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Be Ready When the Son Comes; Matt 25:1-13

GPBC

4.3.22

Introduction – Several months back, I believe it was November, we completed ch24 in our study of Matthew’s gospel. Matt 24 is a super-condensed version of Revelation. Jesus teaches His disciples about the things to come as His coming draws near. That chapter ends with Jesus exhorting His listeners to be ready for His coming. We can glean from the Scripture how to recognize the season of His return, but no one knows the precise date of His coming. What we do know, however, is that He is coming. So be ready. The first 2/3 of Matt 25 we find two parables Jesus tells to illustrate how His coming will be received. Some will be ready for His appearing but many will not be ready. Now when we get to ch26 in our study, we’ll begin to see the events leading up to Jesus’ arrest and in ch27 we come to His crucifixion.

In other words, the final instructions Jesus gives to His disciples before His death are in large part concerning His return. Jesus wants us to know one thing for certain before His death and He exhorts us through teaching and story-telling to respond appropriately. He wants us to have the utmost confidence in His return, and having the utmost confidence in His return – He wants us to be ready to meet Him! Be ready when the Son Comes.

- I. Preparation and Expectation of His Coming (vv1-6)
 - a. When that day that no one knows except for the Father in heaven arrives, when Jesus returns – the kingdom of heaven will be like this – like this story of the ten virgins, 5 were wise and 5 were foolish.
 - b. The 5 wise virgins represent true believers who are ready for Christ’s return. The 5 foolish virgins represent those who have heard about Jesus. They’ve heard the story of how He came to earth, died for sin, rose again, and is returning one day to reign forever. They’ve heard He is coming, but they are not ready when He arrives.
 - c. Notice there is an expectation of His coming. All ten virgins take their lamps and go to meet the bridegroom. The bridegroom here represents Christ. The foolish virgins have an apathetic expectation. They go through the motion of taking their lamps and going to meet

Him. They appear to be eager for His coming but their expectation is shallow. They think all they need to do is show up.

- i. It's much the same in our day with the occasional church attender who simply goes through the motions. Oh they would agree that Jesus is going to return but they have a very low expectation of His return. A foolish faith believes that all that is required is an appearance of knowing Jesus. Therefore, their low expectation results in little to no preparation. They are not ready when He comes.
- d. The wise virgins, on the other hand, have a very high expectation that leads to great preparation. These wise virgins brought along extra flasks of oil with their lamps.
 - i. These are the true believers who truly believe. They not only agree that Jesus is going to return, they eagerly await His return. They know salvation is not maintaining an appearance but rather maintaining the faith. They know faith will be accompanied by works. They know the new birth brings about a new life. They know hardships and persecution require perseverance.
 - ii. The delay of His return is not a reason to doubt but rather a reason to endure. For the patience of God is that all who will believe have the opportunity to believe.
 - iii. So at midnight, while they slept and least expected it, the bridegroom appears – but they're ready. They made preparations.
- e. III. Have you ever had an unexpected guest show up at your house? But when you are expecting guests to arrive, what do you do? You prepare.
- f. Are you prepared for His arrival? He is coming. Are you ready? Have you surrendered your life to Christ and are now living for His glory, awaiting and longing for His return? Are we wise or are we foolish in how we respond to the truth of God's Word? Is it merely something we agree with or is it what we live by and cling to?

II. We Can Share the Message of Salvation But We Cannot Share Our Salvation (vv7-9)

- a. Because the foolish virgins had not prepared, they were not ready when the bridegroom arrived. Their lamps were empty.
 - i. The same will be true for those who are not prepared when Jesus returns. They won't be ready. Their hearts will be empty and void of salvation.
- b. For believers, the oil in our lamps, the salvation in our hearts is only sufficient for our salvation. We can share the message of salvation until Christ returns. We can share the good news about faith in Christ until He returns. But we can't save others. We can't impart our faith to another.
 - i. That should stir an urgency within us to be faithful witnesses today while it is the day of salvation. There is coming a day when your opportunity to win that friend to Jesus will be gone. Don't delay. Share Christ today. Share Christ every day.
 - 1. I want to challenge all of us here today, myself included, to pray this prayer every morning. Lord, open a door for me to share Christ today. Give me the wisdom to see that open door. Give me the courage to walk through it and words of life to share.
 - ii. But the text is really emphasizing a warning to the unprepared, isn't it? You have to have salvation in your heart when Christ returns. Grandma and grandpa's faith won't take you to heaven. Mom and Dad's faith won't save your soul. Your name on the church roll isn't the same as your name in the Lamb's Book of Life. You have to own it for yourself. You have to believe. You have to surrender and give your life to Christ. You have to have the oil for your own lamp – for your own heart.
 - 1. Don't delay. The only person keeping you out of heaven is you. Don't be deceived. You're not promised tomorrow. But you do have today. Don't be misled. This world doesn't have the answer. The pleasures of this life and the treasures of this world and the appearance of having it all together simply won't suffice. Just like the oil of the foolish virgins, it will run out.

- III. When the Son Comes the Opportunity For Salvation will End (vv10-13)
- a. You see the delay in His coming wasn't so that you would run out of oil but rather that you would have ample time to prepare!
 - b. But once the door is closed, it won't be reopened. When God closed the door of the Ark, the time for repentance and faith was over. There are two doors that stand in front of every one of us and we don't know when they might close. There is the door of death and there is the door of His return.
 - c. The Bible says it is appointed unto man once to die and then the judgment. The Bible says one day Jesus will return and those who believe will be saved and those who refused will be judged.
 - d. If Jesus' coming is years away, that door of death will close on every one in this room, and you may see it closing and you may not.
 - e. If Jesus were to return today, would you be ready when that door closes?
 - f. You see if you don't know Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior, He doesn't know you. If you don't want God in this life, you won't have Him in the next life either.

Conclusion – You know the purpose of a medical x-ray. It takes a picture of your inside. It looks past the outward appearance. It gets past the makeup and clothes and outward show and goes right to the bone. Dental x-ray.

You know God has x-ray vision. The Bible says man looks on the outward appearance but God looks on the heart. I wonder if we could borrow God's salvation x-ray this morning and let every person here walk past it? What would it show when you stood behind it? Would it show an empty, dark heart chained with sin's corruption and deception? Or would it show a new heart, full of life and faith in Christ?

Is there oil in your lamp or is it empty? You can fill it today but only God knows if you'll have the opportunity to fill it tomorrow.