

Bridesmaids & Goats - Endtime Parables

by Philip Powell

Philip Powell's sermon explores the significance of the parables of the bridesmaids and goats, emphasizing preparedness, accountability, and acts of kindness in the context of end times.

Duration: 1:17:39

Scripture: Luke 4:16, John 3:3-5, Acts 1:1, Titus 3:4-5, James 2:14-26

Topics: "End Time Prophecy", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses three end time parables from the Bible. The first parable is about the wise and foolish virgins, emphasizing the importance of being prepared. The second parable is about talents, where individuals are given talents according to their abilities, and they are expected to use them faithfully. The third parable is about the sheep and the goats, illustrating how acts of kindness towards God's people determine one's place in the final judgment. The preacher emphasizes the need to recognize the spiritual battle we are in and the eternal truth of God Almighty.

Transcript

Alright, what we're looking at now today, the topic of bridesmaids and goats. Sounds exciting. End time parables.

And before I get right into the topic, I want to just make three sort of statements. First of all, I want to bring you a quote which really winds up what I was saying last week about rock music and the Song of the Bride. And this quote was given to me.

It's a quote from Terry Law in his book *Praise and Worship*, which was published in 1985. And it's quite frightening. He tells how, and Terry Law is a person who I met way back in probably the late 60s, early 70s, when he travelled the world with living sound.

And he came to us in Britain. I was in Britain at that time. Then I met him again in Australia.

And he's certainly quite a good musician. But he gave a fearful warning about rock music. And he tells of meeting, or not him meeting, but somebody else meeting the person who was the manager of one of the biggest rock and roll bands in the world.

And this man was asked the question, what do you think is the next agenda for rock and roll? And the person went on to say, we're coming through the era of punk rock, a new wave. Where do we go from

here? And this is what the manager said. If you study rock music, it has gone through four phases.

Each phase has appealed to one side of the human personality. In the late 50s, early 60s, it appealed to sex entirely. In the late 60s, going into the 70s, we tried to raise the consciousness and spiritual perception of young people.

We were getting them involved in causes, Vietnam, etc. We opened them up to take drugs and experiment in other ways. We are now in the third era, the addictive rock and roll era.

Notice that, addictive rock and roll era. That is what punk rock is. Our music is violent and blaring.

We don't feel quality is important. We are creating an addiction to the sound of violence. And then the manager continued saying, we're just like any other business.

How do they sell cosmetics, clothes or cars? They find motivational triggers. We have discovered the best motivation to buy a product that there is in the world. It is religious commitment.

No human being ever makes a deeper commitment than a religious commitment. So we have decided that in the 80s we are going to have religious services in our concerts. We are going to pronounce ourselves as Messiah.

And we are going to make intimate acquaintances and covenants with Satan to pray for the sick and pill people out of wheelchairs during concerts. We will be worshipped. Now, I'm quite sure that is what is happening.

And I'm equally sure that certain musicians in the church have tried to counter it wrongly. Maybe they have perceived it. I'm not sure if they have perceived it.

But they have tried to counter it by producing the same sort of thing in the Christian context. Now the Bible clearly says that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal. And we are not to follow the enemy by using his weapons.

Our weapons are spiritual. They are mighty to the pulling down of strongholds. It is my fearful conclusion that churches that have introduced rock will ultimately be shaken to their very foundation.

And what's more, the leaders themselves will be shaken also. And I would suggest that people who hear this tape or anyone who are in churches that have introduced rock that they ought to protest to the best of their ability. If their protest is not heard, I would recommend that they withdraw from the church.

And I would recommend that action is taken against leaders who introduce this sort of thing. Now, I know musicians, quite a very well-known musician in this country who came from Australia. And he said he is aware of the musical scene in Australia.

And he said some of the people who are into Christian rock are failed rock musicians in the world. And because they have failed there, and I could name some of them, some of them unfortunately are coming over to New Zealand shortly and they are doing their big concerts here. Now, we have to have our eyes open.

And so we are giving these types of warnings. I have been in some of these meetings and quite frankly I find it almost impossible to think. I know Barry Smith who is a good friend of mine.

He has told me that some of the churches that he goes to speak at he finds it almost impossible to preach following the music that has preceded him. And certain places he has insisted on a type of music before he gets up to preach. And you know Barry's position on that.

And I certainly support him in that. And I think it's high time that we sounded out the warning. So that's the first thing I want to say.

And it's a bit of a wind-up to what I said last week about rock music and the darkness that has invaded. Then the second thing is by way of explanation. During this series I have been fairly forthright in making statements.

And I have named people. And some people may be a little concerned about that. Quite frankly as I understand the New Testament and the Old Testament and I agree with Jacob Pratt here that if people do not heed then they are to be named.

And this is what happens. Paul named people quite openly. And the Old Testament prophets named false teachers and false teaching and false people who live falsely.

They were named. The Bible contains many names. And we wouldn't know about them apart from the fact that they were named and it's been written down for us.

So I don't have a lot of problems about that providing we are accurate when we do name people. And the reason I have done this let me tell you something that happened to me when I first went to Australia. I was very friendly with a godly man by the name of Dennis Clark who has gone to be with the Lord now.

He came from South Africa to Europe. And he was a brethren extract. And I linked up with him.

He was an independent Bible teacher. But we worked together a great deal in England and then we joined forces and did some seminars together in Australia. And the first time we were together God gave us a sort of an agenda.

And the agenda was that we were to pray for the exposure of corruption in high places. And it had to do with the government on that occasion. It was quite amazing what happened out of that.

We actually saw the arrest of Mr. Asia the drug boss I believe directly as a result of that prayer time. There was a hundred of us together and we prayed and within a very very short period of time things were starting to be exposed in high places. I believe that we got on to God's agenda for prayer.

And it was quite remarkable. I don't say it with any sense of boasting. It wasn't us.

It was the Lord leading us. And there were about a hundred people with us from all denominations praying there in Sydney. But while I was there God gave me an understanding of what is necessary I believe for his resurrection life to come into any situation including the church situation.

And it was linked to John chapter 11 and I think it's about verse 38 or verse 39 where Jesus said to Martha roll the stone away. Now because Jesus was all powerful he could have done that by just a command couldn't he? I mean he raised Lazarus with a command. But he left it to Martha and those with her to roll the stone away.

Why? Because I believe there's a principle here that it is our responsibility to expose corruption to the light of resurrection. Some things God can do some things he has entrusted to us. And so I believe that some of the things that I have said and it's on tape I believe God wanted me to say it.

And so I have said it we probably will never have to say it again. But I believe we have to say it and I believe that that will have a snowballing effect. There has to be the exposure of corruption in high places.

And I talk about that now in regard to the church. There has been cover-ups and I have mentioned them. It needs to be exposed and when it is exposed it will be exposed to the resurrection life of the Lord Jesus.

The problem with us is we are too concerned about our stinking reputation and our reputation doesn't count for very much when all is said and done. It's character that counts in the end and character and reputation are not always the same thing. And so very often in order to protect our name we will engage in cover-ups and I believe it's obnoxious to God Almighty and I believe that he intends for it to be exposed.

And then brothers and sisters I believe we will see the revival that we need to see in New Zealand and across the world. So I have said that just to give you a perception of the background of what we are coming at. And then the third thing I want to say very quickly is about the material that I am giving you with the notes.

You'll find at the back of each set of notes up to today from next week it won't apply but you will find an article from the Omega Times because I have linked all my messages in with what I wrote in Omega Times. And incidentally some of the leaders for reasons best known to them have objected to my writing in Omega Times and have put pressure on the publishers for me not to write any longer. Now that's OK, I don't mind.

But they have done it and so much so that they have actually influenced people to cancel their subs to Omega Times because of our involvement. Now that's between them and the Lord. The fact is they haven't come to me they haven't spoken to me and they've also said that there's nothing that they would find that they could object to to what I've written.

So that's with them and the Lord. But we will not be continuing with our articles. One article was omitted and so I have given it to you in original draft form.

And it is the Jewish analogy of the bridal system. And I believe there's some good stuff in that but it was never published and it won't be published but it's there for you to read. And I trust that you will find it helpful.

So that's the explanation and now what I want to do is get into the topic today. And we're talking about the passage of Scripture in Matthew chapter 25. And there are three basic parables there.

There is the parable of the ten virgins five wise and five foolish. Then immediately after that there is the parable of the talents. One man was given five talents another was given two talents and another was given one talent.

And you know the story very well. The one with five brought back another five. The one with two brought back another two.

And each of them is commended equally. Well done thou good and faithful servant because you have been faithful over a little then you will be entrusted with a lot. There's no difference made between them.

The fact that one has produced five and the other only two doesn't make any difference. They are both commended equally. The one who had one only brought one in the end because he buried his talent.

And he is condemned on two bases. He is condemned on the basis of his fear and he is condemned on the basis of his laziness. We'll look at that a bit later.

Then the third parable has to do with the sheep and the goats. It talks about the nations being gathered together at the end of time and the great shepherd divides them as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats. The sheep are on the right hand side the goats on the left.

The sheep are sheep because they have shown acts of kindness to God's people. The goats are goats because they have not shown acts of kindness to God's people. And they are divided on that basis.

Now there are certain problems with all of these if you just don't fully understand what Jesus is getting at. And I trust that by the end of today we will understand what it's all about. Bridesmaids and goats end time parables.

Now let me say three things and here we go to our notes about parables in general before we look at these in particular. I want us to look at the nature of parables and of the truth of parables. Then I want us to see secondly that all of the parables were in a particular setting and so that is important.

And then I want you to consider the time element involved in parables. Now according to A.M. Hunter in his interpreting parables Jesus used some 60 different parables in his teaching which makes up one third of his recorded teachings that's a lot. So one third of all of his teachings was in fact parable teaching.

However I would suggest that A.M. Hunter in getting to that figure must have looked not merely at the major parables but also at minor parables. What we would call more similes or metaphors. Now a parable in the strictest sense is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning.

It has to have a story attached to it. So probably some that Hunter called parables were more what we would call similes. Like a simile is a statement of likeness between two things which are different in every other regard.

When you say a person for example he is like a lion. You don't imagine that he's got four feet. You don't imagine that he's got a long beard or he might have.

But what you're saying is he's strong. That's really all you're saying. He has the strength of a lion.

That is a metaphor. It's a picture. It's a figure of speech.

Now Jesus used many figures of speech in the scriptures. For example on one occasion he used the figure of speech that we call irony where it's like inverse sarcasm where he's meaning the opposite of what he's saying. And really you don't understand his teaching unless you see that in this particular story and parable.

It's in Luke chapter 11 or chapter 16 where Jesus talks about the steward the unjust steward. And on that occasion Jesus uses irony a couple of a times. He says I say to you make to yourself friends of the

mammon of unrighteousness.

Now he's not telling us to go out and get money because that would be contrary to all of his teaching. But what he is saying is simply this. Look if you don't believe what I'm saying then trust the money system.

You can see that the you know what he's really saying if you look at the parable in depth. Also when he says the children of this generation are wiser in their day than the children of light. The New King James puts the more correct slant on that.

When it says the children of this world are more crafty. You know wisdom is at two levels. You've got the wisdom in the Garden of Eden of the serpent.

That was the wisdom of this world. And Jesus is not commending that type of wisdom. He is actually using a figure of speech that we call irony.

And when you understand that then you start to understand the parable there. So Jesus used a lot of figures of speech and we don't have time to go into all of that. But I have done a series of articles which appeared in the Australian Evangel when I was editor on the parables the parables of the kingdom.

And I've actually printed them out. You can take them if you wish. But it just gives you some background about parables in general.

So Jesus used this form of teaching. Now parables are intended essentially to convey one basic truth. Alright.

It's an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. However there may be a number of applications. For example the famous parable is the sower and the seed.

You know a sower went out to sow. And some of the seed that he sowed fell by the wayside. Some fell among thorns.

Some fell on dry ground. Some fell on good ground. Now that parable is the only parable that Jesus fully interprets.

He gives the full interpretation. And he says listen he says unless you understand this one you're not going to understand any of them. And so he gives the interpretation.

And he tells us that the seed is the Word of God. Later on he tells us that the one who sows the seed is the Son of Man. Of course.

He started it all didn't he? He started it. He's the sower that goes out. And I tell you what if you're sowing it's not you that's sowing it's him sowing in you.

Did you know that? So he's still the sower. In every age and generation Jesus is the great sower. How dare we take credit or glory for what happens.

It's him doing it all the time. Blessed be his wonderful name. You see we get so many things mixed up.

You know that song that we often sing where we turn it into a prayer that comes from us. Ask of me and I will give you the nations for your inheritance. If you look at it it's in Psalm 2. And the person who was asking was the Son.

At the time of the resurrection. In Psalm 2 God says to the Son at the moment of the resurrection this day have I begotten you. Hallelujah.

And he says ask of me and I will give you the nations for your inheritance. Give the church the nations for the never. It's giving the Son the nations for the inheritance because he owns everything and everything belongs to him.

And yet we've made it ours haven't we? We have said we've got to do this. We've got to do this. And so much of the church growth thing and the church planting thing is a self motivation thing.

But when it comes back to realizing it's for his glory it takes all the pressure out. Hallelujah. And it begins to put it in perspective once more.

So he's the sower all through the generations. He's the seed who bruises Satan's head. We think we are.

No it's him. When God promised there in Genesis chapter 3 and verse 15 the first great promise of the Bible he said and the seed of the woman will bruise the head of the serpent and the serpent will bruise his heel. And there on the cross thank God though his heel was bruised he bruised Satan forever.

Blessed be his wonderful name. And in every generation and every nation it is the seed of Satan that is being bruised by not us but by the seed of the woman Christ in us. Blessed be his wonderful name.

And when you start to see that it becomes a marvelous, marvelous thing. So parables are intended essentially to convey one basic truth. And you've got to see that truth.

The sower incidentally the kingdom parables of Matthew 13 there are eight of them there's eight of them but there are six basic truths that are brought out in them. The first one deals with the commencement of the kingdom. A sower goes out to sow.

Christ does that. And he does it not only in his generation but he does it through us in every generation. The next one about the tares and the wheat is the confusion in the kingdom.

My, there's some confusion isn't there? And you can sometimes tell the wheat from the tares. And the problem is we go tearing up the tares and start tearing up a bit of wheat too if we're not careful. So, you've got to watch that.

But the devil plants his seed alongside of the seed that the father plants. And just like the darnel which was the tare there you can't tell the difference until harvest. But at the time of the harvest you can tell the difference.

And the women used to go out and gather the tares before the harvest was gathered in and he'll gather his tares undoubtedly. So that's the confusion of the kingdom. Then afterwards with the mustard seed and the leaven you have the corruption of the kingdom.

I've heard many teachers say oh this, this, you know this mustard seed it's a great tree and they try and make it represent the kingdom. No, no. It's the corruption of the kingdom.

It's, you see what happens is that the simple thing that God starts we make it so complicated and it gets so big that all sorts of strange birds come and flock in the branches. And God never intended for it to become big and like that. He intended it for it to remain simple.

That doesn't mean we can't have lots of people but let's keep it simple. Give everything the kiss. K-I-S-S
Keep it simple, stupid.

Right. So you have the corruption of the kingdom. Then next you get the cost of the kingdom.

Jesus says the kingdom of heaven is like a treasure in a field. Hidden in a field. The kingdom of heaven is like a pearl.

Oh, thank God. He is the infinite pearl. But he looks down and he sees a pearl in us as well.

Thank God. And he sold everything he had to get that pearl. The pearl of great price.

The church, the true church. And we've got to sell all we've got to get him. Hallelujah.

That's the way it works. The cost of the kingdom. Some people think if they pay their tithes they've done God a duty.

In fact, let me say this. Tithing is not a New Testament principle. Did you know that? And lots of churches bind you to it because they want your money.

And it's not a New Testament principle. You can't find it taught in the New Testament. Now I'm not saying it shouldn't be practiced.

I think if anything it's a minimum. But it doesn't belong to the church. I tell you where it belongs.

Everything belongs to God. And what's more, it's not a tent, but it's everything. Okay? Everything.

I am owned by Him. And because I am owned by Him, everything I own is owned by Him. But He has made me a steward over the things that He has entrusted to me.

And it is under my control in submission to His Lordship. And it doesn't belong anywhere else. That's the cost of the kingdom.

And if you want the pearl, He says you can have it, no matter if you've got little or a lot. It doesn't matter how much you've got, as long as you're prepared to trade everything, you can have it. Hallelujah.

And He's worth it, isn't He? Blessed be His wonderful name. So you've got the cost of the kingdom. Then you get the consummation of the kingdom, the gathering in of the dragnet.

And then finally the conclusions of the kingdom. Jesus said, have you understood it all? They said, well, yes Lord. What? Have you understood it all? Well, you know, a bit with tongue in cheek, yes Lord.

And He said, well then, the kingdom of the heaven is like a person who is a householder and out of his treasure he brings old and new. Thank God for the old and the new. Don't dismiss the old for the new.

Right the way through the kingdom, the old and the new is mixed up together. Praise the Lord. And we're constantly bringing it up.

Well, that's a little bit about the parables. You can read a bit more about it there. But that is what it is intended.

The parable is intended to convey one basic truth. Now, if you interpret every detail in the parable, you will end in confusion and you will probably end in error. The ones we're coming to in a moment, the one about the virgins.

You know, I've heard people say, ah, they were virgins. That means they were pure nonsense. All it is is just a term which simply says that they were the friends of the bride.

That's all. They were like bridesmaids. It's got nothing to do with their purity or their impurity.

Then others come along and say, oh, the oil represents the Holy Spirit. Again, it can do, but it doesn't exclusively represent that. The story is simply one basic story and the importance of being ready when Jesus comes.

That's all it is. Being ready, being prepared. That is what it's talking about.

And you try and make every detail carry through, you'll end up in all sorts of confusion. For example, there'll be those who come along and say on the basis of this, well, there are these ten and they weren't even part of the bridal. You know, they weren't part of the bride.

And so teaching has got around that you can be somewhere in the kingdom without being part of the bride. Again, that's not what it's all about. You must not and dare not establish doctrine on the basis of parables.

All you can do is establish the doctrine from the scripture and then use the parable to illustrate. That's all that Jesus did. And you start doing that sort of thing, you will end up in all sorts of problems.

So you've got to understand the nature of parables. It's an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. And then the setting in which the truth is being taught.

You see, Jesus taught in the open air close to nature. And you'll find that these three principles carry through with most of biblical teaching. There is, first of all, the matter is stated.

Then the matter is illustrated. Then the matter is demonstrated. You'll find that with all basic truth.

It is stated. It is illustrated. It is demonstrated.

Now, it doesn't always come in that order. It may come in a different order. For example, in Acts chapter 1 and verse 1, Luke says, The former treatise of I made O Theophilus, can you repeat it for me? Of all that Jesus began both to do and teach.

So he's reversed the order now. But go back to his statement. In Luke, and it's the same writer, Luke chapter 4 and verse 16, where Jesus actually announces his program.

He comes to Nazareth and he takes the book and he finds the passage of Scripture where it is written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because what? He has anointed me to what? What's the first thing now? Preach! And then to what? Restore the sight to the blind. So now he's reversed it. Right? Back there, it was to do first and then teach.

Here now, it's to teach or preach and then to do. It doesn't matter about the order, but you will always find those three things in all basic truth. It is stated, it's illustrated, it's demonstrated.

Sometimes in the reverse order, but it is always there. And we bring that out in our teaching on the kingdom parables which are available for those who get them. The tape, if you want them, we'll send you a copy of those.

The kingdom parables based on Matthew chapter 13. Christ, and this is important, directed his teaching to ordinary people. People like you and me.

He didn't have much time for the highbrows. He dealt with ordinary people. Mind you, there were some very wealthy people that joined his party.

One lady seemed to support him nearly all through his life and ministry. So there were wealthy people, there were well-to-do people. There were people from Herod's palace that joined his group.

But Jesus never made any difference. Thank God. And we never should either, for we are all at an equal level in the kingdom.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. That's why Jesus illustrated it.

When they were vying with each other for who would be first. And Jesus took a little child and set the child in the midst and said, Hey, it's not a question of whether you're going to be first, it's a question of whether you're going to get in. And he said, I tell you this, unless you become like this little child, you won't even get in, let alone be first.

And that attitude is so fundamental to the kingdom. But he deals first of all with poverty of spirit. And I like the way that Young's literal translates that.

He says, Blessed are those who rate themselves insignificant for theirs is the rule of the heavens. Hallelujah. When you rate yourself insignificant, you don't have a problem about a self-image.

You've dealt with it once and for all. Praise the Lord. And you're in the kingdom.

And that deals with your image forever. Blessed be the name of the Lord. Because you're being made into His image.

Glory to God. Which is far more important than self-image. Or anything else.

Okay. And Christ always dealt with things close to nature. Then he directed his teaching to ordinary people.

Mark 12, 37 says, The common people heard him gladly. But John 7, 15 says about the intelligentsia. They looked at him and they said, How does this man know what he knows, having never learned? Why, of course he'd learned.

But he'd not learned in their establishments. He had learned morning by morning, Isaiah tells us. The one who woken his ear so that he heard morning by morning.

He had been in father's school every day. Hallelujah. And he knew more than they all.

Blessed be his wonderful name. He was not an ignoramus. No.

And I find that sometimes sadly, Pentecostals look askance at people who have a little bit of knowledge. That's sad. Very sad.

We should have knowledge. But we should have knowledge which comes first and foremostly from above. The wisdom which comes from above.

For it was said of Peter and John they looked at those fellows and they perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men. Actually, the term means they were ignoramuses. In the schooling of the day, they had not been instructed.

But there was something about them. And the only conclusion that they could make is they have been with Jesus. Something of his knowledge and wisdom had rubbed off on them.

And Christ gave his teaching in that sort of a setting. And then you have to consider the time element involved. Most parables have a wide and general application.

For example, going back to again the Matthew, thirteen parables. The sowing of the seed is a constant ongoing process. The planting of the tares alongside of the genuine is a constant ongoing process.

Most of the parables have a general application. And some have seen in those parables the process of history where it starts with the good seed and then it gets confused in the second generation and then it gets corrupted in the third century and so on and so forth. Well, there may be a measure of truth in that.

I don't know. I've had difficulty with that. But certainly, it's an ongoing thing.

It's constant. It's a constant thing. But some parables focus on a particular time element.

And these that we are considering today do that. They are introduced with the phrase then. Now the expression, the word then means at that time, doesn't it? Then.

Just like the word now means at this time. So, the word then means at that time. And so there is a time element involved.

And this really brings us to the end of what we were trying to deal with last week and we didn't get to it. We were looking at the fact that Satan has an end time role. He is referred to in Revelation 12, 7 to 12 as the dragon.

And he's always dragging something up, isn't he? But he's a dragon and he comes down with great fury. The Bible says. Why? Because he understands that his time is limited.

Now I have found and again I just throw it out for your consideration three keys to understanding the book of the Revelation. You must take into account these three things. We're not going to deal with the book of the Revelation this session.

We might at another session sometime pick it up. But you have to realize that there is symbolism in the book of the Revelation. But symbols always have significance.

This is clear from chapter 1 verse 20 where Jesus stands with seven stars in his hand and we're told he walks in the midst of seven golden lampstands. And the angel says the stars represent something and the candlesticks represent something. In fact the stars represent the minister or the angels the angel it's called

but it actually refers to the messenger or minister who is responsible to God in the church.

I believe in a properly run church there is always one person who is ultimately responsible to God. Right? He's not fundamentally responsible to the people though he has to serve the people. But he is answerable to God.

And Jesus Christ called these leaders into question. They were accountable. Thank God they're also protected.

When they're working with him in his hand they're under his protection. Blessed be the name of the Lord. So the stars represent the ministers.

The candlesticks or lampstands represent the churches. So right at the outset we're told that the symbolism of the book represents something. Now some people have all sorts of weird answers to some of the symbols of the book of the revelation.

I've just come across one man who's put out a book that's gone all over New Zealand where he tries to make out the millennium in the twentieth chapter as a cube of ten. Well, okay. Ten by ten by ten makes up a thousand.

But so does a quadruple of two hundred and fifty. So does a quintuple of two hundred. Why does he suddenly take ten by ten by ten? He's got no basis for doing that.

And yet he tries to do that because he doesn't accept the idea of the simple explanation that Jesus Christ is going to come back and he's going to set up this kingdom on this world for a thousand years. Now that seems very simple to me. We've got to be careful with the symbolism of the book of the revelation.

Not put our own interpretation upon it. There is symbolism there undoubtedly. But we're told very often what the symbolism represents.

Then the second thing you've got to understand about the book of the revelation is what we call the recurring prophetic principle. And this is where I've really appreciated Jacob Pratchett. I never saw it the way he's brought it out.

What he calls the madras hermeneutics. Where the Jewish mind can accept two conflicting ideas at the same time. And it's no problem to them.

And they can accept the idea that there's one fulfillment, then there's another fulfillment, then there's another fulfillment, then there's an ultimate fulfillment. Now that's how I've always understood, and I'm not a Jewish madras student, but I believe the Holy Spirit helps us if we trust him. Hallelujah.

And that's how I've always understood prophecy. That there is a sequence of fulfillments. And so here with for example Matthew chapter 24 precedes Matthew chapter 25.

And Jesus in these parables says then. What is he talking about? He says when these things are fulfilled then, after these things of Matthew chapter 24, then the kingdom will be likened unto what? Ten virgins. Five wise.

Hey, we're getting close to it aren't we? Five wise and five foolish. Now there is truth that is recurring throughout history, but it has ultimate fulfillment at the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ. The same

thing when you come to this passage of scripture in Revelation chapter 12 about the dragon and the man-child and the woman.

Of course Jesus is the one that comes out of Israel. And so the woman is Israel, and Jesus is the man-child, and Satan tries to swallow him up. But also thank God it can refer to the church because it's got an ongoing fulfillment.

And we're living at a time when Christendom friends and even the so-called church is so confused that I believe there's a group going to come out of them. And I tell you what, the devil is not after the church generally. He's got it.

But he's after that group. That little group that intend to be true and faithful to the Lord. As again the passage says.

Satan's great object is to deceive the church and to destroy the Jew. And don't forget it. And we're living in that time when there is great deception if it were possible even the elect should be deceived.

And that leads me to the third point about the book of the Revelation. We have to understand God's purpose and Satan's purpose. What is God's purpose? Ephesians 3, 10 and 11 tells us.

It tells us that it was an eternal purpose. God had from eternity. What was it? A fellowship? Only partly.

People say God made man for fellowship. Well hang on. He had the fellowship of the Trinity.

You can't have any closer fellowship than that. He had the fellowship of created beings, angels. He had lots of fellowship.

Why did he make man? Ephesians 3 tells us. To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers might be known in the church, through the church, the great wisdom of God. What is the great wisdom of God? Satan has made a libel on the character and nature of God.

And the libel is this. That God wants everything for himself. God is selfish.

When he tried to be like God, God put him out. When man tried to be like God, God put him out. And Satan says, there you are God, you don't want anybody to be like you.

You're selfish. You want it all for yourself. But thank God, through the church, God is going to demonstrate that he's not selfish at all.

But what does he do? He takes little bits of clay, like you and me, non-entities, unimportant, and he allows us to share his glorious throne to all eternity. No, God is not selfish. Hallelujah.

And through the church God is going to give the light of Satan forever and forever. And as principalities and powers look on, they will see the great wisdom of God. And they'll say, God, you were right.

You were not selfish. Hallelujah. Oh friends, that thrills me through and through.

So what is Satan's great object? Well, Revelation tells us, and this is what we failed to deal with last week. Revelation 12, verse 9. The dragon, his great intention is to deceive the nations. Deceive the nations.

Deceive the people. Corrupt the church. And deceive the Jews.

And what we've got to recognize is the battle we're in is not against flesh and blood. The things that we have said about personalities is not against personalities. The things that we have said has to do with the eternal truth of God Almighty.

And if it means naming personalities, then it has to be named in order to maintain the truth for the glory of God. For we do not contest against flesh and blood, but against spiritual wickedness, principalities and powers in high places. Okay, quickly then.

Yeah, I've got time. Three major lessons from the three end time parables. The first, the wise and foolish virgins.

The lesson is the importance of being prepared. Let's read it. Matthew chapter 25 verses 1 to 13.

Then, at that time, after what has been in chapter 24, and incidentally Matthew chapter 24 is the key which opens the book of the Revelation. For in Matthew chapter 24 you have Christ on earth saying the same sort of things that he is saying in heaven in symbolic form in the book of the Revelation. In Matthew chapter 24 they came to him and said Lord, when will these things be? What things? When will the temple be destroyed? And what will be the sign of your coming? Beyond that, what shall we look for when you come back again? And of the end of the age.

So there's three aspects to the question. When will these things be? When will Jerusalem be destroyed? And the temple cast down? Because that's what Jesus has talked about in the previous verses. And what will be the sign of your coming? And of the end of the age? And Jesus gives a whole list.

He says watch for these things. And the first thing that he says to watch for is false Christ. Now false Christ were then, false Christ have continued throughout time but they have intensified towards the end of time.

And so here we have a sequence of what to watch for and the prophetic fulfillment. There's an immediate prophetic fulfillment. There's an ongoing prophetic fulfillment.

But there's an ultimate prophetic fulfillment. Christ, false Christ were then, but now in our day, we're just about on the verge of the final antichrist. He's about to make himself manifest.

And what a mistake ought to really take with it a penalty where a man steps down from his ministry for a period of time. At least for a period of time. And doesn't confuse the people anymore.

He'll keep on going, certainly. And others. All sorts of heresy, all sorts of error creeping in to confuse the people.

And ultimately headed up in the ultimate confusion. It says that those days, the days in which we've been living, will be shortened for the elect's sake. Because if they were not shortened, even the elect should be deceived.

It doesn't say the elect will be deceived. I don't know about you but I'm elect not to be deceived. Thank you very much.

What about you? You sure about that? Hallelujah. Keep on the word. Don't chase personalities.

Keep on the word. And you'll be pretty safe. Hallelujah.

So that's the pattern in Matthew 24. The same thing. He goes on then after false Christ who talks about wars and rumors of wars.

Well there were wars then, weren't there? Titan, the Roman governor came and attacked Jerusalem. A great war. But look how it's gone on through history.

And this is one of the most remarkable indications that this is the word of God. For of all the problems that man has been able to solve, you can't solve the problem of warfare. And with the United Nations, the League of Nations and all that they've set up of their peace treaties, we have more war today than we've ever had.

Incredible, isn't it? That's an indication that this is true. Jesus said it is now, it will continue to be, but towards the end of time, it will escalate. And so that is in the background of this statement.

Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins which took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Now incidentally, the bridegroom is coming from the wedding feast. Alright? But you can't build a doctrine on a parable.

So don't try and make anything of it. They're not going into the wedding feast. He's already had it.

But they're going to engage in some ongoing festivities. This is the Jewish thing. So you see, here's the setting.

Jesus is out and they all knew what he's talking about. He's talking about these people who wait after the wedding feast to escort the bride and groom to their home. They've had the party, they've had all of that, and now they're going to the home.

And there were, Jesus said, there were ten of them. Now five of them were wise and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps.

The lamp burnt for about half an hour. And when it ran out of oil, it would give off the most horrible smell. As it continued to burn.

So, if you were wise, and you were prepared, you took a container of oil with your lamp. And so, five of them were wise and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them.

But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. I suppose the foolish thought he was coming right away. They only had half an hour's supply.

The wedding, very often took place, the actual wedding and the feast, about eleven o'clock at night. Never at midnight. Never after midnight.

That's interesting. That was a Jewish context. But Jesus is simply talking about being prepared.

But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. And while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. Nothing wrong with that.

They'd be more alert when he comes. After he's had a good sleep. So don't condemn them for sleeping.

Nor commend them for being virgin. It's got nothing to do with it. It's just a question of being ready or not being ready.

But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight a cry was heard, behold the bridegroom is coming, go out to meet. Then all those virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps.

And the foolish said to the wise, give us some of your oil for our lamps are going out. But the wise answered, not so. No, lest there should not be enough for us and you, but go rather to those who sell and buy for yourselves.

It was pretty ironic. There were no shops open at midnight. But here they're saying, maybe you'll find somewhere.

They're being rather cynical really. And the foolish go off to try and find. Well they should have stayed really and just persisted in the light of the others.

They would have been there. But the stupid people went off and so they missed out. Now they were foolish in two regards.

They were foolish in not having enough oil and they were foolish then in not waiting and just making the best of the situation. They were foolish. The oil's got nothing to do with the Holy Spirit.

It can represent all sorts of things. It can represent the Word as much as the Holy Spirit if you want to draw those parallels. The very fact is they were not ready.

Some people rejoice in a Pentecostal experience which is 30 years old and they don't have the Word in them now. And I tell you what, they're not ready. Even though they may have been baptized in the Holy Ghost.

The important thing is both the Spirit and the Word anyway and being ready for when He comes. Afterward the other virgins came and said, Lord, Lord, open to us. But He answered, I don't know yet.

I don't know yet. Now here's the spiritual lessons. One group had sufficient oil.

The other was unprepared for the long wait. Are we ready for both? Should He come right away? Are we ready? Should He delay for a hundred years? Are we still prepared for that? Right? We don't know. No man knows the day nor the hour.

And I think one of the great dangers of today is that we're living on the verge of the imminence and if He doesn't come right away, we won't be ready for the delay. Let's be ready whichever way it goes. Okay? It's a strange thing but at the turn of a century the Church makes the same mistake over and over again and says it can't go beyond this century.

It must be and they start setting dates. Stupid people. We must never set dates.

Four. The timing is dependent upon the bridegroom. Thank you very much.

Not the bride. Okay? It was the bridegroom who was delayed. And He has locked that up in His own keeping.

They said to Him, Lord, will you at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel? And He said, mind your own business. Get on with the job in hand. We don't know.

Nor by our action will we just simply hasten His coming. I believe in evangelism with all of my heart. But I tell you what.

I believe in evangelism because He told us to evangelize. That's why. And I believe in evangelism because of the need.

But it's not my action that brings His coming. He has set a time when He's coming. Blessed be His wonderful name.

And He knows when it will be. And everything will be ready. Hallelujah.

When He comes. The only question is, will I be ready? Will you be ready when Jesus comes? It is folly to rely upon others for what is our own responsibility. That's the other lesson here.

And then the final lesson is, unprepared bridesmaids are not bridesmaids at all. Hello? They say, Lord, open to us. We were invited.

Yes, He said. You were invited and you had every opportunity. But you missed it.

You missed it. Oh, God help us that we don't miss it. The next parable.

Five, two, and one. The first deals with the importance of being prepared. The second deals with the importance of active service.

Bridesmaids were careless in their preparation. They were not prepared because of carelessness. Mr. One talented is not prepared because he's full of fear and he is lazy.

That's what the Lord says when He comes and the Lord says, well, what have you done with what I gave you? The man with five said, you are Lord ten. Well done. The man with two said, you are Lord four.

Well done. The man with one said, I knew what you were like. I knew that you gathered where you had not so.

He said, I knew what nature of a person you were. So I went and hid it in case I lost it. Here it is.

It's yours. Wicked and slothful servant. You should have at least put it out to the national or the trust bank or one of them and got a bit of interest and then I would have had what I've got and something with it.

But you're lazy. You haven't been active in your servant. Now on the face of it, the Lord says, take it away from him and give it to the fellow that's got ten.

But Lord he's already got ten and he's only got one. Doesn't seem fair until you look at some things. Hey, hello.

Talents don't belong to us personally, you know. They belong to the one who gave them. Right? All the way through the parable this comes out.

It belongs to the master, not to me. Right? It's not mine. It is.

And acceptance and reward is upon the basis of faithfulness. Not on the basis simply of ability, but on the basis of faithfulness. Let me just quote quickly to summarize it from my Omega article.

The second end time parable is about talent. One person had five and by trading returned ten. Another had two and increased his talents to four.

A third had only one and buried what he had. In the time of settlement the first two are commended and then rewarded while the third is condemned, deprived and then banished. Superficially the whole thing seems monstrously unfair until you recognize two things.

Firstly, the talents belong to the man who gave and not to the person who received. Compare verse 14. And secondly, each person was given talents according to his own ability.

See verse 15. Implicit are the ideas of service, faithfulness and the discharge of responsibility. No one was commended or condemned on the basis of what he had at the start, but only on what he did with what he had.

The lesson is clear. The end time is the time of reckoning. Service for the Saviour counts.

Those who have been diligent and faithful in using what they have received will hear the marvellous words well done, while those who have been dilatory and fearful will be dismissed. Salvation is not dependent upon service, but its reality is proved by service. The final one.

Sheep and goats. Here we have the importance of concern and care for God's people. Now we must clearly understand certain things.

Salvation is never on the basis of acts of kindness. The Bible makes that clear. Ephesians 2, 8 and 9. Not by works that we have done, but by His grace and His grace alone.

Isaiah 64, 6. All our righteousness is as filthy rags. Titus 3, 4 and 5. Again the same. John 3, 3 and 5. Unless you are born again, you will not see the Kingdom of God.

So, salvation is on the basis, not of what I do for Jesus, but on the basis of what Jesus does in me and for me. That's the way it is. Let me quote again from the article.

The third parable is the hardest to understand. On the basis of it, some have falsely taught salvation by good deeds of kindness. But that simply illustrates what we warned earlier.

You dare not build doctrine on parables. You can only use parables to illustrate doctrine. Otherwise you make the Bible contradict itself.

For example, those verses that we just quoted clearly teach that salvation cannot result from good works, religious or otherwise. Paul writes, and though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. 1 Corinthians 13, 3. Love is the nature of God.

1 John 4, 8 and 16. God is love. And that becomes ours only through the new birth.

Jesus said to Nicodemus, you must be born again. For being born again puts the nature of God in us, which is love. And that means then that our actions are acceptable.

So in judgment people will be separated, as with the case of the goats and the sheep, not on the basis of what they have done to or for Christ, but rather on what Christ has done for and in them. Forgiven our

sins, changed our lives, and made us fit for heaven. But, and here is the application of the truth of the parables of the talents, and of the sheep, and of the goats.

It is impossible that Christ has done something in me without me doing something for him and for those who love him. That is not the cause of my salvation, it is the proof that I am saved, and that fact will be recognized by Christ in the day of judgment. I fear sometimes for the attitude sometimes of leaders to God's people, to other leaders at times, and to God's people in general.

For one day they are going to stand before Almighty God and Jesus, and Jesus will say, Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Inasmuch as ye did not do it unto the least of these my brethren, ye did not do it unto me. It's awesome, isn't it? And it's a proof of the fact that grace has worked in our lives.

Now the final thing I want to deal with before I just wind the whole thing up is that nations are not envisaged here. I've heard all sorts of strange speaking, but it says there are sheep nations and there are goat nations. So New Zealand is a sheep nation, and Australia must be a goat nation.

And Wales, well where will that fit in? And Ireland, brother, has got no chance. And well, I don't know about Holland. Okay, we'd better stop, and we'll become racist.

But that's what they say. They say we've got to say, look, it's a misunderstanding of the word. The nation here simply means people.

The word in the Greek is ethnos, and it appears several times in the scripture, according to Strong's Concordance, it literally means a multitude, whether of men or of beasts, associated or living together, a company, a troop, or a swarm. And yet, on the basis of this notion that the word only means nations, that is, nations as a sort of an entity, some very strange ideas have emerged. One is linked to the idea of judgment, and the other is linked to the idea of church planting and evangelism.

The passages of scripture in consideration are the one before us about the sheep and goats, where in Matthew 25 32 it says, and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them from one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. Now it's a very simple story which everybody living in Israel at the time would understand. They would see the shepherds each day dividing the sheep from the goats.

And Jesus just used this as an analogy for the end time judgment. He's not talking about nations as an entity, but rather he's talking about the peoples, a multitude gathered together, and he divides them, and he divides them on the basis of what they do, because what they do relates to who they are, their nature. And so this idea that at the end of time certain nations will be judged as sheep nations, and certain nations as goat nations is ridiculous.

In fact, here in New Zealand there will be those who are sheep and those who are goats. Australia similarly, Wales, Ireland, and you can go down the list. And that is simply all that it is speaking about.

The other is probably a more serious error, which has crept in and is taught very, very widely. And it relates to Matthew 28, verse 19, where Jesus said, go therefore and teach, and the word there could have been translated disciple, all nations. And once more the notion has been built up that we in the end time are here to disciple nations.

Now this is again ridiculous. What it is simply talking about is discipling or seeing people evangelized. We don't baptize nations, we baptize people, individual people.

And the verse goes on to say, go therefore and teach all peoples it could be rendered, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age. The idea that a nation could become a Christian nation is a possibility, but generally throughout history it has proved to be an abortive idea, and so it will be towards the end of time also. You cannot build a doctrine on that sort of idea.

This word ethnos, again, in the context of the church planting and the church growth and evangelism idea, there is projected so often the idea that there are still 12,000 unreached peoples, and they use this word ethnos, nations that we have to reach before Jesus comes back. And so a doctrine has been established that we have to see all of these evangelized before Jesus Christ can return. Again, there is no basis in Scripture for this strange idea.

The fact of the matter is that it is reserved in the Father's knowledge and in the Son's knowledge now as to when Jesus Christ will come back. Of course we have to evangelize. We have to evangelize and engage in church planting, but not simply to reach the 12,000 unreached peoples.

We are there to do it because Jesus Christ commissioned us to do it, and because there is a need with regard to the 12,000 unreached peoples everywhere. But incidentally also, the Scripture seems to indicate that the gospel has already sounded out to all the world anyway. And so we don't have to wait for that particular promise to be fulfilled in our day and generation.

Paul says, has not their word sounded out to all the world or all the earth? And there has been a witness, probably already established in every nation. And so this notion is really quite a false notion. Now the story of the sheep and the goats presents us finally with the idea that ultimate judgment is linked to practical righteousness.

And you can't escape this. It's no good saying that I am closed with the righteousness of Christ, therefore I can live as I want to. The Bible very clearly says that no adulterer will enter the kingdom of God.

And so if I am believing on Jesus Christ and I am living an immoral life, then I will not be an heir to eternal life. That is very, very clear. The fact is that my belief system will change my mode of living.

And this is very, very clear in the scripture. This idea of cheap grace which covers everything is a false idea. And my belief, my trusting in Jesus, will affect my lifestyle.

And this is very, very clearly brought out in this story. That out of the life that Jesus has implanted within me, there will be expressions of goodness and of kindness. And finally, the judgment will be set and I will have proved my faith in Jesus Christ and my loyalty to Him by my lifestyle.

This is brought out in several passages of scripture, but two of the pertinent ones are in James chapter 2 and 1 John chapter 3. James chapter 2 from verse 14 through to verse 26 reads What does it profit, my brethren? If someone says he has faith but does not have works, can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food and one of you says to them, Depart in peace, be warmed and filled but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? That's also faith by itself. If it does not have works, it's dead. But someone will say, you have faith and I have works.

Show me your faith without your works and I will show you my faith by my works. Incidentally, again there, there's some very, very unusual teaching that has crept in with regard to our giftings. I've heard it said that some people have the gift of mercy.

Quite frankly, I don't think there is such a gift of mercy. It's built upon a false interpretation of Romans chapter 12. We all have to show mercy and to think that some people are mercy people and other people are not is a maligning of the scripture and really a travesty of the teaching of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is absolute nonsense. Verse 18 says, but someone will say, You have faith and I have works. Show me your faith without your works and I will show you my faith by my works.

You believe that there is one God, you do well. Even the demons believe and tremble. So it's not just a mental ascent to an idea, this business of faith in Jesus Christ.

But do you want to know all foolish man that faith without works is dead? Was not Abram our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do you see that faith was working together with his works and by works faith was made perfect and the scripture was fulfilled which says Abram believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness and he was called a friend of God on the basis of faith that is working out in his actions. Verse 24 You see then that a man is justified by works and not by faith only. Likewise was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way.

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. The teaching of the parable is very very clear it's an illustration of that great doctrine there. And then if you go to 1 John chapter 3 and particularly verse 16 Incidentally I suppose everybody can quote John chapter 3 verse 16 For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life.

But what about 1 John chapter 3 verse 16. Here it is By this we know love because he laid down his life for us and we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. If we do not show kindness towards those within the kingdom of God then it's a pure sign that there's something lacking in our relationship to the Lord.

And I could tell you a lot about that in regard to attitudes to us myself and my family after being in the ministry for something like 30-35 years. It has been one of the deepest cutting experiences to find that certain churches will not allow us to attend. They exclude us not because I have done anything but because I've spoken out against the corruption that has come into certain situations and I've spoken out against the cover ups that have happened and the leaders don't like this and one leader here in the city of Hamilton told me that I threatened him and as a result he precluded us from his church and not only that when my son and I were attending another church he made it very very difficult for us.

Now that is an indication that there is a wrong attitude and if we don't show love and concern one for another we've been without work for some 8 months and not one of the hierarchy of the movement that I was associated with for a number of years have ever expressed any concern in that area. God has looked after us but not with any thanks to them. Now that to me is an indication of something fundamentally wrong.

I use that as a personal illustration but there are numerous illustrations that could be employed and leadership that detaches itself on the pretext of having a holy sort of calling to protect the kingdom or the church without a fundamental concern for individuals there is something wrong in their relationship and their attitude. Verse 17 says but whosoever has this world's good and sees his brother in need and shuts up his heart from him how does the love of God abide in him?

My little children let us not love in word or in tongue but in deed and in truth and by this we know that we are of the truth and to assure our hearts before him for if our heart condemns us God is greater than our heart and knows all things does that mean that God doesn't condemn us if our heart condemns us?

No no it's saying the exact opposite if our heart condemns us then God is greater than our hearts and the condemnation from that source is greater than the condemnation from within and then verse 20 and this is the illuminating verse but if our heart condemns us not then do we have confidence before God that's verse 21 beloved if our heart does not condemn us we have confidence toward God whatever we ask we receive from him because we keep his commandments and do those things that are pleasing in his sight and this is his commandment that we should believe on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and love one another if we believe correctly there will be a natural love a proper relationship that flows out as he gave a commandment now this is the teaching of the sheep and the goats that the

judgment ultimately is linked to practical righteousness if we have not shown expressions of concern and kindness towards those who are the least in the kingdom of God then it is a sure indication that the love of God is not dwelling in us now just finally bringing this to a close let me quote from my final Omega Times article it's the last that was allowed to be published Barry my dear friend Smith and the whole group down there are very supportive of what we have tried to do but again certain leaders and I don't know who they are have brought pressure to bear and they have indicated to Barry that platforms would close to him and also that in fact they would stop ordering Omega Times I understand that some have given back orders because we have spoken out again on issues which are not

palatable to those in the leadership but let me quote the final summary in that last article about bridesmaids and goats the teaching of the end times parables is very simple one day we don't know when Christ the heavenly bridegroom will come for his bride at that time some professing believers will be prepared and ready and some will not there will be the wise there will be the foolish the evidence of our readiness is not in the hallelujahs that we shout the praises or songs that we sing or the profession of faith that we make but in the faithfulness of our service with the talents and opportunities God has given us and the natural and normal acts of kindness that we show to others especially to God's people for whom Christ died Hebrews 9 27 to 28 and as it is appointed unto men once to

die but after this judgment so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many and unto them that look for him till he appear a second time sin apart without sin unto salvation now from time to time it has been conjectured that God does not live by the standards that he set in fact on one occasion Robert Ingersoll that most famous of atheists was asked what would he do when he stood before almighty God and Robert Ingersoll said when I stand before almighty God I will say to God do unto others as you would that they do unto you now the fact of the matter is that God is not a hypocrite God does live by the standards that he sets though he is above his law he is also subject to his law he chooses so to be God is higher than law and he doesn't simply operate on the basis of law he is the law

and that law is the law of life and the same principle carries through in the new covenant where he said I will write my law in their hearts that is their nature will be changed and this is a wonderful thing about the gospel God is not a hypocrite Romans tells us very clearly that he has to be the just and the justifier of those who believe in Jesus he is not just a justifier he is a just justifier justification is the moral act which establishes right relationship it takes into account everything and God is right and righteous in all his doings this is the great principle of Abraham as he stood before God almighty and he said will not the judge of all the earth do that which is right God is just in all his ways sometime ago I came across a little piece of prose which illustrates this

brilliantly it is called the long silence at the end of time millions of people were scattered on a great plane before God's throne most shrank back from the brilliant light before them but some group near the front talked heatedly not with cringing shame but with belligerence can God judge us how can he know about suffering snapped a young brunette she ripped open a sleeve to reveal a tattooed number from a Nazi concentration camp we endured terror, beatings, torture death in another group a negro boy lowered his collar what about this he demanded showing an ugly rope burn lynched for no crime but being black in another crowd a pregnant schoolgirl with solemn eyes said why should I suffer it was not my fault far out across the plane were hundreds of such groups each had a complaint

against God for the evil and suffering he had permitted in his world how lucky God was to live in heaven where all was sweetness and light where there was no weeping or fear or hunger or hatred what did God know of all that men had been forced to endure in this world for God leads a pretty sheltered life they said so each of these groups sent forth their leader chosen because he had suffered the most a Jew, a Negro, a person from Hiroshima, a horribly deformed arthritic, a thalidomide child, in the centre of the plane they consulted with each other at last they were ready to present their case it was rather clever, before God could be qualified to be their judge he must endure what they had endured their decision was that God should be sentenced to live on earth as a man, let him be born

a Jew let the legitimacy of his birth be doubted, give him a work so difficult that even his family will think him out of his mind when he tries to do it let him be betrayed by his close friends let him face false charges be tried by a prejudiced judge and convicted by a cowardly ruler let him be tortured at the last, let him see what it means to be terribly alone then let him die, let him die so that there can be no doubt that he died let there be a great host of witnesses to verify it, as each leader pronounced his portion of the sentence loud murmurs of approval went up from the throng of the people assembled when the last man had finished pronouncing his sentence there was a long silence, no one uttered another word no one moved for suddenly all knew that God had already served his

sentence God is just in all his ways, there is no injustice in God and God looks for justice and righteousness and right standards and kindness, acts of kindness and use of talents in his people, God bless you let's bow our heads in a word of prayer Father we thank you for being gathered together today, we thank you for your word, we thank you that we do believe that Jesus Christ is coming back again, he is coming for a purified bride, we pray that we, your people, may be ready help us to be like the five wise virgins that we have the extra oil whether you come today or tomorrow, or in a hundred years time, it will not unduly affect us because we are totally prepared we are prepared for your imminent return or if your return is delayed and meanwhile may we be occupied with what you have

given us, may we not take the glory may we recognize that the talents belong to you and may we use them for the extension of your kingdom and above all may we show the genuineness of our faith in our

acts of kindness one to another may we be among those who you call your sheep sheep of your pasture we pray in Jesus name and now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit rest and remain with each one of us now and forever more God bless you

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/12/SID12077.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/philip-powell/bridesmaids-goats-endtime-parables/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net