

Message Three

Our Preparation for the Lord's Coming

(2)

Being Faithful in Service

I. Matthew 24:45-51 reveals that we must be faithful in service in the Lord's commission to give God as food to the members of His household that we may win Christ as our reward in the coming kingdom:

- A. God has a household and a household administration, an economy, to dispense Himself as food to the members of His household for His expression—1 Tim. 1:4; 3:15; Eph. 2:19.
- B. God has set faithful and prudent slaves over His household as household administrators, stewards, channels of supply, to give His people food at the proper time—Matt. 24:45; 1 Cor. 9:17; Eph. 3:2; 1 Cor. 4:1; 1 Pet. 4:10; Phil. 1:25.
- C. *Give them food* refers to ministering the word of God and Christ as the life supply to the believers in the church; Christ as the life-giving Spirit is our food, embodied and realized in the word of life—Matt. 24:45; John 6:57, 63, 68; Acts 5:20.
- D. To say in our heart that our Master delays is to love the present evil age and not to love the Lord's appearing—Matt. 24:48; 2 Tim. 4:8, 10; cf. Acts 26:16:
 - 1. We must beware of covetousness, not storing up treasure for ourselves but being rich toward God—Luke 12:16-20; 2 Cor. 6:10; Eph. 3:8.
 - 2. "Remember Lot's wife" is a solemn warning to the world-loving believers—Luke 17:31-32; cf. Rom. 1:21, 25.
- E. To beat our fellow slaves is to mistreat fellow believers—Matt. 24:49a; Acts 9:4.
- F. To eat and drink with the drunken is to keep company with worldly people, who are drunk with worldly things—Matt. 24:49b; cf. Eph. 5:18:
 - 1. Because of their divine nature and holy standing, the believers should not be yoked together with the unbelievers; this should be applied to all intimate relationships between believers and unbelievers, not only to marriage and business—2 Cor. 6:14; 1 Cor. 15:33; cf. Prov. 13:20.
 - 2. We must flee youthful lusts and pursue the all-inclusive Christ with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart—2 Tim. 2:22.

II. Matthew 25:14-30 reveals that we must be faithful in service in the Lord's gifts to make a profit for Him that we may enter into the joy of the Lord in the coming kingdom:

- A. The Lord likened Himself to a man going abroad (into the heavens) and delivering to his slaves his possessions; *his possessions* signifies the church (Eph. 1:18) with all the believers, who constitute God's household (Matt. 24:45).
- B. To one of His slaves He gave five talents, to another two, and to another one—to each according to his own ability—25:15:
 - 1. Talents signify spiritual gifts (spiritual skills and abilities)—Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:4; 1 Pet. 4:10; 2 Tim. 1:6.
 - 2. All the members of the Body of Christ are gifted, and all are gifts—Rom. 12:6a; Eph. 4:7-8.
 - 3. *Own ability* signifies our natural ability, which is constituted of God's creation and our learning—Matt. 25:15; cf. Acts 7:22.
 - 4. Trading with talents signifies using the gift the Lord has given us—Matt. 25:16-17; cf. 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6.

5. Gaining other talents signifies that the gift we received from the Lord has been used to the fullest extent, without any loss or waste—cf. 4:5b.
- C. The one-talented one went off, dug in the earth, and hid his master's money—Matt. 25:18:
1. The earth signifies the world; thus, *dug in the earth* signifies becoming involved in the world to bury the gift we have received from the Lord.
 2. *Hid his master's money* signifies rendering the Lord's gift useless, letting it lie waste under the cloak of certain earthly excuses; to make any excuse for not using the Lord's gift is to hide the gift.
- D. In the coming kingdom the Lord's gift will be taken away from the slothful believers, and they will be cast into outer darkness, but the faithful believers' gift will be increased, and they will enter into the uttermost enjoyment of Christ—vv. 21, 23, 26-30.

Message Three—Verses

Matthew 24:45-51

- 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?
46 Blessed is that slave whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.
47 Truly I say to you that he will set him over all his possessions.
48 But if that evil slave says in his heart, My master delays,
49 And begins to beat his fellow slaves and eats and drinks with the drunken,
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,
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.

Ephesians 2:19

So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.

1 Corinthians 4:1

A man should account us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

1 Peter 4:10

Each one, as he has received a gift, ministering it among yourselves as good stewards of the varied grace of God.

Luke 17:31-32

- 31 In that day, he who will be on the housetop and his goods in the house, let him not come down to take them away; and he who is in the field, likewise, let him not turn back to the things behind.
32 Remember Lot's wife.

Luke 21:34-36

- 34 But take heed to yourselves lest perhaps your hearts be weighed down with debauchery and drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day come upon you suddenly as a snare.
35 For it will come in upon all those dwelling on the face of all the earth.
36 But be watchful at every time, beseeching that you would prevail to escape all these things which are about to happen and stand before the Son of Man.

Luke 6:37

And do not judge, and you shall by no means be judged; and do not condemn, and you shall by no means be condemned; release, and you will be released.

Ephesians 4:31-32

- 31 Let all bitterness and anger and wrath and clamor and evil speaking be removed from you, with all malice.
32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ also forgave you.

Matthew 20:25-28

25 But Jesus called them to Him and said, You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and the great exercise authority over them.

26 It shall not be so among you; but whoever wants to become great among you shall be your servant,

27 And whoever wants to be first among you shall be your slave;

28 Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.

2 Corinthians 6:14

Do not become dissimilarly yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership do righteousness and lawlessness have? Or what fellowship does light have with darkness.

2 Timothy 2:22

But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Romans 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.

Ephesians 4:7-8

7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

8 Therefore the Scripture says, "Having ascended to the height, He led captive those taken captive and gave gifts to men."

1 Timothy 4:14

Do not neglect the gift which is in you, which was given to you by means of prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

