

# Parables of Jesus - 04 the Danger of Legalism

by Zac Poonen

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*The sermon warns against the dangers of legalism and hypocrisy, and emphasizes the importance of living a genuine spiritual life.*

**Duration:** 48:56

**Scripture:** Genesis 4:3-5, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 21:28-31, Matthew 23:13-15, Luke 18:9-14, Romans 2:17-24, James 1:22-25

**Topics:** "Parables"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the parable of the two sons from Matthew's Gospel. He emphasizes the importance of judging ourselves rather than others, as God will ultimately judge everyone. The sermon focuses on the danger of legalism and the difference between being religious and being spiritual. The preacher highlights the story of Cain and Abel as an example of two streams in Christianity, one being religious but not spiritual, and the other being truly spiritual. The sermon concludes with a reminder to be sincere in our faith and not just speak empty words.

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## Transcript

So today we want to continue our study in the parables and we're going to study on the subject of the danger of legalism and we're going to look at seven parables that deal with this theme. In fact, a number of parables deal with the theme of the difference between being spiritual and being religious. Way back in history at the beginning of time, Cain and Abel started two streams.

Cain was a deeply religious man who offered sacrifices to the true God but he was not spiritual. Abel was spiritual and from them started two streams. In Jesus' time, it was the Pharisees and Jesus and those two streams are flowing today in Christianity.

There are religious Christians and there are spiritual Christians. So when we talk about the danger of legalism, we're talking about people who are religious but not spiritual, people who are followers of Cain, not of Abel, people who are followers of the Pharisees, not of Jesus. We're not here to judge other people.

That's not our business. God will judge them but we are here to judge ourselves to make sure that we don't get into the wrong stream and so we're looking at these parables in that light. In the first one, parable number 14, we have covered 13 altogether so far.

Parable number 14 we find in Matthew's gospel chapter 21 and verses 28 to 31. Here Jesus spoke a parable about a man who had two sons, verse 28, and he came to the first one and said, son go work today in my vineyard and the first son said, I'll go sir but he did not go and he came to the second son and said the same thing but the second son said, I won't go. He was rebellious but afterward he regretted or he repented and he went.

Which of the two did the will of his father he asked. They said the latter and Jesus said that's right. I say to you the tax collectors and the harlots will go into the kingdom of God before you.

That means those people when they repent will go into the kingdom of God before you religious people, Pharisees who stand in the synagogue and preach so much and know so much of the Bible. And then he spoke about John there rejecting the message of John the Baptist. Now what is the difference between these two sons? The first son said something, I'll do it.

It sounds very spiritual but he didn't actually do anything. The second son, he said I won't do it but afterwards he repented and did. And Jesus said the second one did the will of his father.

So here is a picture of a so-called Christian who says many things with his mouth but he doesn't do it. You think there are Christians like that? On Sunday morning they will sing a hymn all to Jesus I surrender. Take my silver and my gold not a mite will I withhold.

What fantastic words you hear people singing that you'll think they are the most spiritual people in the world but they go away from there. Their silver and their gold belong to them not to Jesus. That's the first son.

You know Christians tell more lies on Sundays than on any other day when they sing their hymns to God. They don't mean it and that's the first son. He said but he didn't do.

The second son, he didn't say anything spiritual. Maybe he was keeping quiet when everybody was singing all to Jesus I surrender but he went out and he actually surrendered all to Jesus. So the two types of Christians are some who say but don't do and some who don't say much but they do.

And I want you to notice this very important difference between Jesus and the Pharisees. Please remember it all your life. Acts chapter 1 verse 1 tells us that Jesus began to do and to teach.

He did not teach first. He did then taught. He practiced and then preached.

That is Jesus. The opposite of that is the Pharisees whom you read about in Matthew 23 and verse 3. They were people who said but did not do. That's what Jesus said.

The last part of verse 3. They say things but don't do them. Do you see the contrast between Matthew 23 3 and Acts 1 1? That's the difference between a religious person and a spiritual person. A religious person says fantastic things.

It may not be only in songs. It may be in prayer. In prayer we say fantastic things particularly in public prayer meetings.

Oh God give me all the souls in India and things like that. And then when they go home what do they pray at home? Usually for some material things for themselves. There's a lot of hypocrisy.

Religious people are liars. They are legalists. They are hypocrites.

Their Christianity is only on the outside. They say fantastic things. Spiritual people do and they teach what they have done.

Make a rule in your life that you will never teach what you have not done. For 16 years of my Christian life in the beginning it was all right. I only taught what I was doing but after some time I found I became a backslider.

Even as a preacher I would stand up and preach a lot of things which are not 100% true in my life. And I came to a place in my life where I said Lord I never want to preach again. This is about 28 years ago.

Unless you do one thing in my life you make my inner life the same as what I speak. You pray that prayer that you will never preach what is not true in your inner life. And I believe that will save you from destroying your life.

Many people, many preachers have destroyed their lives because they preach fantastic things. It's not true in their inner life. That's the story of these two sons.

It's a very dangerous thing to tell lies. Ecclesiastes 5 verse 2 says God is in heaven and you are on earth so let your words be few and don't make a vow to God which you're not going to fulfill. It's a very dangerous thing to tell lies to God in our prayer or in our hymns or anything.

Remember that the first sin that was punished in the early church was the sin of Ananias to whom Peter said why do you tell a lie to the Holy Spirit. Ananias was just pretending to be very spiritual to have given all his money when he was not giving. He didn't have to give everything but he should not have told a lie.

So in all these examples we see lying is a very serious thing. The first sin mentioned in the Bible is lying. Genesis chapter 3 when Satan said you shall not die that's a lie.

The last sin mentioned in the Bible in Revelation 22 you read it sometime is lying. Okay we'll go to the next parable. So we see that religious people tell lies even to God.

Spiritual people seek to preach only what they practice. Now the second parable is Luke chapter 6 verse 39 to 40 parable number 15 about the blind leading the blind. Now it's only one line Luke chapter 6 verse 39 but it's called here a parable.

And he also spoke a parable to them saying a blind man cannot guide a blind man can he? Will they not both fall into a pit? A pupil cannot be above his teacher. You got to be careful whom you're following. If you're a student a pupil means a student you must be careful that you're following the right teacher.

And here Jesus spoke about blind leaders. So from that parable what do we learn is the most important thing for a leader vision spiritual vision. He must be able to see far ahead the direction in which he is going.

The direction in which he is leading his flock. Vision. Religious people they may have a lot of knowledge crammed in their heads but no spiritual vision.

They're not able to see what will happen if I go in this direction for 25 years. You know the old testament prophets you read in the book of Samuel were called seers s-e-e-r-s seers means one who can see into

the future. Now if you allow a man without spiritual vision to be your leader one day he'll fall into the pit and you'll fall into the pit also because he doesn't have spiritual vision.

A man with spiritual vision say can see 10 miles ahead he sees there's a pit there and he says because there's a pit there I will not lead my flock along this direction. Why should I go all the way to the pit and then walk back? We're going to go in a direction where there is no pit. Now this teaches us that there are many pitfalls in the way ahead of Christians.

The devil has made pits into which we can fall and it's no use discovering those pits after you've fallen into it. You got to discover them before you fall and if you have a man who is your leader with spiritual vision and you seek to be a leader yourself with spiritual vision you can be saved from destroying your life. Now when this man with spiritual vision this prophet this seer says listen fellas if you go along this direction you're going to fall into the pit after a few years because he sees 10 miles ahead a pit.

All the other fellas say hey you're wrong. He says okay you go your way I'm going another way and then they go this direction and some fellows when they come to five miles from the pit they say oh yeah that's right what that brother said five miles ago was right I can see the pit now.

See their vision is not so sharp as the other fellows but when this fellow says hey I can see a pit most of the others say no there's no pit it's okay we can go in this direction but this man says sorry I'm turning around I'm going back and then some other people when they come to a hundred yards from the pit they say oh yeah that's right what those two brothers said there was right this is a dangerous direction and they turn back a few of them and then most of the others you know when they discover there's a pit there when they fall into it that's right oh this was a pit but all these brothers told us before was right and some of these pits can be pretty deep and when you fall into it you got to humble yourself acknowledge that all those brothers whom you despise those people with

prophetic vision who warned you from the word of God were right humble yourself get out and if you don't that pit can one day become the bottomless pit which is a pretty dangerous thing so we had to be careful the direction in which we are going now if you studied geometry you studied in school you studied geometry and you know that 360 degrees in a circle and supposing you go just one degree off track supposing this is the way God wants you to go the full counsel of God the absolute truth of God and you say well we can modify it slightly because you know we are in the 21st century we can't think of all those things which Paul wrote way back there we modify it not much we don't go right around like the liberals 180 degrees no no no that would be terrible we go only one degree off track

and when you're supposing two of you are walking together and you decide to go one degree to the side you can still see him you can still see this other brother you walk one mile you can still see him you walk three miles you can still see him but by the time you walk a hundred miles you can't see that brother you've gone way off track now in the beginning when you deviate from scripture he doesn't look as if you're going too far astray but wait a few years and see what will happen Jesus said your conscience is your eye Luke chapter 11 verse 34 he said if your eye is clear or single your whole body will be full of light and he was speaking about the eye of the heart which is the conscience this is how people become blind we can ask how do people become blind how do leaders become blind

they in a little thing they violate their conscience some unreality comes into their life and they cover it up some hypocrisy comes into some area of their life and they act as if nothing is wrong and the conscience is being violated and gradually over a period of time eyesight is gone it doesn't happen overnight have you

seen a little baby's eyes so clear that's how we are when we are born again crystal clear we see Jesus but then we mingle in the church with so many hypocrites people who are unreal people who do wrong things and then we begin to think why should I be so holy and spiritual everybody is enjoying themselves let me also do that and you've also gone that way it's a very rare man or woman who will stand and say I don't care if everybody around me compromises it's fine if I'm

alone I'll be alone that's how Jeremiah was that's how Isaiah was they were the people with vision they warned the people of God don't go that way go this way or they wouldn't listen there were plenty of false prophets they're blind leaders you said oh don't listen to Jeremiah and Isaiah they are just fanatics this is okay God is with us and they all fell into the pit so we have enough warnings in scripture not to follow blind leaders now we go to the next parable parable number 16 in Matthew chapter 13 and verse 24 to 30 and this is the parable of the wheat and the tares Matthew chapter 13 and verses 24 to 30 here it speaks about a man who the kingdom of God verse 7 is like a man who sowed good seed in the field you know that Jesus interpreted only two parables I hope you know that one

was the parable of the sower which he explained in verses 18 to 23 here and the other was this parable of the tares which he explained in verses 36 to 43 so there were only two parables out of the 40 which Jesus explained he expected us to use our heart and our mind and seek the revelation of the Holy Spirit to find out the meaning of the other 38 that's what we are doing in these days but here Jesus explained what the meaning of the parable is who is the sower that's the son of man he said it's Jesus Christ himself verse 37 so he is sowing the seed in the field what is the seed in the other parable the seed was the word of God here the seed is not the word of God here the good seed verse 38 are born again spiritually minded believers the bad seed are the sons of the devil verse 38 we

don't want to call anybody a son of the devil they'll get angry but it's what Jesus said the sons of the evil one we have to recognize that Jesus spoke about the sons of the kingdom and the sons of the evil one however unpopular it may be this is what Jesus said a lot of people are ashamed of the words of Jesus I'm not ashamed of the words of Jesus Jesus said if any man is ashamed of me and my words of him will I be ashamed when I come in the glory of my father with the angels so I'm not ashamed of Jesus words I speak Jesus words and I say Jesus said there are sons of the kingdom and there are sons of the evil one the apostle John said in 1 John 3 10 there are children of God and children of the devil both are there so this is the wheat and the tares and the tares are a type of weed that

grows up along with the wheat and looks exactly like the wheat that's the danger I mean if they were different colors if one was white and one was black you could pull them out easily but they are not different colors they are the same color they look alike and they grow next to each other somebody has come and sown these weeds it says here verse 25 when men were sleeping the enemy came and sowed the tares do you know how the tares come because men go to sleep you know how tares come into the church because the elders are sleeping spiritually if they were alert at the door itself they would have turned out those tares but a lot of churches the elders go to sleep spiritually and so all types of people get in but it's not just in the church it's in the whole world because now we have seen

what the sower is that's Jesus we've seen what the good seed is the children of the kingdom we've seen the bad seed that is the children of the evil one now the next question is what is the field you know some people say well this parable teaches that we should not discipline people in the church because when the slave came to the landowner and said verse 28 let us go and pull out all the tares he said no don't pull out the tares because accidentally you may pull out some wheat also because they look alike so much verse

29 let them both grow together and in the time of harvest i will first gather up all the tares and bind them and burn them up then i will gather the wheat into my barn which is a picture jesus said on verse 41 of the day when he comes back in glory and he will take out all

the evil people who commit lawlessness and put them into the furnace of fire and he'll gather the righteous into his kingdom so some people say well you must allow the wheat and the tares to grow in the church together they'll always be there one day when jesus comes he'll separate them but that's not true because the field is not the church that's the mistake if jesus said the field is the church then i agree we must allow the wheat and the tares to grow up in the church let everybody grow together but one day when jesus comes he'll separate one from the other but no the elders of a church have the responsibility to keep the church pure 1 corinthians 5 the last part says you got to judge those who are in the church put that wicked man out of your church he says in 1 corinthians 5 the man

who's living in sin don't allow him to sit there don't allow these tares to grow up in the church jesus said himself here verse 38 please remember verse 38 whenever you read this parable the field is not the church jesus said the field is the world and in the world god allows the wheat and the tares to grow up together but not in the church so when these things grow up together they look so similar the hypocrites look just like the other believers they pray they sing they clap their hands they raise their hands sometimes they clap and sing louder than the real believers and you really think that they are so spiritual i remember once i was in a meeting in one town and i was sitting on the platform before getting up to and we were having a wonderful time of clapping and praising the lord

and i saw one man sitting over there who was clapping louder than anybody else and i decided to go up and meet him at the end of the meeting i thought this is a wonderful spiritual brother and within about six feet i could smell the alcohol coming from his mouth he was drunk that's why he was clapping louder than anybody else so don't be fooled by all that religious people look very similar to spiritual people but they don't have an inner life the wheat and the tares look alike but there's a lot of difference between them in their inner life is different the inside of the wheat is different from the inside of the tares and the inside of a real child of god is tremendously different from the inside you know our thoughts imagine if our thoughts sounded out like words don't you think we'll

all be more careful with our thoughts why are we careless with our thoughts because nobody can hear them that's the mark of a tares of a weed he's not bothered about his inside he's only bothered about the outside that he must sound spiritual when he prays he must use the right words when he preaches when he sings he must use the right words but he's not worried about the inner quality of his life religious people legalists hypocrites are like that but spiritual people are more worried about the quality of their life wheat is good quality stuff let's turn now to the next parable number 17 luke chapter 13 luke's gospel and chapter 13 verses six to nine we are considering hypocrites and genuine christians religious people and spiritual people wheat and tares we can ask one question here why

does god allow the cults and the false teachers to look so much like real christians you know a lot of people who are in the cults have got a very good life externally why has god allowed so much damage deception in the midst of christianity why is he allowed so many false teachers why is he allowed the devil to come as an angel of light and send his servants as servants of righteousness let me tell you to test the believers to see whether they are genuine or not you know we are tested by the deception around us we don't realize it those who sincerely seek god in his glory will not be deceived luke chapter 13 verses six to nine speaks about a man who had a fig tree in his vineyard and he came looking for fruit what did he come

looking for fruit and all he found in the fig tree was leaves

and the fig trees got such big leaves that you can be deceived that there's fruit in it when you see a fig tree completely covered with leaves you think boy that's a fruitful tree jesus once went near a fig tree looking for fruit and there was no fruit there when he went and pushed the leaves aside there's no fruit there but from a distance it looked as if there was fruit and that this man worked for so many years and there was no fruit in this fig tree so he said let's cut this down what are these leaves a picture of leaves are a picture of religious activity a lot of prayer a lot of fasting a lot of bible knowledge a lot of evangelism a lot of activity which is all good every tree should have leaves god made all trees good trees also have leaves so all of this is good jesus also fasted

he prayed he did bible study he did evangelist activity but fruit what's fruit fruit is character not religious activity character love humility purity patience goodness this is the fruit of the spirit now when you have only leaves you can fool a lot of people that you're spiritual but actually you're religious a spiritual man has the fruit plus the leaves but the fruit is more important when jesus came to the fig tree he was not looking for leaves and when jesus comes to us today he's not looking for the leaves of religious activity other people can be impressed with leaves but not jesus he always looks for fruit in our life remember that so if you want to impress jesus you look for fruit in your life if you want to impress people you look for religious activity it's human righteousness

we can say the fig leaves are a picture of human righteousness you remember when adam and eve sinned they looked for the biggest leaves in the garden and they found fig leaves they said okay let's cover ourselves up what was that a picture of a sinful man trying to cover himself with his human righteousness that's the picture of adam covered with the fig leaves and god took away those fig leaves and threw them away and god killed an animal we read in genesis chapter 3 shed its blood picture of christ dying took the skin of that animal and covered adam and eve with the skin of an animal the picture of the righteousness of christ so right from the beginning of the bible fig leaves are a picture of human righteousness that is why when jesus saw a tree covered with leaves and no fruit he

cursed it there is a curse on human righteousness but even though he cursed it it did not wither away immediately you read in chapter 11 that story how the next day when they came by then they saw it withered which teaches us that even though there's a curse on human righteousness and religious activity without the fruit of the holy spirit god does not allow it to be withered away immediately these religious hypocrites sit right in the midst of the church and look spiritual because they got just as much leaves as the other person but there's no fruit god allows these fig trees without fruit to remain sometimes he's patient like this man said okay for three years i looked for fruit there's no fruit let me give it one more year and sometimes god is patient let me give this fellow one more

year to see whether he will repent and seek for fruit in his life now we go to the next parable number 18 which we find in matthew's gospel chapter 9 that's the parable of the new cloth on an old garment new cloth on an old garment matthew chapter 9 the disciples of john the baptist came to jesus and asked him a question in matthew 9 and verse 14 they said to him why do we and the pharisees fast but your disciples do not fast and jesus said well the bridegroom is here with them now and you don't fast when the bridegroom is there one day the bridegroom will be taken away and then they will fast so what he was saying to them was that was an old covenant type of religious system where you fasted and you had your feasts and your ceremonies and your fastings and all that but now we are

entering a new covenant a relationship with the bridegroom and they will fast yes there is fasting in the new covenant too but it is of a different type it's from a different motive from the old testament even though the external action is the same there's a fundamental difference in the motive behind new testament fasting and old testament fasting and then he told this parable no one puts a patch of a new cloth on an old garment because the patch will tear away from the garment and a worse tear will result now in those days there was no terralean and terrycott clothes and synthetic clothes the clothes are made of cotton and he's talking about cloth made out of cotton and if you have bought cotton material in the market to make a dress with it a shirt or a pant or anything you know what

is the first thing you got to do put it in water if you give it to the tailor without putting it in water and he takes your measurement and stitches it after your first wash it will not fit you know that because it'll shrink cotton shrinks unlike terralean and things like that so that's what jesus was speaking about here is an old shirt let's say and it's got a tear but this has been washed 100 times and now i say i've got to cover this patch i get a new cloth and i stitch it over this patch okay it looks nice but when i give it for the first wash what happens to this new patch it shrinks and what does it do to this hole it tears it and the hole becomes bigger that's the parable so what is the meaning of this parable jesus i love jesus stories he always spoke in such a simple way that

even the children can understand all of you who become great preachers one day please remember this one thing speak to the children speak to the simple people if they can understand everybody will understand but if you speak over the heads of all these simple people to all those clever fellows sitting in the back nobody will understand so speak like jesus that's what we learned from the parables see what a simple story that in your old life you cannot put a patch of this new life that you hear in the gospels you know that's what some people try to do they've got that old life from adam we all got an old life from adam that's the adamic dress full of tears and holes everywhere and then we come and hear about jesus how we can be humble and we can be good and god fearing and patient and we

can serve the poor and things like that and say hey this is wonderful i'd like to get a little patch of these little things and patch up my adamic life here and there with this life of jesus it doesn't work that's what he's trying to say you can't put a patch of jesus life onto your old life you got to throw away that old garment and get a completely new garment you got to get jesus life completely like an old writer said god is not making nice people he's making new men you know the difference between nice people and new men new men are people who got a new life you remember when nicodemus came to jesus do you think nicodemus was an adulterer and a thief and a godless man no he was what today we would call a bishop and what did jesus tell this bishop you must be born again because it's

not enough just to live a good life you must be born again you need another life you got to throw away that old garment and get a new garment the life of jesus and only when that happens you can really start on the way of becoming spiritual you know a lot of people today are they come to church and they think the message of the gospel is like a self-improvement program you come here and you learn to be better people and better citizens and better behave no god is not in that business god is not taking your old garment and patching it up here and there with little patches of the life of jesus you know today in the christian church let me warn all of you there's a lot of preaching in the christian church today he who has years to hear let him hear where the teachings of human psychology are

mixed up with the teachings of jesus and many preachers what they are preaching is psychology not the teachings of jesus they are mixing up the old garment and patches of the life of jesus and putting it

together and making it look nice it doesn't work it'll tear okay let's go to parable number 19 and that is in the next verse parable number 19 is in the next verse verse 17 of matthew chapter 9 nor do men put new wine into old wineskins otherwise the wineskins will burst and the wine pours out and the wineskins are ruined but they put new wine into new wineskins and then both are preserved now what we were thinking of in the previous parable was about the life of jesus that don't mix up the life of jesus with the life of adam and try to produce a good human being you know there are many

people who say to christians what is the difference between christianity and other religions there also there are some good people here also there are some good people i say right but here god is making a new creation and there's a lot of difference between a new creation and a nice person god is not making nice people he's making new men who got a totally different life inside them now that is we can hear it is pictured as new wine the new wine is the life of jesus the old wine was the life of adam but now jesus is speaking about something beyond that this new wine must be put into a new wineskin now in these days people put wine in glass bottles all wine is sold in glass bottles today but in those days there was no glass glass had not been invented in those days you know where they used

to put wine they used to make animal skins and stitch it up and make it waterproof and they would pour the wine into this skin of a cow or something that's been stitched up a big bag leather bag made of animal skin because you know when you get the wine out of the grape juice grapes first it ferments you know that grape juice ferments when it's kept over a period of time that's how they get wine and when it ferments it increases in volume and if you put it into a new animal skin when the volume increases the animal skin stretches animal skin has got the ability to stretch so the wine as it ferments and increases in volume inside the skin also stretches and the wine remains inside but this animal skin cannot stretch forever it has got a capacity after some time it cannot stretch anymore

just like your cloth it shrinks the other parable the cloth shrinks here the animal skin stretches and so what happens if you take some now new wine which is not yet fermented and put it into this old wine skin that has already stretched and then the wine begins to expand and the animal skin is not expanding bursts the wine skin is torn and the wine is wasted the wine skin is ruined and the wine is wasted now what was jesus saying here he was comparing the old organization of the synagogue with the new testament church which is the body of jesus christ there's a lot of difference between the old synagogue where a man got up and preached and the body of jesus christ where the holy spirit is poured out on every member and every member has got a function in that body where we function

together and love one another like the different members of a human body that's the new wine skin the old wine skin was just a congregation you know like a cinema theater a lot of churches are like cinema theaters where a lot of people sit there you know what it is in a cinema theater so many people sit and some interesting thing is going on up in front and they all watch what's going on in front they don't know who's sitting this side they don't know who's sitting that side they're not interested they're only interested what happens in front they pay their money and go home and that's what happens in many churches they come and sit in their pews something interesting is happening up in front they watch all that they pay their money they don't know who's sitting this side that side and

they go home what's the difference between that and a cinema theater no it's got to be a body a body means i'm interested in the person sitting in front of me behind me left right i'm part of a body i'm not sitting in a cinema theater i'm related i praise god for the preacher up in front but i'm connected and related to the people who are sitting either side of me i'm connected to them i've got to work with them i'm interested if

one member suffers they all suffer if my little finger is infected and full of pain my whole body is in agony because of that pain and that brother sitting there is suffering it affects me because i'm in a body but if you're in a cinema theater you're not bothered if somebody sitting over there is suffering there's a lot of difference between a congregation and a

body and unfortunately a lot of groups today are congregations the old wineskin but they're trying to pour this life of jesus into that old system it doesn't work life of jesus must be poured into the new testament church baptized into one body by the holy spirit where each brother where there's love for one another and we function together as a body last parable matthew chapter 25 verses 1 to 13 where jesus spoke about 10 virgins matthew 25 verses 1 to 13 jesus spoke about 10 virgins who were waiting for the bridegroom and you know the story all of them had lamps which were burning but five of them took extra oil they had a little pocket in their garment where they kept a little flask of oil they said when this oil in this lamp finishes we need some more oil to pour in but the foolish

virgins said oh the bridegroom will come quickly no need of all this extra oil they only had the lamp and they went now here again is a picture of good people it's not five virgins and five prostitutes no no no no it's 10 virgins 10 good people people who are good on the outside what is this light on the outside symbolize you know what it symbolizes you don't have to use your mind just go to scripture let your light so shine before men that they may see what your good works that's right light is our external good works that other people can see and all 10 of them were virgins all 10 of them had good works on the outside that everybody could see they had a good testimony we're talking about christians who got a good testimony we're not talking about all those people who got a bad testimony

10 virgins who had their lights but five of them had oil inside oil is the thing that makes the fire to burn and throughout the new testament throughout the bible oil is a picture of the holy spirit and in the new testament is explained in romans 5 5 as we saw yesterday the holy spirit who pours the love of god into our hearts see the holy spirit pours god's love into our hearts so when the holy spirit shows me the glory of jesus he makes me to love him and that love which i have hidden away inside is the thing that makes my light to burn whereas the foolish virgins are those who don't have that love you know in a church you can have two people obeying the same commandments one does it out of love the other does it maybe for some other reason two people can't go to be pastors in a church

one can do it because he loves jesus another can do it because he gets a good salary in a church but both are pastors both are preaching both are doing good works but only one has got love a fervent love for jesus he's not bothered about his salary he loves jesus those are the wise virgins in the old testament god told them to keep his commandments but jesus came he said if you love me john 14 15 keep my commandments if you don't love me don't keep it i'm not interested anything listen to this anything that you do which is not out of love for jesus is a dead work maybe a good work like a light burning but it's a dead work useless because the motive is not good it's not a bad work in the old testament you had bad works and good works in the new testament you have bad works good works and

dead works dead works are good works done with a wrong motive being a pastor to make money preaching to get honor there's no oil there the preaching may be good the light is burning but it's not out of love god rejects it the five wise virgins were those who bought this oil it says here later on when the bridegroom came and they didn't have enough oil the foolish virgin said please give us some oil and the wise virgin said no we can't give you our oil but you go and buy go and buy remember yesterday we spoke about buying verse 9 go and buy from those who sell we have to pay a price to love jesus with all our heart

and when our service for the lord comes out of love even if the bridegroom tarries and waits and waits and waits a long time for him to come our light will continue to burn

because we love jesus christ but if we do not love him then for a little while it'll burn but if it's a long delay we'll get impatient and our light will die out so i hope you have learned something in this study today about avoiding hypocrisy avoiding legalism avoiding pretense avoiding dead works it's all the way of religious people and being spiritual preaching what we practice and serving the lord with love in our hearts let's pray again i want to invite you to respond to the word of god that you've heard this evening say lord save me from dead works the bible says we must repent of dead works lord please help me to do everything i do in all of my life out of fervent love for you pray in jesus name amen god bless you all

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