

The Fatal Delay

by Ernst Tanner

The sermon calls for urgent spiritual preparedness in light of the signs of the times and the imminent return of Christ.

Scripture: Matthew 16:3, Matthew 24:14, Mark 13:10, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-2

Topics: "Delay"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the need for revival and urgency in the current times. He highlights how people have become complacent and distracted by worldly pleasures, such as feasting and entertainment, instead of focusing on prayer and fasting. The speaker also discusses the importance of being prepared for the coming of the bridegroom, symbolizing the return of Jesus Christ. He warns against being attached to worldly things and urges listeners to be ready for the kingdom of God. The sermon references biblical passages such as Matthew 25 and Isaiah 60 to support these teachings.

Transcript

Well, I want to be honest with you. This theme is very much on my heart. And I have asked God under tears to give me a message for tonight.

Because it is an urgent time. I'm not talking about religion. I'm trying to show you on the hand of some facts, make us aware how late it really is.

You see, man has been made for eternity. It's just through the curse of sin that the time of man became limited. Through death.

And man is having a hard time to accept it. We feel that we are here to live forever on earth. Unfortunately, even some of us Christians, we are not in a hurry at all to go to heaven.

Why? We have heaven on earth. But time is running out. And we should not put our roots too deep into this world.

In Psalm 90 verse 12, I'm just quoting it because I don't have my German Bible. God says, teach us to number our days. To apply wisdom to our heart.

To number our days. We think we have ages to live here. No, no.

It's just days. And you see, no clock is running backwards. Every clock runs forward.

Time is unmerciful. There's no way back. You see, God is trying to warn us about that.

We have warning signs for road traffic. You don't dare to pass a stop sign. Not because of the police.

But because of the danger. On the Niagara River in the States, in Canada. There's a cable across the river just before the Niagara fall.

With a sign on it. And it says, point of no return. If you pass here, there's no way.

And God's signs are even more important. In Matthew 16, 3, Jesus said to the hypocrites, He said, you know about the weather when it's going to rain. Matthew 16, verse 3. But the time of the season of God, you cannot discern.

In Thessalonica, 1 Thessalonians 5, verse 1 and 2. It says about the time, and it says in English the seasons. But in the German it says the points of time. Not just season, like four seasons.

But the point, the precise points of time. We don't have to write to you. Because you know precisely, Paul says.

So God expects us to know precisely the times of God. The first sign I want to mention is the sign of politic. Glad to have your honor here as a politician.

I hope you don't mind me preaching to you. You preached to me just a while ago. In my 57 years of ministry, I remember that about 40 years ago, we preached that when the time of the season of God, when Israel becomes a state, that generation will see the return of the Lord.

That's 40 years ago. Today, Israel is in a very difficult situation. Very difficult.

Israel has become a state long ago. The last year, 3,890 rockets were fired at Israel. A total of 7,000 rockets have been fired at Israel.

One just last week. 43 casualties, death. Hamas in the south.

Hezbollah in the north. Syria in the east. Iran threatening to wipe out Israel with an atomic bomb.

The U.S. Security Council has had just a while ago agreed for the condemnation of Israel of going into the Gaza. USA has turned very much in favor of the Palestine. Obama said the world peace depends on the Middle East.

Everything is focused on Israel. And there is a worldwide distress amongst the nations. Look 21, 25 to 28.

You can read it in your own Bible later on. Worldwide financial crisis. Swiss banks go bankrupt.

Swiss banks. Are in trouble. And it's good.

And it's good. There's so much corrupted money in Switzerland. I said for years God is going to judge us for it.

And they've got us around the neck now. It's a sign of time. Recession is worldwide.

Everybody talks about recession. Unemployment. Turning into war.

Let me quote some of the world press what they say about today. CIA has said recently. That population centers like Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Düsseldorf, Paris, London.

Will be uncontrolled within the next five or ten years. There are areas in these cities where even the police does not dare to go into anymore. The press said that civil war is at hand.

They're talking about world currency. A world president. A world government.

Do we realize what that means? Antichrist is just around the corner. Spiegel, the number one magazine in Germany. Barack Hussein Obama is the world president.

And in our little newspaper in Appenzell, where I come from in Switzerland. They said just recently. Is the antichrist coming from the White House? I'm talking about world press.

The world is watching the time. Realizing what's going on. And quite often they are wiser than the children of the light.

Because we feel so wonderful in Canaan. We sing our songs and go to heaven. Hallelujah.

While the world is going to hell. A second sign I want to mention tonight. That's the sign of mission.

I'm talking now out of my own kitchen. Jesus said. This gospel has to be preached.

Must be preached to all the Gentiles. Mark 13 verse 10. Matthew 24 verse 14.

Jesus said this gospel of the kingdom. Will be preached to every tribe and nation. And then the end will come.

That's clearly prophetic stable. Jesus says the end will not come before every tribe has been reached with the gospel. When I realized that.

It threw me out of my socks. I thought we're going to wait another thousand years until Jesus comes. Because I found out there are still so many tribes.

That haven't heard the gospel. So I walked through the jungles three years during dry season. And then I started to do mission work with a helicopter.

The first one. That there was. I was 43 years old already when I learned to fly.

My pilot instructor said Mr. Tanner you will never a pilot forget it. I took off in Bern with only 37 hours experience. Our pilots have to have a minimum of 500 hours or 1000 hours.

Five minutes after takeoff I was already lost. I landed somewhere in the field. Let the helicopter turn.

Ran into a restaurant. And with my map and I said can you tell me where I am. I didn't tell him that I was on my way to Africa.

Now you can laugh but I wasn't laughing at that time. Today we have nine helicopters. We have flown 38 years free of charge.

All our helicopters are paid. We have no debts. No bank loans.

Hallelujah. And we saved thousands of lives. If we were not so late we would have shown you a film about the work afterwards.

But maybe we still do it. Let me get back to my message. The big question now is in our heart.

Well brother Ernie how many tribes are there still? That's the big question. How many more tribes are there unreached? Well before a tribe can be reached we have to translate their language. And I supported language specialists science for many many years.

Right now we support seven teams in the jungles of Papua that are there to study the languages. Seven tribes. I have met personally 16 tribes that have never heard the gospel before.

And in these areas where we support after three years they were already able to preach the gospel in that language. And some people got saved already. Hallelujah.

Now it's a question about languages. Now Wycliffe is the biggest language institution worldwide. Language mission.

They suspect that there are still 2400 unreached tribes. Right now they are working amongst 350 tribes. They suspect between 21 and 25 years to have completed the job.

But that's just Wycliffe. We work a lot with new tribes mission. They are also very strong in language studying and translating.

The Luton mission is doing language studies and translations. The Swiss Bible Society is doing language translations. Bible Society worldwide.

Minister Diffusion Bible. The French mission are doing Bible translations. If I deduct these from the 21 to 25 years I may be coming down to 5 to 10 years.

Maranatha Hallelujah. Jesus is coming soon. On top of all that.

Heli mission is helping all these translations to be pushed forward. We have on my new film that I'm making now. The testimony of revival broken out in five different valleys in Papua.

They were deadly enemies. Killing and eating each other. The gospel changed everything.

And we flew. We'll show that in the film. We flew the government people into the jungles of Papua.

To witness these five different areas come with all their weapons, their spears and arrows to burn them at the government seat. And these are all arms with blood on them. As a testimony of what God can do.

No government, no military, no politic is able to change the hearts of these people. Praise God. Revival can change everything.

I'm coming to the third sign of God. And that's the sign of the kingdom of God. In Matthew 25 verse 1. Matthew 25 verse 1. The Lord says, then shall the kingdom of God like 25 virgins.

If he says, then. It raises the question, when? Well, it's right after Matthew 24. When it talks about war and famine and pestilence and earthquakes and all that.

We've had all that. So the Lord is talking about our time. In Matthew 25.

It corresponds with Isaiah chapter 60 verse 1 and 2. And 3. Where the Lord says, rise and shine. Then he says, the Gentiles will come to your glory. That's our time.

God is waiting for the Gentiles to come. Into the kingdom of God. Now he says, arise.

Well, that's what we have actually in the picture of these 10 virgins. It was mentioned this afternoon already. The Lord says, five were wise and five were foolish.

Now, if Jesus mentions numbers. He means numbers. Otherwise he would have said, some of them were foolish and some of them were wise.

But he says, five to five. That means half of us. Half of us.

He says, two will work on the field. One will be taken. One will be left.

Two work on the mill. One taken. One left.

Two in the bed. One taken. One left.

One to one. Five to five. To me that speaks.

And I wonder. To which half do I belong? So there are some very interesting pictures the Lord is giving us in this example. At the first verse it was a common or collective preparation for the wedding of the Lamb.

They all prepared for the wedding. Verse three to four. Now, it's important to realize that all 10 had a lamp.

Jesus said, ye are the light of the world. First he said, I am the light of the world. But then he says, ye are the light of the world.

So these virgins all were the light of the world. Because Jesus is the kingdom of God is like unto these 10 virgins. Now they all had lamps.

And, and, and. They had vessels. That's very important.

We usually just talk about the lamps. But they had vessels. And these vessels are very important.

Because five were full of oil. And five were empty. The apostle Paul says, be ye not drunken with wine.

But be ye filled with the Holy Spirit. Now he never said that it is prohibited to drink wine. He just said don't be drunken with wine.

And I take that sometimes very, very carefully. Dogmatically. Now, I appreciate anybody that restrains from alcohol.

I worked amongst drunkards in America. And I know what alcohol can do. But we can be so serious about not drinking a drop of wine.

Which is only an example. But we can be very negligent about the command to be filled with the Holy Spirit. He says be ye filled with the Holy Spirit.

We are commanded to be. And in the Greek timing it means continually be filled. Again and again.

Now there can be a very dangerous negligence. You see these virgins, they were all very, very, I would say, obedient. Very, very serious.

Very dedicated young ladies. And they were dressed in white. Speaking of holiness.

There was only one problem. Five of them. Had an empty vessel.

You see it's very important that we are clothed in white. That it's also important that we are under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The leather killed, but the Spirit gave it life.

Now when we look at this whole situation. This was the real problem. You see they didn't have the oil in the vessel.

Now Paul says that we bear this precious treasure in earthen vessels. To my understanding the earthen vessel is my body. It is breakable.

Made out of dust. In other words, I should bear the Holy Spirit also in my body. And I don't know about you.

But my body is my biggest enemy. That's what I have all the problem with. Because Paul says there's a war going on constantly.

Between the Spirit and the flesh. Just take for instance my head. How shall I translate that from my German notes? My doubting box.

My tongue. Filled with the fire of hell. Nobody can tame it James says.

Take your stomach. Some of them, their belly is more important than the brain. Paul says eating and drinking.

And then about the sexual part of our life. Isn't that one of the biggest problems? That's why Paul says walk in the Spirit and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. Let me move on.

It's going to get more excited all the time. They all fell asleep. Laodissea.

Affluence. I have more than enough. Feasting instead of fasting.

Entertainment instead of prayer. The fourth scene we see here is that they wake up with a yell, with a scream. Strange.

There was a cry. The bridegroom cometh. Why wasn't there a hallelujah? They were all waiting for the bridegroom.

Why was there a cry? They realized that something was wrong. They were caught asleep. We need revival.

Revival will come through trouble. I wish I had more time. I would take you to Joel.

The prophet of the Holy Spirit. He says the day of the Lord has come. A dark day, a terrible day.

And he says if my people that I call by my name, my servants will humble themselves and will fall on their knees and will cry to God. Why should the heathen say where is now their God? He says then shall I hear in heaven and I will answer from heaven and I will retreat my big army which I have sent against you. Why is God sending that big army against us? To bring us on our knees.

And I say often the Muslims are going to teach us to pray again. There's something coming up in the press in Europe. I missed to read it.

They talk about Eurasia. Eurasia. Europe becoming Asian.

We are going to face hard times. And it will teach us to cry to God. Now the Pentecostal churches like to quote that verse one in chapter three about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Peter quoted that on the day of Pentecost. I've heard that so many times and I believe that there will be an outpouring of the Holy Spirit before the Lord is coming. But it will come just like Joel said through tribulation.

God has to wake us up. And what people, preachers forget are the first two words of that verse. It says after this in the English it comes afterwards.

But it says after this I will pour out my spirit. You have to ask after what? Well, after God has brought revival and we have been on our knees before God. And I have been on my knees before I prepared this message.

We come to the next scene which is very important. The hour of the truth. Our lamps are going out.

Terrible. Lack of oil. What a tragedy.

Maria, Maria, give me some of my lamp. It's going out, it's going out. But give me some of your oil.

Please, Maria. I'm sorry. Marta, I'm sorry.

I would love to but then I don't have enough for me. But Marta, hurry up, go and get some. Lydia, come on, let's go get some of oil.

And they ran. Hurry up, hurry up. Go get your oil.

And then comes the fatal delay, the title of my message. But don't be afraid, I'm not starting my message here. The tragic delay.

I was a steward on ships, big passenger ships. I crossed the ocean 26 times. Luxury ship with 2,700 passengers.

I never was seasick. I never was seasick. Five times over South America, even down to Rio de Janeiro.

I visited all these islands in the Pacific there. And our big ship couldn't go into these small harbors. It anchored outside.

And the passengers went on the shore with little boats. And there were these four sailors, they also went on the shore and had a good time. And they did quite a bit drinking.

And time went by so fast. Suddenly one of them said, hey, the ship is leaving here at 12. Why? Wow, let's run down to the harbor.

They ran down to the harbor as good as they could, as drunk they were. They jumped in their boat and they started to row like Olympics. Wow, the ship is going.

We don't catch up. Let's go faster. Come on.

Let's go faster. Shut up. We don't catch it anymore.

They rowed and rowed. And suddenly one realized that they were still attached to the board. When Jesus comes and you're still attached somewhere to someone, you can row as much as you want to.

You won't make it. Amen. This time is urgent to be released, to be delivered.

But now I'm coming to the most difficult part. They had gone to get oil. I'm coming back.

Out of breath. In the meantime, the bridegroom had come and the door was shut. Can you hear the hinges go? The locks go down.

Door lock. They come running. The door is locked.

Hello. Hello. Open up.

This is Martin, Hannah and Lydia. We belong to the party. We have now oil.

Look, our lamps are shining bright again. Our clothes are still white. There are no spots at all.

Please let us come in. And then they heard some of the hardest word that I can imagine in the scripture. And we have to realize that.

Jesus said, I do not know you. How is that possible? I pondered over that many, many years. He knew them.

They were virgins. He must have known them. Why then could Jesus say, I don't know you.

I went eventually to the original translation. You see, in English you only have one word for knowing. In German, we have at least two.

Kennen and erkennen. That means to know just personally. From person to person.

But erkennen means to know someone very deep. That word is used in the Old Testament for the relationship between man and wife. And Adam knew Eve.

But in German it says, erkannte. That's very important. The Apostle Paul knew Jesus.

He met him personally. But he says, I leave everything behind and strive to know him. But to erkennen, that's a big difference.

To know someone very deeply, very personally. Now in the Greek language, there are five words for knowing. And the one that is used here, that Jesus used, is oida.

That means, I haven't seen you for a long time. I haven't seen you for a long time. I don't know you as well anymore.

That makes sense to me. In John chapter 15, the chapter of the fruit bringing, Jesus says, once only in verse 16, he says, we're called to go and to bring fruit. But seven times the Lord Jesus said, he that I abided in me.

All our running, all our doing, means nothing unless we abide in him. That's the secret of fruit bringing. Jesus said, without me, you can do nothing.

Or we can organize. We can do many things. But no lasting fruit.

He says, unless you abide in me, and I in you. How does Jesus abide in me? By the Holy Spirit. By the Holy Spirit.

How much do I have of Jesus in me? How much time do I spend on my knees? How many appointments do I have with him? When did you last time spend an hour praying? The Lord says, seek me and you shall live. Seek me with all your heart. Then you will find me.

That's not done in five minutes. My dear Martha, my dear Lydian, Hannah, I'm sorry that we missed contact. You didn't make it.

And what's the result? Not only do I miss the glory in heaven and the banquet of the marriage feast of the Lamb. Behind me is tribulation. The anger of God being poured out upon this world.

Tribulation. My God, I don't want to be missing. The Lord says, rise.

How can I rise? It means to seek the Lord. Urgent of time. We don't have much time left.

I've tried to make us aware of the hour we're living in. There is still a chance to get oil, to get filled with the Holy Spirit. The Lord says, let him that is a thirst that he come.

And then he says, whoever will. Isn't that strange? When you're thirsty, why shouldn't you want a drink? There are a lot of Christians that are well satisfied the way they are. You have to want to be filled.

You have to be open to the Holy Spirit. Let him that will take of the water of life freely. Take means by faith.

Drinking by faith. Every baby is born with the ability to drink. I have never heard of drinking lessons for newborn babies.

And every child of God is born with the ability to drink of the water of life. Are you still there? I'm at the end. I'm glad nobody fell asleep so far.

But I feel very deeply challenged in my heart myself. There is such a potential here together. If God can meet with us here, it's going to change a part of the world.

And I would like to pray in closing. And I just have it on my heart to ask you that every one of you that has a deep desire to rise up anew whatever that includes to be sanctified to be delivered from habits from relationships that are not right and whatever you want to rise and make your life right with God. We can make a step of faith like when a sinner comes to God and we ask him to stand up and pray or whatever.

I just feel to ask every one of you that tonight wants to really rise for God. Willing to praise the price. I would reverently ask you to stand up where you are.

I want to pray for you. Thank you Lord. Oh God.

Oh God. Lord we realize tonight that we need you. We have everything else more than enough but the oil is lacking.

We ask you to forgive us. Have mercy on us. The world is going to hell.

The sinners are dying of thirst and we so often play church. Oh God have mercy on us. Grant us a new help pouring of your Holy Spirit that will change our lives that will change history that will change the world.

Have mercy on us for being so low on oil for being so cold so hard fill us with your love with your presence and let this day become a new day for us and for you and Lord save us from not being part of the foolish. By all means may it cost what it will. Give us the grace not to miss the boat.

God have mercy on us tonight. We pray and ask you in the precious name of Jesus. Amen.

God bless you. Thank you for patience.

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