

**The Contrast: Faithful vs Foolish
Matt 24:45 – 25:29**

Overview

1. The test of a prophet
2. The signs of the end-times
3. The Great Tribulation
4. The Second Coming of Christ and the Rapture: Be Ready!
5. The Contrast: Faithful vs Foolish
6. The Millennial Kingdom

7. After giving insight into the ‘signs and times’, the outward signals of His Second Coming, Jesus now turns the focus inward:
 - a. If we believe what the Lord is telling us, then we need to do something with that information – ***it should change how we live.***
 - b. Today we’ll look at three parables that Jesus gives to His disciples to help them, and us, understand something about how His promised return, what we have been talking about for the last 4 Sundays, might change the way we live.
 - c. Three parables: Service – Salvation - Stewardship

Service: The Faithful Servant vs Evil Servant

45 "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? 46 Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. 47 Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods.

8. I believe this passage is directed specifically to church leadership:
 - a. those whom God has appointed and called by the Spirit to oversee His household, the house of God.
 - b. See, overseeing a church community is different from overseeing a business – because we are a family – the family of God:

Eph 2:19-22

Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

- c. And the primary role of pastors and church leaders is to “give them food in due season’

- d. Jesus stated to Peter: “tend my sheep” and “feed my sheep” (John 21:16-17)
- 9. Notice that Jesus does not say “*Blessed is he who grows a big church, or has a great TV ministry*”, but the ruler who will “*give them food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing*”
 - a. What is the good food?

Luke 4:4

"It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.'"

- b. That is the parting message Paul gave to the pastors of the churches in Ephesus before he left for Rome:

Acts 20:25-28

"And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

- c. Jesus notes that for that servant who faithfully serves “good food”, He “will make him ruler over all his goods”
- d. In other words there will be a reward for those who are faithful in the Kingdom...

Rev 22:12

"And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work

- 10. **By the same measure, there is a warning for those overseers who are not faithful...**

48 But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,'
49 and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards,
50 the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of,
51 and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

- 11. **Jesus paints a picture of an overseer who mistreats those under his care, and begins to participate in the carnality around him.**

- a. **But I find it interesting the reason Jesus gives for this careless behavior: The overseer falls into evil because he does not believe that the master is coming anytime soon.**
 - b. **In other words, this is the pastor that has lost his sense of the imminent return of our Lord Jesus Christ.**
 - c. **The message is – “Jesus IS coming! Expect Him!”**
- 12. And we can apply this truth to all of our lives – how many Christians lose sight of the return of Christ, and become slack in their walk?**
- a. **Jesus is telling us all: “Be ready – I am coming!”**
- 13. Next the Lord addresses another group..**

Salvation: The Wise Virgins vs The Foolish Virgins

25:1 "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3 Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, 4 but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5 But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. 6 "And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' 7 Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. 8 And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' 9 But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' 10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. 11 "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' 12 But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.' 13 "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

- 14. A Jewish wedding is very unique in many aspects, but one aspect was that everyone knew the day of the wedding, but no one knew the hour.**
- a. **The groom could come at anytime – dawn to midnight – and claim his bride. So the bride and her party had to be ready for when the groom would arrive!**
 - b. **But as soon as he arrived, word spread quickly that the wedding was about to begin, and the community would gather and accompany the wedding procession to the ceremony.**
 - c. **In this parable, Jesus lays out a contrast –wise virgins and foolish virgins. The wise virgins has lamps, and they had oil, the foolish virgins had lamps, but no oil.**
 - d. **Now it's important to note that in the bible oil is symbolic for the Holy Spirit. And so the message of the parable is not about being a good scout and having fuel for your lantern...**
 - e. **The message is that some people in the church are “born of the Spirit” – and some are not.**

f. Remember Jesus told us...

Matt 7:21-23

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"

- g. In other words, if the rapture were to happen right now, on Sunday morning, churches all over the country would be affected in two very impactful but different ways:**
- i. Many people would simply disappear – poof – in the twinkle of an eye, gone to meet the Lord in the air. (practical joke on Pastor Rob)**
 - ii. But many people would still be sitting in the pews, dumbfounded.**
- h. Jesus is telling us that it's not enough to hang out with the wedding party – you must have oil in your vessel – you must be born of the Spirit to enter into the Kingdom.**

John 3:5-6

Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

- 15. This is not to say that we should come in every Sunday and doubt our salvation, or live in fear that we might not have oil in our lamp...**
- a. But that we might be diligent to make our call and election sure**

2 Peter 1:10

Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure...

- b. I would rather a person come forward for prayer every Sunday than to have him think that because he sits in church he is going to heaven.**

Stewardship - The Parable of the Talents

14 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. 15 And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. 16 Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. 17 And

likewise he who had received two gained two more also. 18 But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. 19 After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. 20 "So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' 21 His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' 22 He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' 23 His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' 24 "Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. 25 And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.' 26 "But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. 27 So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. 28 So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. 29 'For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. 30 And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

16. The message of this parable is very simple: Each of us has been given a “talent”, a gift or gifts (money, energy, abilities),

Eph 4:7, 12

*But to each one of us grace (**charis**) was given according to the measure of Christ's gift...*

...for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,

- a. **These gift are given for a reason – to be used in the kingdom.**
- b. **The interesting thing is that the ones who received more talents did something with them, while the one who only received one buried his.**
- c. **And I believe that is a perfect example of how our nature can be...**
 - i. **We look at someone who has been given “five or ten talents”, and “man, they are blessed! And they use their gift for the Lord!**
 - ii. **But we think if we don't have a great gift –then our little gift just doesn't matter, and we bury it.**

17. Guys, you need to understand that each of us has been given at least one talent. And if we bury it, then we are wasting it!

- a. If we look at our little talent and dismiss it, then we are saying to God “that gift you gave me, it’s not really worth trying to do anything with it.”
 - b. How many have experienced “but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away” – in other words, God will take that purpose and give it to someone else to do.
- 18. But look at the other side of the principle - 'For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance’**
- a. In other words, if we’ll take what God has given us, and use it, God will give us *more*.
 - b. To me that is one of the coolest aspects of serving in the Kingdom: when we’re faithful in the small things, God expands our ministry!
- 19. Three parables: Service – Salvation - Stewardship**

Copyright © 2010 Clay Ritter. This data file is the sole property of Clay Ritter. It may be copied only in its entirety for circulation freely without charge. All copies of this data file must contain this copyright notice. This data file may not be copied in part, edited, revised, copied for resale or incorporated in any commercial publications, recordings, broadcasts, performances, displays or other products offered for sale, without the written permission of Clay Ritter. Requests for permission should be made in writing and addressed to Pastor Clay Ritter, c/o Calvary Chapel of Wilmington, 2831 Carolina Beach Rd, Wilmington NC, 28412.