is a high risk of harm. **Construction zones, military areas, natural dangers (game preserves, Grand Canyon)**

But there are other kinds of danger zones. For example . . .

**There is a temperature** danger zone when it comes to food. It is between 40°F and 140°F. This range of temperature is dangerous because it's below the temperature at which heat destroys bacteria (above 160°F), yet above the cooling range (below 40°F) where the growth of bacteria is slowed.

**When you** see a ***Danger Zone*** sign it is a warning to stay away. If you ignore the sign you could get hurt or killed. Those signs are for our protection.

**This sermon series** is about **Danger Zones** that relate to our spiritual lives. We will look at four danger zones that can cause eternal harm. Danger zones that you do not want to be stuck in. You may be in one of these now, and if so, my goal is to help you see the danger and learn how you can get out. We've considered **Denial & Delusion**. Today let's consider the danger zone of **Delay**.

**The Invitation** consistently on the lips of Jesus was to ***come and follow me***. He was constantly calling people to come to Himself. Even after His death and resurrection He has continued this invitation.

**Some refuse** because they deny the reality of God and thus deny the truth of who Jesus is. Others because they deceive themselves into thinking they do not need Jesus. And then some simply delay responding and ultimately miss the kingdom.

**Last group** most pitiful of all. Those who deny God or who see no need for Christ are making willful decisions to reject Christ. Many will die and go to Hell not because they have taken firm stand against Christ, but because they just never got around to making a commitment to Him. They put it off too long. **Delayed!**

**Matthew 25:1-13** records one of the parables by Jesus. Window to those who are interested in knowing the truth, a wall to those who do not want to learn. Let this parable be a window for you. **Read the text.** Discussion about end of time.

## 1. Preparation for Rejoicing (1-5)

Three parts to Jewish marriage. **Engagement**, normally arranged by parents. **Betrothal**, couple stood before family and friends and exchanged vows. Legally married but did not consummate the marriage and did not live together. Groom would complete place to live and prepare to care for his wife. Might take many months. **Wedding feast.** Groom and groomsman would come for the bride. She and her bridesmaids would be ready and waiting. Normally happened in evening. They would then lead a process to the wedding feast.

**Two classes** of ladies. Those who took oil and those who did not. **Foolish and the wise.** Five prepared, five not. Delay of the groom. All sleep assuming that everything will be fine. Picture of Today!

**Many people** who in their hearts know they need to trust Christ, but are waiting until the last moment. Because they seem to be fine and Jesus seems to be tarrying His coming. So, they get sleepy, contented, unconcerned. Believe they can take care of it when He comes.

**Many people** are anticipating a happy ending to their life. They believe somehow they will make it to Heaven. They are anticipating rejoicing, but they have not taken care of business. They have not prepared.

## 2. Urgent Pleas (6-9)

The groom is coming. All light lamps. Five with no oil see their lamps going out. Beg for oil. No avail. This is a pathetic request for help at the last minute. They have delayed preparation and now they panic. **Why the Delay?**

### A. Counted on Others (8-9)

Note their first response. Give us some help. They thought the others would bail them out at the last minute. That they all could join the groom by sharing the oil of the few. Not enough oil.

**What is the principle?** You cannot enter Heaven on someone else's

salvation. Oil in the Bible often represents Holy Spirit. He indwells every believer. You can't get to Heaven on mom or dad's salvation. Husbands, wives, kids, parents. Salvation is individual, personal thing. No one can do it for you.

## **B. Thought They Had Time (10)**

Note the response of the wise. Go and buy oil. Maybe the foolish thought they would have time to go to market. Went to buy and when they returned, too late.

## **C. Hoped for a Another Chance (11)**

When they returned the party was already in progress and door closed. They begged to be let in but were refused. They had waited too late and now the invitation has been withdrawn. **You do not come to God on your terms!** There are three great deadlines that you cannot cross.

### **1) When You Die**

Death locks you into an eternity. All will die and after that the judgment. No second chances after death. We will all die. **2 people die every second.** One day you will join the statistics. Sometime it is a teenager who is in an accident. A young adult with a terminal disease, middle aged with heart attacks. One day your heart will stop, lungs will cease, blood stop its flow and your soul will be required of you.

### **2) When the Holy Spirit Honors Your Rejection**

There will be a time when God will withdraw His invitation. Salvation not like a U. S. Savings Bond that is held in your name for you to cash anytime you want.

**Invitation offered** for limited amount of time. Prov. 29:1 *The man who hardens his neck after much reproof will suddenly be broken.*

Romans 1:18-24 *And God gave them over...*

**Imagine the people in Noah's day** who begged to board the ark after the rains began to cause water to rise. Too late, God had closed the door and Noah was helpless to do anything.

### 3) When Jesus comes again

This parable is in discuss on his return.

#### 3. Sad Realization (12)

Realize once and for all that it is too late. Nothing can change your eternal destiny. Words cannot begin to describe the utter despair that is felt at that moment. You will know that you have failed to get right with God and it is eternally too late. You are banished forever to a place prepared for the devil and his demons.

D. L. Moody taught a class of young men. Led most to Christ. One refused to yield. He said, "I'm going west and after I've made my fortune I promise I will accept Christ. Weeks later man sick and in hospital. Moody again urged him to trust Christ. Same response. Told Moody he was leaving.

One more attempt to lead him to Christ. ***Mr. Moody, never speak to me again of salvation. I have promised to do it when I return. Good bye.*** That night Moody awakened by knock. Man's wife. Desperately sick. Come. Moody said "No." it would do no good. But she prevailed. Entered room eyes wide open but not conscious of them. Died.

#### 4. Principle to Remember (13)

Be ready. Don't delay. So foolish!

**Welsh minister** leaned over pulpit and said, "Friends I have a question to ask. I cannot answer it. You cannot answer it. If an angel from heaven were here, he could not answer it. If a demon from hell were here, he could not answer it." Every eye fixed on speaker. "The question is this, (quote from Heb. 2:3)

***How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?***

**Another Reason for Not Delaying:** Not only does it jeopardize your eternity, but also that of others. Wonder how many parents lived godless lives before kids, later got saved, but whose kids never did. Every moment that you delay you are influencing that many others.