

Matthew 23-25

by Chuck Smith

Jesus warns against the Pharisees' hypocrisy and predicts the destruction of the temple, while also giving signs of the end times and the importance of sharing the gospel with all nations.

Duration: 1:07:52

Scripture: Matthew 23:12

Topics: "Hypocrisy And Humility", "Second Coming"

Description

This sermon delves into Matthew chapter 20, focusing on Jesus' interactions with the Pharisees, highlighting their hypocrisy and warning against a Pharisaic attitude of directing others without personal obedience. Jesus pronounces woes upon the Pharisees and laments over Jerusalem, outlining the characteristics of the Pharisees and emphasizing the importance of humility and servanthood. The sermon also covers the Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24, discussing the signs of Jesus' second coming and the need to be watchful and ready for His return.

Transcript

Matthew gospel 20 chapter 23. Jesus deals here in the 23rd chapter with at the beginning with the Pharisees. He spoke it said to the multitude and to his disciples saying the scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses seat and therefore whatsoever they bid you to observe that observe but do not do after their works for they say but they do not.

Many people like that they can tell you what you should do but they don't do it themselves and so Jesus is saying this is true of the scribes and the Pharisees. They tell you what you should do but they don't do it themselves. It's interesting the first 12 verses of chapter 23 Jesus deals with the Pharisees and sort of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and warning against this kind of attitude that they have and there are many people who have what you might call a Pharisaic attitude of you know being able to sort of direct other people but they're not willing to walk it themselves.

So in chapter 23 the first 12 verses he's dealing with this problem with the characteristics of the Pharisees and then in verses 13 to 36 he pronounces woes upon the Pharisees and then in 37 to 39 the lament of Jesus over Jerusalem. So that basically gives you an outline of chapter 23. They bind heavy burdens and grievous to be born and they lay them on men's shoulders but they themselves will not move them with one of their little fingers.

In other words they can tell you what you ought to be doing but they don't do it themselves. But all of their works they do to be seen of men and they make broad their phylacteries and enlarge the borders of their garments and they love the uppermost rooms at the feasts and the chief seats in the synagogue and the greetings in the markets and to be called of men Rabbi Rabbi but don't be called Rabbi for there's one who is your master even Christ and you are all brethren and call no man your father upon the earth for one is your father which is in heaven and neither be called masters for one is your master even Christ but he that is greatest among you shall be your servant and whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased and he that humbles himself shall be exalted and so this is what Jesus is working to. There are men who exalt themselves they want recognition from others they want to have people just sort of acknowledge them as superior and so forth and he said you know if you want to be great in the kingdom of God learn to be the servant of all if you exalt yourself you will be abased but if you will humble yourself you will be exalted.

The Lord teaches that the way down is up and the way up is down. If you try to exalt yourself you'll come down he'll bring you down but if you will humble yourself in the sight of the Lord he will lift you up. So Jesus goes on to denounce now woes upon the Pharisees and he's really heavy on this one but woe unto you scribes and hypocrites for you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men for you neither will go in yourselves and neither will you allow them that are entering to go in.

Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees you hypocrites for you devour widows houses and for a pretense you make long prayers therefore you shall receive the greater damnation. Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees you hypocrites for you come past the sea and the land to make one proselyte and when he is made you make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. Woe unto you ye blind guides which say whosoever shall swear by the temple it is nothing but if you swear by the gold that is in the temple then you are a debtor.

You fools and blind what is greater the gold or the temple that sanctifies the gold and whosoever shall swear by the altar you say it is nothing but if you swear by the gift that is upon it then you are guilty. You fools and blind for what is greater the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift. Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar swears by it and all of the things that are thereon and whoso swears by the temple swears by it and him that dwells therein.

Are you surprised that the Pharisees got angry with Jesus? I mean he's calling you know he's just very straight with him and calling the spade the spade and all and they don't like it and so he said he that swears by the heavens swears by the throne of God and him that sits thereon. Woe unto you ye scribes and Pharisees hypocrites because you pay tithe of your mint and you're an eyes and coming and you've omitted the weightier matters of the law judgment and mercy and faith. These ought you to have done and not to leave the others undone.

They would go out to their spice gardens and these little spice gardens they would tithe a tenth part of their spices of their mint their coming and their an eyes and so forth and and they were very you know careful to make sure that you know they count out these little seeds nine for me one for the Lord nine for me one for the Lord and they were very very conscientious in that but where they were really lacking was in the judgment and mercy and faith and he said these you ought to have done in other words Jesus is confirming you ought to pay your tithes but he is saying you shouldn't leave the more important things undone and the more important things are showing mercy and showing judgment and faith. You blind guides which strain at a net and swallow a camel. It's an interesting thing they say that the Pharisees when they are you know say out walking or running or jogging and should a net get in their mouth that you

would see them standing there sticking their fingers down their throat to try to throw up because the net has not been bled and you're not supposed to eat anything that hasn't been thoroughly bled and so they strain at the net but then he said you swallow a camel.

So true of so many people we sort of strain at non-essentials and we just overlook many times the more important things. So woe unto you scribes Pharisees hypocrites you may clean the outside of the cup and the platter but within you're full of extortion and excess. You blind Pharisee cleanse that which is within the cup and the platter that the outside of them might be clean also.

Woe unto you scribes Pharisees hypocrites for you are likened to whited sepulchers which indeed appear beautiful outward but they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men but within you're full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees hypocrites because you build the tombs of the prophets you garnish the suffocators of the righteous and you say if we have been in the days of our fathers we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets but wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves that you are the children of those that killed the prophets.

Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers ye serpents ye generation of vipers how can you escape the damnation of hell wherefore behold I send unto you prophets and wise men and scribes and some of them you shall kill and crucified and some of them you shall scourge in your synagogues and persecute them from city to city that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth from the blood of the righteous Abel even to the blood of Zacharias the son of Barakas whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you all of these things shall come upon this generation. So he's not really very complimentary towards them but he is just telling it like it is and this is always upsetting when someone is too straight with you.

We want people to sort of be flowery in their evaluation of our lives and so forth and for them to be thoroughly honest and all it is an upsetting thing and so here is Jesus not pulling any punches at all but just laying it out straight. He is describing these supposedly righteous people who in the eyes of the people their righteousness is all outward. It's all an outward show and it's for others to look to them and think of them as being very righteous and so everything was done really to impress others not really to impress God but to impress other people and you've met and seen people like that too and unfortunately they do exist even to the present day.

People who you know are outwardly very religious very spiritual but within you know they're full of dead men's bones. They are like a cup that is clean on the outside but the inside of the cup is filthy and so with these scribes and Pharisees and hypocrites so it was. Now he closes off the chapter with a lament over Jerusalem.

Oh Jerusalem Jerusalem thou that killest the prophets and you stone those which are sent unto you. How often would I have gathered your children together even as a hen gathers her children under her wings but you would not. Behold your house is left unto you desolate for I say unto you you shall not see me henceforth till you shall say blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.

This is all taking place on the week that Jesus was crucified and when you read this you will understand some of the reasons why they did conspire to put him to death. They just couldn't handle the things that he was saying and of course it was on Sunday and we studied that last week where Jesus made his what we call triumphant entry into Jerusalem and this is happening about Tuesday of the week where he is bringing

this indictment against the Pharisees and the scribes and the religious leaders of that day and the thing that of course caused them to conspire to put him to death. So in chapter 24 it's often referred to as the Olivet discourse because it is Jesus teaching his disciples there on the Mount of Olives and in verses one and two he is predicting to his disciples the destruction of the temple which they have just passed through.

In verse three the disciples request for further information from Jesus. The signs that would signal his coming again that is his second coming and I think it's extremely important as we read chapter 24 these signs that Jesus is giving here are not signs of the rapture of the church but they are the signs that will precede his second coming and I think it's very important that you distinguish the difference between the Lord coming for his church at the rapture and then coming with his church at the second coming. When Christ who is our life shall appear then shall we also appear with him in glory so he's coming for us he'll snatch us away and the word rapture is to be snatched away with force we'll be snatched away we'll be with him for at least seven years and during which time the world will be going through a great time of testing the antichrist will be revealed he will deceive the nations and the people but then he will reveal the truth of his nature and who he is and then will come of course the great tribulation such as the world has never seen before or will ever see again and we'll get some of that here in chapter 24.

In verse three the disciples are inquiring for more information and then in verses four to six he gives what are signs that are not really signals of his second coming but these are just conditions that will exist in the world you know after he was taken up and of course they're conditions that have existed and do exist but beginning with verse 7 and through verse 25 he gives signs that are signals of his second coming and then in verses 26 to 31 he speaks of the event itself his second coming and in verses 32 to 34 he gives them the parable of the fig tree and then in verses 35 to 51 the conditions at his second coming so as we go through chapter 24 Jesus went out and departed from the temple and the disciples came to him to show him the buildings of the temple this is the temple that

was built by Herod the king it was a temple that took years to complete and at this particular point it was not yet completed they had been working over 27 years on this temple but it wasn't even yet finished and Herod was a little guy but he liked to do big things and the stones that they quarried for the temple were huge actually weighing some of them some 27 tons and we just can't really and still don't understand how in the world they were able to move such huge stones the temple again was quarry the stones were quarried and you can go today in Jerusalem to the quarries of the stones of this temple and it's you enter what near what they call Herod's gate and you can go underground into these caverns where these stones were cut out and brought out and used in the building of the temple

and it was a huge thing and so the disciples are showing to Jesus or pointing out to Jesus the buildings of the temple and Jesus said unto them see ye not all these things verily I say unto you there shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down now you can perhaps imagine uh the the disciples when Jesus made such a statement like this here are these huge stones that Herod used in the building of the temple and Jesus is saying not one of these stones is going to be left standing upon another amazing but in 70 A.D. when the Jews rebelled against Rome and the Roman troops came under the leadership of General Titus to put down the rebellion the Jews were holding out in Jerusalem against the Romans and when the Romans finally made the breach and invaded the city

the Jews that were there actually sought refuge in the temple it was their last holdout because of the huge stones and so forth it was a ideal kind of a place to sort of defend themselves from the Roman troops and so as they were besieging the temple one of the Roman soldiers shot a flaming arrow at the temple which

caught the temple on fire and many of the jews were cremated within the temple as it burned but as it burned the gold in the ceiling melted and came down into the cracks of the temple because herod built the temple like solomons without any mortar and the stones were so perfectly hewn out that they just interlocked and fit on each other and no need of mortar but that meant that the gold actually came down and melted and went between the stones all the way down so the

romans dismantled the temple one stone after another in order to get the gold that had melted and come down between the cracks and they also pushed the stones over the wall of the temple mount and they crashed into the tropium valley and down below and today if you go to jerusalem if you will go there to the western wall where the jews go to pray you find that you are in the tropium valley there and actually you're though quite a bit above what was the original bottom of the tropium valley you're maybe some well if you go into the inside just the wall there on that western wall if you'll follow it just inside the wall they have places where you can look down and it's about 60 feet below and what you are standing on is rubble the rubble from the temple of herod that was built and down

towards the corner there of the wall where it turns and goes toward the al-aqsa mosque there at the corner you actually can see some of these stones you can see the pavement stones of the original road there in the tropium valley and you can see these stones that were tossed over the wall well they weren't tossed over they were shoved over or pushed over or of course they use all kinds of devices to move these huge stones and you can see where they crashed onto this road at the tropium valley and how that it just sort of splintered these huge blocks of stones that made up the road in the tropium valley and it is an interesting thing if you get a chance to go to jerusalem then i encourage you to go over and take a look at that and that gives you a little bit of a background of what you're

looking at when you see the stones that were the road of the in the tropium valley and you see these great stones as they have excavated them and have left many of them just in place as they were when they were shoved over the wall by the roman troops and so if you don't get a chance to go now in the millennium take a look at that you'll enjoy it it's going to be an interesting site it is a very interesting site so jesus is making a prediction here that came to pass completely by the time of josephus the historian he said that at that time of course the temple had been destroyed and he said there is no evidence of where the temple stood and so even to the present day no real evidence of where the temple stood that is not one stone was left standing on another an amazing prediction of

jesus that was literally fulfilled now as he sat there on the mount of olives and that's why it's called the olivet discourse his disciples came into him privately and they said lord tell us and notice what they're asking now when shall these things be that is the destruction of jerusalem and of the temple and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the world so they're actually asking for signs of three different things what will be the sign of your coming the end of the world and when these things shall be so as jesus begins his olivet discourse he seeks to answer their questions of the signs that they should look for that would indicate the destruction of jerusalem the signs that they should look for that would indicate his coming again not the rapture but the coming

again to establish his kingdom and the end of this age and so jesus answered and said to them take heed that no man deceive you for many will come in my name saying i'm the messiah and shall deceive many and you shall hear of wars and rumors of wars but see that you be not troubled for all of these things must come to pass but the end is not yet in other words wars and rumors of wars are no sign of the coming again of jesus that's just a sign of man not able to get to get in harmony or in peace with his fellow man

since jesus made this prediction the world has known 17 years of war for every one year of peace so wars and rumors of wars no sign of his coming uh the end is not yet but then he said nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom in the greek this indicates a

worldwide state of war and though man has had wars from the time that jesus was ascended into heaven to the present day we've only had two world wars nation against nation and kingdom against kingdom and of course that was in 1914 and then more recently in the 1940s the late 40s and so we've had two of those kinds of world wars and these do constitute the sign of his coming and the end of the age there shall be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in diverse places now these are the beginning of sorrows and they shall deliver you to be afflicted they shall kill you and you'll be hated of all nations for my name's sake and then shall many be offended and they will betray one another and they'll hate one another and many false prophets shall rise and deceive many and because iniquity

shall abound the love of many shall wax cold i think that that is so true today the iniquity in the world is getting worse all the time but the result is the love of many have waxed cold and god help us god help us to be aware that these are days in which there are so many things to distract you from your walk with the lord that it is so easy to just your love to get cold and don't let it happen but just remain fervent in your love and devotion for the lord and the things of the lord but he that shall endure to the end the same shall be saved and the gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations and then shall the end come it is interesting this particular prophecy the gospel will be preached as a witness to all nations and then shall the end come

for years the church took this as the rallying cry for missions and every missionary conference this would usually be the theme of getting missionaries out to share the gospel with the end of the world or with the tribes that have never heard with the nations that have never heard the message of jesus christ and that was a great impetus for mission work and many many people responded to that call and went out to do missionary work but it's interesting now today through our modern media radio and all and television the gospel is being preached even into those countries that are closed to the gospel by radio and by tv shortwave and so forth the gospel is being preached into all of the world and thus this prophecy is being fulfilled they used to encourage us saying you know you need to get

out and do the mission work and the whole theme was bringing back the king you know getting the gospel out to the whole world so that christ could return again but now we thought you know that that had to be done through sending missionaries into all the world but we realize that it is being accomplished by the using the devices and the methods that god has made available to us today so jesus went on to say verse 15 when you therefore shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by daniel the prophet standing in the holy place whoever reads let him understand then let them which are in jerusalem flee into the mountains let him which is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house now notice we are dealing with israel we're dealing with the people in israel in this

particular these particular verses let them which be in judea and so it would be the jews there in jerusalem but what is this abomination of desolation that was spoken of by daniel the prophet daniel tells us that when the antichrist comes that the jews will be deceived by him he is going to give them permission and all and help to rebuild their temple right now the jews are extremely anxious to rebuild their temple they have in jerusalem what they call the temple institute and the whole purpose and desire is to rebuild the temple rabbi richmond is in charge of this jerusalem institute and they are making the instruments for sacrifices the instruments that will be used in the new temple according to rabbi richmond they have

actually already begun to quarry the stones for the new temple

and that they are ready to build it and can build it in a hurry once the doors are open for them to do so which he believes will be very soon but the bible tells us that the antichrist will actually enable them and help them now it's an interesting thing and talking with the jews and talking about you know these end times and so forth the well these jews that i was talking to they said we don't believe that christ was the messiah because he claimed to be the son of god and we don't believe that the messiah will be the son of god we believe the messiah will be a man and thus we reject jesus as being the messiah because of his claim to be the son of god i said if the messiah is a man then how you're are how are you going to know that he is your messiah and their answer to me was he will

lead us in the rebuilding of our temple and i said oh yeah you guys are you know you're you're just right for the antichrist because he's going to help you rebuild your temple and you know they they said we will acclaim him as our messiah and so it looks like they are really set up by the enemy to receive the antichrist as their messiah and of course the abomination of desolation we do read that after three and a half years when the temple has been rebuilt and they start again the sacrifices and the worship within the temple there in jerusalem that the antichrist is going to come to jerusalem he's going to come to the rebuilt temple he's going to stand in the holy of holies he's going to stop the daily sacrifices he's going to declare that he is god and demand to be worshipped as god and

daniel calls this the abomination that causes the desolation this is the final insult of man to god as he is there declaring that he is god and demands to be worshipped as god and stops the sacrifices and all that is the abomination of desolation that causes the desolation or the great tribulation period that is when the wrath of god is going to be poured out on this world such as the world has never seen or experienced before so those are the things that are coming for this world you don't want to be here when that happens and by the grace of god you don't have to be here for the lord himself shall come and we who are you know alive at that time will be caught up to meet the lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the lord and as he said pray ye always you'll be accounted worthy to

escape these things that are going to come upon the earth and that you might be standing before the son of man that is my prayer lord i want to be accounted worthy to escape the great tribulation that is coming upon the earth i don't want to be here when that happens i want to be standing lord before you there in the heavenly scene so uh he is saying when you see this abomination of desolation spoken of by daniel the prophet and it's standing in the holy place that is the image of the antichrist is set up now in the holy of holies within the new temple whosoever reads let him understand then let those that are in judea flee into the mountains and let him which is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house neither let him which is in the field return back to take his

clothes and woe to those that are with child and to those that are nursing in those days but pray ye that your flight may not be in winter and neither on the sabbath day again it's jewish in its background and and these are to the jews that are still there they will flee to the wilderness according to isaiah chapter 16 they will flee to the rock city of petra where the lord has prepared a place for them that they might be preserved there during the great tribulation period and the antichrist will send out an army to destroy them but the earth will open up and swallow the army that is sent out by the antichrist and the bible has many things to say about this particular time that is coming in the future for the jews this again as i said is not the church this is not the christians it is

the jewish people that we are dealing with here and so there will be great tribulation verse 21 such as has not been since the beginning of the world to this time no nor ever shall be the worst time in the history of man is yet future and except those days should be shortened there should no flesh be saved but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened the elect here again being the jews not the church and except those days be shortened this if you will notice indicates that men will have weapons that are capable of destroying humankind off the face of the earth and lest those days be shortened no one would remain but because of the jews the elect's sake those days shall be shortened then if any man says unto you lo here is christ or there believe it not for there shall arise

false christ and false prophets and they shall show great signs and wonders in as much as if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect that is again the jews not the church behold i've told you before wherefore if they shall say unto you behold he's in the desert don't go forth behold he's in the secret chambers don't believe it for as the lightning comes out of the east and shines even to the west so shall also the coming of the son of man be for whatsoever the carcass is there will the eagles be gathered together and immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened the moon will not give her light and the stars will fall from heaven and the powers of heavens shall be shaken and then shall appear the sign of the son of man in heaven and they shall all

the tribes of the earth mourn and they shall see the son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory the second coming of jesus christ with his church to establish his kingdom here on the earth and he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet and they shall gather together his elect the jews again from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other and so uh events that are to take place in the future and wherever the carcass is will the eagles be gathered together there is a dispute among the theologians as to just what this particular passage is referring to the carcass is usually a dead body and the eagles be gathered together and they translate that particular greek word atos atos as vultures and they say that it is a reference to the battle that

will come and all of these carcasses that will be there and the vultures gathered together to eat them and so immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened the moon will not give her light and of course if the sun is darkened the moon can't give her light and the stars shall fall from heaven and the powers of heaven be shaken and then shall appear the sign of the son of man in heaven the glorious return of jesus christ with his church to establish his kingdom now it does seem that we have just sort of a change of thought here in the mind of jesus because he introduces this next portion by saying now learn a parable of the fig tree when the branch is yet tender and it puts forth its leaves you know that summer is nigh the fig tree is used in the bible as a symbol

of the nation of israel in the old testament there are a couple of places where in jeremiah and so forth where it talks about the fig tree and it's obviously talking about the nation of israel so the parable of the fig tree in the jewish mind would remind them of the nation of israel itself with it when its branch is yet tender and it puts forth its leaves you know that summer is getting close so likewise when you shall see all these things know that it is near even at the doors that is the coming again of jesus christ to establish the kingdom of god here on the earth verily i say unto you this generation shall not pass till all of these things be fulfilled an interesting question what generation shall not pass and there are different interpretations to this particular passage by the

scholars there are those that say the generation that sees you know these things shall not pass till all of these things be fulfilled and in a way that could refer to this generation who has seen the budding of the fig

tree and it's putting forth its leaves the nation of israel is now 60 years old and this generation is about to pass i'm part of that generation that saw the rebirth of the nation of israel and i'm about to pass and so it could be that it isn't referring to the generation that saw the rebirth of israel the generation could refer to the nation of israel and this is probably more accurate uh the jews will not pass away uh the uh genera or the jews will remain until this is all fulfilled and if that be so uh you know it's still an indefinite time in the future verily i say

unto you this generation won't pass till all of these things be fulfilled heaven and earth they'll pass away but jesus said my words shall not pass away but and of course this is important of that day and hour knoweth no man no not the angels of heaven but my father only so day and hour we don't know all we know is that at this point jesus begins to give parables and all and analogies that the whole thrust of them is the important thing for you is you don't know when it's going to be happy happening so be ready watch ye therefore and be ready because you don't know the time or the day or the hour when the lord is coming but the lord goes on to say but as the days of noah were so shall also the son of man be for in the days of noah before the flood they were eating and drinking marrying

and giving in marriage until the day that noah entered into the ark and they knew not until the flood came and took them all away and so shall the coming of the son of man be then two will be in the field one taken the other left two women shall be grinding at the mill one shall be taken the other left watch you therefore for you know not what hour your lord doth come so as i said the idea and the thrust from here on in is to be watching and to be ready because you just don't know when the lord is going to come interesting two shall be in the field one taken the other left two women grinding at the mill one taken the other left and so if the good man of the house had known what watch the thief would have come he would have been watching and would not have allowed his house to be broken up

therefore this is the key again be ready for in such an hour as you think not the son of man is coming this is interesting in that it does indicate you know that the bible does assume that the world is round and that two women out in the field that would be during the day and one taken the other left two women grinding at the mill that would be first thing in the morning the women would go to the mill to grind their wheat for the day and then of course he talks about the good man of the house knowing what hour and that would be the night when the thief would have come so these conditions will all be existing simultaneously at the same time when the lord does come because the earth is round so it could be morning in israel it could be night here when that happens and it's interesting to me

that this anticipates that therefore be ready and that's the key for in such an hour as you think not the son of man is coming who then is the faithful and wise servant whom his lord hath made ruler over all that he hath to give them their meat in due season blessed is that servant whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing verily i say unto you that he shall make him the ruler over all of his goods but and if that evil servant shall say in his heart my lord delayeth his coming and shall begin to smite his fellow servants and to eat and to drink with the drunken the lord of that servant shall come at a day when he's not looking for him and an hour when he's not aware of and will cut him asunder and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites and there will be weeping and gnashing of

teeth and so again the chapter closes off with the warnings of watching and being ready because we just don't know when it's going to happen but if that's true for the second coming of jesus it is all the more so for the rapture of the church because we know that the rapture precedes the second coming and the signs of the rapture are very very prominent and because it does precede the second coming if there are well it's

sort of like when we were going past south coast plaza the other day and saw these big christmas bulbs out there as they're putting up their christmas decorations i noticed that they got this huge tree that they're decorating now and i said oh isn't that exciting i love thanksgiving i love thanksgiving dinners and the turkey and all and my wife said you not that's not

thanksgiving that's christmas i said i know that but i said i also know that thanksgiving precedes christmas and if the signs of christmas are out it means that thanksgiving has to be real close and so you know if the signs of the second coming are out i mean we know that we've got to be real close to the rapture of the church so then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins which took their lamps and they went forth to meet the bridegroom and five of them were wise and five were foolish and they that were foolish took their lamps and they took no oil with them but the wise took oil with their vessels with their lamps and while the bridegroom tarried and notice in these parables that the bridegroom isn't coming exactly when they thought he would in here the bridegroom is

tearing they all slumbered and slept and at midnight there was a cry made behold the bridegroom is coming go out to meet him and then all of those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps and the foolish said unto the wise give us your oil for our lamps are gone out but the wise answered saying not so lest there not be enough for us and you but you go rather to them that sell and buy for yourselves and while they went to buy the bridegroom came and they that were ready and of course as we just read watch and be ready they that were ready went in and with him to the marriage and the door was shut and afterward came the other virgin saying Lord Lord open to us but he answered and said verily I say unto you I know you not watch watch therefore for you know neither the day nor the hour wherein

the son of man cometh and I do believe that these parables though they still apply to the second coming they apply also to the rapture of the church we don't know when it's going to be we just need to be ready because of the fact that we just don't know so the next parable he said the kingdom of heaven is as a man who is traveling unto a far country who called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods and to one he gave five talents and to another two and to another one every man according to his ability and immediately he took his journey now we know that the man taking the far journey is Jesus and he has entrusted us with you know the things of the kingdom and the one who would receive the five talents went and he traded with the same and made them another five talents and

likewise he that received the two he gained another two but he that had received the one dug in the earth and hid his lord's money and after a long time now notice after a long time we've been waiting a long time for the lord to come two thousand years now we've been waiting for our lord to come and after a long time the lord of those servants came and he reckoned with them and so he that had received the five talents came and he brought the other five talents saying lord you delivered to me five talents behold i have gained beside them five talents more his lord said unto him well done thou good and faithful servant you have been faithful over a few things i will make you ruler over many enter into the joy of thy lord he also received the two talents came and said lord you delivered unto

me two talents and behold i've gained two other talents beside them and his lord said unto him well done good and faithful servant you have been faithful over a few things i will make you ruler over many enter into the joy of thy lord and he which received the one talent came and said lord i knew that you were a hard man you reaped what you had not sown you gathered where you had not straw and i was afraid and i went and i hid the talent in the earth and lo thou hast that which is thine in other words here's your talent back his lord answered and said unto you wicked and slothful servant you knew that i would reap which i

did not sow and i gathered where i had not spread or straw and you ought therefore to have put my money at least to the exchangers that when i came i could have received

my own with interest take therefore the talent from him give it to him which has the 10 talents for unto everyone that hath shall be given and he that shall have that he might have abundance but him that hath not will be taken away even that which he has and he casts and casts ye the unbrotherable servant into outer darkness there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth the importance of using that which the lord has given to us in order to bring fruit to our lord and it i think speaks for itself so important that we are careful with what the lord has given not to try and hide it but to try to multiply it that we might give him back more than he entrusted to us so when the son of man shall come in his glory and all of the holy angels with him then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory

and before him will be gathered all of the nations and he shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats and he will set the sheep on his right hand the goats on the left and then shall the king say unto them on his right hand come ye blessed of my father inherit the kingdom that was prepared for you from the foundation of the world for i was hungry you gave me meat i was thirsty you gave me a drink i was a stranger you took me in i was naked and you clothed me i was sick and you visited me i was in prison and you came unto me and then shall the righteous answer him saying lord when did we see you hungry and fed thee or thirsty and gave you a drink and when did we see you as innate as a stranger and took you in or naked and clothed thee or when did we

see you sick and in prison and came unto you and the king shall answer and say unto them verily i say unto you in as much as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren you have done it unto me and then shall he say also unto them on the left hand depart from me you cursed in the everlasting father fire that was prepared for the devil and his angels for i was hungry and you gave me no meat i was thirsty you did not give me anything to drink i was a stranger you did not take me in i was naked and you did not clothe me sick and in prison you didn't visit me then shall they also answer him saying lord when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not minister unto you then shall he answer them saying verily i say unto you in as much

as you didn't it not unto the least of these you did it not to me and these shall go away into everlasting punishment but the righteous into life eternal again the importance of ministering to those that are in me and uh you may not recognize them lord when did we see you but again he said when you do it unto the least of these my brethren you're doing it unto me so our care and concern for those in need around us the lord is interested in our doing that and so uh the day's coming the day of judgment is coming the lord is coming again and then he's going to gather us together for this judgment when he returns now the interesting thing when the lord comes and to judge the earth uh it seems like the first order of business when jesus comes again will be that of judging and it probably will

consume about 60 days of time as it will be determined those that are here on the earth which will be allowed to go in to what we call the kingdom age and those that will be cut off at that particular time and daniel seems to indicate that there will be a 60 day period of time in which this judgment will be taking place and of course if you uh if you are not taken up in the rapture and you're left here on earth and the judgment comes you will be one of those who will have to stand in judgment and then if you make it through that at least you'll be into the kingdom age but it's it's a bad way to go the best way is to just be walking and as he said be watching and be ready because you don't know just when the lord is going to come father we thank you for the glorious hope that we have and

as we look for your coming for us we know lord that no man knows the day or the hour we know lord that suddenly there will be that shout the trump of god will sound and we who are alive and remain will be caught up to meet the lord in the air and ever be with our lord lord we're anxious for that day we look at the world in which we are living and we see it just falling apart we see lord that men are just hearts are just against you and opposed to you we see lord that more and more people are becoming agnostics and becoming atheists and becoming opposed to you and to your kingdom the lord we pray thy kingdom come thy will be done here on earth even as it is in heaven lord we're anxious and longing to see your kingdom come and so lord we pray that tonight our hearts will be prepared for

that glorious day when you come for your church and lord when we're joined together with you through the ages to come as you reveal to us the exceeding riches of your love and mercy and grace toward us through jesus christ our lord bless your people bless your church lord may we bear fruit for you may we not just hide in the corner and hide the talent and all that you have given to us but lord may we use it and invest it for your kingdom's sake and for your glory in jesus name we pray amen

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