

Parables on Legalism - 2

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of living an inner life of Godliness and purity in our thought life, attitudes towards people, and motives, in order to distinguish ourselves from the tares and live a life that is pleasing to God.

Duration: 1:00:26

Scripture: 1 Samuel 16:7, Matthew 9:16, Matthew 13:24, Matthew 25:1-13, Luke 16:13

Topics: "Legalism"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of yielding to the Holy Spirit and allowing Him to transform our lives. He uses the analogy of a child yielding to their artist father's guidance to write the alphabet perfectly. The preacher also discusses the parable of the wheat and tares, highlighting the significance of the inner life and how it distinguishes true believers from those living under the law. He further explores the parable of the good seed and explains that Jesus came to establish a new covenant and lead us away from legalism to a life led by the Spirit.

Transcript

Bow our heads before God and still our hearts to hear his word, Father in Heaven. We want to be more conscious of your presence in our midst of Jesus risen, Lord of Lords and King of Kings, in our midst this evening, and Lord we want to give you your rightful place, we want you to anoint us as we speak and as we hear, that our hearts will be drawn to you, you'll bring us to freedom in our spirit, for that is your will, that we might be free in our spirits, that your name might be glorified in each of our lives, Lord, make us what you want us to be, we pray in Jesus' name, Amen. So, we'll continue our study in the parables that Jesus spoke on legalism, we know that Jesus came to establish a new covenant and to lead us from the law of Moses, away from the law to the law of the Spirit, and there were a number of parables that Jesus spoke that related to, that prepared the disciples for this new covenant life, we looked at three of them yesterday.

Now we want to turn to a fourth one, it's in Matthew chapter 13 and verse 24, Jesus spoke here about God's kingdom, kingdom of heaven, it's like a man who sowed good seed in his field, and later on he explained that the one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man, Jesus himself, and the field is the world, and the good seed are the sons of the kingdom, that's verse 38, where Jesus gave the explanation, and he said the field is the world, and in the world, Jesus has planted wheat, that's the good seed, that's

the sons of the kingdom, of which kingdom?

Verse 24, the kingdom of heaven, that means in a world where everybody is interested in earthly things, where everybody, the things that will promote their kingdom on earth, Jesus has come from heaven, and planted here and there, you and me, good seed, supposed to, this is what we are supposed to do, to manifest that we don't belong to this earth, the sons of the kingdom, you know that's one of the names that the Lord gave us, here in verse 38, the sons of the kingdom of heaven, and that's the good seed, so we are supposed to be demonstrating the principles of God's kingdom, of the kingdom of heaven, by having an attitude to this world where we live in it, but don't belong to it, that means we are not going to fight for earthly things, you remember what Jesus said to Pilate, if my kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight, all people whose interests are in this world, fight for earthly things, please remember that, whenever you fight for something earthly, with your wife, or your husband, or your neighbor, or with somebody else in the church, even a position in a church is an earthly honor, when we fight for anything earthly, we are thereby proving that our kingdom belongs to this world, those are the words of Jesus, if my kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight, but they don't fight, which proves that my kingdom is not of this world, so a person who is a legalist, who is under the law, remember Israel was under the law, they can come to a pretty good life, we have to say that people who lived under the law in Israel, lived very upright lives, in fact the law made Israel, the nation of Israel far superior to all the people on earth, they lived the best lives, they had the highest moral standard on earth, in fact all the laws in the king countries today are based on the Ten Commandments, but with all that upright life, they had a good testimony on the outside, every Israelite had his interest in earthly things, in making more money, living a comfortable life, they were not heavenly people, their lifestyle was not something that made people think of heaven, their message was, see, because we keep the Ten Commandments, God has blessed us, God has blessed us materially, God has prospered us, according to his promise in Deuteronomy 28, and it was true, they were an earthly kingdom, blessed by God, but here Jesus speaks about the sons of another kingdom, who are planted in this world, that's not Israel, that's you and me, and that's what the new covenant is all about, and I believe that is what Christians have missed, and that is why so many Christians are deceived by this false prosperity gospel, that's spreading the world today, which is leading people back to that gospel preached in Deuteronomy 28 to Israel.

So, these people being planted now are the people who are the sons of the kingdom of this earth, but Jesus said, this is the kingdom of heaven, it's like this good seed in the field, and in the middle of this, the enemy came, verse 25, and while men were sleeping, sowed tares among the wheat.

Now, I really don't know what tares are, I don't know whether anybody can explain what tares are, and I really don't need to know, except for one thing, and that is, that when the wheat sprouted, verse 26, and bow grain, the tares also sprouted, and the slaves of the land owner, now notice this, we got to see certain things here, it was an enemy who came and sowed this tares, somebody, an enemy came into this field, that is the world, and in the midst of all these people who are supposed to be the sons of the kingdom of heaven, he sowed some tares here and there, and the enemy and the slaves came to the land owner, that is to God, and said, how is this, how are these tares come up here, and the Lord said, and the land owner said, an enemy has done this, verse 28, and then the slaves said,

shall we pull out these tares, and the land owner said, no, and this is where I want you to notice, he said, if you pull out the tares, you may uproot the wheat also, so whatever the tares are, I don't know what they are, but one thing I know, that they look very much like wheat, now if it was completely different from the wheat, it would be very easy to pull it out, I mean if they were thorns and thistles, ok, that's easy to pull out,

I mean I can distinguish between wheat and thistles, but tares were something which looked so similar, but they are not wheat, and that's the work of the devil, Jesus said that, that the enemy who sowed it, verse 39, is the devil, the devil comes, and in the midst of genuine sons of the kingdom, he plants people who look like sons of the kingdom, who speak

like sons of the kingdom, who sing like sons of the kingdom, who attend churches like sons of the kingdom, but who are not really wheat, they look like wheat on the outside, and inside they are completely different, and we know the reality of that today, that if all the Christians on earth, let's take India, if all the Christians in India, every single Christian in India, right now our Christian population is probably between 2-3% of this country, but supposing only every single Christian was a born again Christian, and there were no other Christians in this country except really born again disciples of Jesus Christ, the percentage would have come to less than half percent, maybe quarter percent, not even 2.5%, but 0.25% or 0.1%, I mean now if it is 2 in a 100, it would probably be 1 in a

1000, ok, do you think, just answer this question, do you think our testimony in India would have been more effective with the present quality of 2.5% of Christians, or would it be better if we had only 0.1%, 1 in a 1000, or even 1 in 10,000 of radical wholehearted disciples of Jesus Christ, who do not fight for earthly things, who live for God, and who are seeking God's kingdom, in my mind I have absolutely no doubt, our testimony for Christ would have been far more powerful, if we were like that, and the devil knows that, the devil knows that Christianity's strength is not in numbers, Christianity's strength is in quality, so how does he neutralize it, in the midst of the sons of the kingdom, he plants multitudes of people who claim to be Christians, and nowadays even people who claim

to be born again, but who are living for this earth, or you talk, then people talk about being filled with the spirit, there are people who claim to be filled with the Holy Spirit, and are still living for this earth, and who are not seeking God's kingdom first in their life, that is the most effective way that the devil has seen in 2000 years, in every country to neutralize the Christian witness, and he has succeeded, because when you talk to the average non-Christian, he does not know the difference between born-again Christian, and non-born-again Christian, he does not know the difference between the different denominations, some preach the new birth, and some do not preach the new birth, he looks at Christians in general, and he says, he got a certain impression of Christians, he

knows some Christians are crooks, and he knows some Christians who cheated him, and he knows some Christians who are drunkards, and he knows some Christians who fight and go to court with each other and all this type of stuff and he said, yeah, just another religion you see how effectively the devil has neutralized it by sowing tares so, but some of these Christians may be very upright too in their life but there is no inner life the life of God is not there within, they have not come into this new covenant and how does this happen? now, when these tares come into the church when the church, the testimony of the church gets neutralized as well and it's a very interesting word here, it says here that the enemy came verse 25, when men were sleeping you know how the tares come into a church

here is a good church of born again people disciples, I think, you know all the so called separated denominations that there are today in the world that came out of the mainline denominations years ago, when they started they all started with a desire to have a good testimony we preach the new birth, they don't, that's why we are pulling out but what's happened today as we come to the second and third generation, there is not much difference in the quality of Christianity in any denomination, it's all about the same that's what I've discovered, because it says here men were sleeping, when the elders in a church

are asleep, that's when the enemy can come in, it's when the gatekeeper is asleep, that the enemy comes in that's what Jesus said here, men were sleeping, verse 25 the enemy came

in, so there is a warning for us, all those who are elders of churches, remember tares come into your church when you are supposed to be a gatekeeper and you go to sleep and spiritually I mean you are asleep and you let these people come in, you don't make sure they are really born again you baptize people who are not really wanting to be disciples of Jesus you become partial, somebody is relative and so you accept him you don't take that position that Paul said, we don't know any man according to the flesh, if a person is in Christ, he is a new creation, we don't have all these human relatives just because somebody is relative, we bring him into the church, that's what happens to a lot of people in a lot of places, now my son is old enough to be baptized, we got to baptize him otherwise

it's a bad testimony for me as a parent, and so whole lot of people got baptized, that's how all these separated denominations became compromising the doctrine remains the same, but the quality of life has just come down to the level of the mainline denominations that they left fifty hundred years ago, the tares have come right in to every group, and what is the solution to this the solution to this is the new covenant, what is the difference between the tares and the wheat, they look alright on the outside, so if you emphasize the outward life, you will never be able to escape from tares, what is the difference between the wheat and the tares, it's inside, there's a different taste that the wheat has from the tares it's the inner life that makes the difference, so if you have a church

that's constantly preaching the inner life, and inner life of godliness and not just the outer life, then there is hope of protecting the church from tares, and that we don't place any value on just looking nice on the outside and dressing modestly, and that's good, but that's not the main thing it's the inner life, what's the motive that means we talk more about the thoughts than our actions see god has given all of us an area of our life which is totally private, nobody can intrude into that private area of our life, that is our thought life, every one of us has got a private thought life, you may have been married for 50 years and your wife cannot invade that private area of your life, it's totally private and there's a reason why god has made it private and the reason is, it is there

that god tests whether you fear him or not it's not in our actions, I can behave well, it doesn't prove I fear god, it may prove that I want to keep my testimony before you as a good christian, I may even control my temper, because it's a bad testimony to lose our temper I may do everything right on the outside, speak nicely, act nicely, words, actions and all of it may be to maintain my testimony and god is not deceived, but when it comes to thoughts, I can be absolutely loose in my thoughts, because I don't lose my testimony when I have a bad thought life and there god draws a line between all of us in this congregation, this evening god draws a line, it's not those whose words are good and words are bad, because both may be seeking the honor of men, it's not those whose actions are

good and actions are bad because those who are doing good actions may still be seeking the honor of men, but he is drawing a line between those who are careful in their thought life and those who are careless in their thought life that is the division between the wheat and the tares the law, the old testament law could not bring anybody to a pure thought life, it could only purify their external actions, but it couldn't do anything about their thought life, because there was no holy spirit dwelling within but now, it's the inner life that makes wheat a son of the kingdom not that which looks alright, if we go by what looks alright, tares and wheat will be all mixed up, so that's the answer, in our churches, god has called us to emphasize the inner life purity in our thought life, purity

in our attitudes towards people, purity in our motives in everything that we do, that is what the new covenant is all about, it's an inner life everything in the old testament was external, the temple was external, today the temple is inward, those sacrifices, the bulls and the oxen and all were external now the sacrifices are inside, in secret, in fact Jesus emphasized the secret life so much, he said when you pray, don't let people know that you pray when you give money, don't let people know that you give money, when you fast, don't let people know that you fast, what was he trying to say? inner life inner life, it's not a question of not committing adultery on the outside what about the inside, it's not a question of not committing murder, what about anger his whole emphasis was, this

is the new covenant he told his disciples, the inner life christianity has lost that emphasis in most places in most places the emphasis today is on activity and do you know that the tares can do evangelism just like the wheat and the tares can be engaged in social work and feeding the poor and looking after widows and orphans and the non-christians doing all that too you go by external activity and assess a church by external activity, you got wheat and tares all mixed up, people who fear God and people who don't fear God, because social service is something very attractive I'm not against that, I praise God for it, to help the poor is great, but I say that's not going to take anyone into God's kingdom, it's the inner life, man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart,

so please remember that, that's the message of this first parable that this inner life is the thing that distinguishes the wheat from the tares, that's how we get free from living under the law, ok, now we go to another parable and that is found in Matthew's gospel chapter 9 and verse 16, that's the fifth parable, again you see the difference between living under the old covenant, under the law or led by the spirit, Matthew chapter 9 verse 16 where Jesus spoke about and said this no one puts a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment for the patch pulls away from the garment and the worst there results, just that verse now you see nowadays where a lot of cloth that we buy is terylene and terricot and all that, we don't understand that but in the old days when there was no terricot etc

and all cloth was cotton, whenever you bought cloth in the market to stitch a shirt or a pant, those of us of my generation know the first thing you had to do before you gave it to the tailor was dip it in water and you let it shrink cotton shrinks when you put it in the water and then only you give it to the tailor otherwise your pant won't fit you, once you had one wash it suddenly is too tight, too short so that's what Jesus was referring to here that supposing you got an old shirt or an old pant and one patch is torn and you want to repair it and you buy a small piece of cloth, a new cloth of the same color and you stitch it on to that well it looks ok till its first wash and what happens when you wash it? the old pant doesn't shrink, it's already shrunk, but this new patch which you

put in there shrinks, and so what happens when it shrinks it tears the old garment so Jesus was saying, you can't do that you got to throw away the old garment and get a new garment all together, the meaning there was when you are living an old covenant life which is basically a defeated life a life defeated by sin, where your mind is as I said, set on earthly things, just like Israel good on the outside but rotten on the inside Paul said in Romans chapter 7 that under the law all types of lusts reigned in his heart it's a mark of an old covenant man, who's got a good life on the outside but all types of lusts reigned in his heart, and his mind is set on earthly things, but then he comes to a meeting like ours, and he hears about the wonderful life we can have in Christ, about a life of

victory, a life of peace, a life of joy a life of triumph, and he says hey this is great I'd like to have a little bit of this life, and he wants to take a little patch of what he heard in one message, and stitch it on to his old

life, to the old covenant life and Jesus said it doesn't work, you can't take little bits of the new covenant and patch it on to the old covenant you got to throw away that old covenant life all together and take this new covenant, for example I told you one characteristic of the old covenant is the Old Testament people in Israel, they loved money like anything, because there was no commandment in the Ten Commandments saying thou shall not love money Jesus said in Luke 16.13 that we shouldn't do that, but in the Old Covenant there was no such command, in fact

they were supposed to love money mark of God's blessing on their life according to Deuteronomy 28 was that they would prosper financially, and they did and so here is a person who basically in all these earthly things wants this old covenant life of you know living comfortably on the earth and having the best of this world but he likes a little bit of these new covenant teachings that he hears in our church, he said I'd like a little patch of that on to my old covenant life so you know I can have the best of both worlds, and Jesus said it doesn't work it doesn't work, some people try to do it, maybe some of you try to do it, but it doesn't work, and that's the reason why you find your Christian life perhaps frustrating and that's the reason why you have this, what I call the sine wave

type of Christian life, sometimes up and sometimes down and sometimes up and sometimes down, that's not supposed to be God's will, Proverbs 4.18 says the path of the righteous is like the shining light that shines more and more and more and more and more until the perfect day there is no sine wave there, it's just steadily going up and up and up and up that is the path of the righteous that God has determined, like the sun it says there in Proverbs 4.18 it's like the sun rising and it gets brighter and brighter and brighter till the time Jesus comes, that is the path of the righteous and that's the way God wants us to walk, why is it not like that with many Christians, because here is the reason if you can understand it they want a patch of this life in the spirit patched on to the old

covenant life, for example some people say hey it's great these songs that we sing, we'd like to have a little bit of these singing and patch it on to an old covenant life, it doesn't work no, it's a life which is totally in the spirit, not partially interested to live that old covenant life with earthly blessings and partially a patch from the new covenant, a lot of what you hear nowadays, even on Christian television, I'll tell you is this patch work, it's partly this and partly that you get a little bit from the old testament and a little bit from the new testament and put it all together, it's exactly what Jesus is speaking about, it's old covenant plus new covenant all mixed up and that's not the type of life which is, if you do that what does he say here, a worse tear results it's

this old Adamic life has got to be destroyed completely, it's good for nothing, that's why the bible says God crucified it on the cross, the old man was put to death there's no way of repairing this old man, it's got to be thrown away completely so that's why the law was never meant to be God's ultimate goal, it was only a temporary temporarily given for a period to keep man live a fairly decent life till Jesus came and then it was supposed to be abolished, it was like a temporary stopgap arrangement you know, till you got the real thing until you get the real thing, here is something to keep you going and when people make that the main thing or try to take a patch of the new and put it in the old it results in tremendous problems, so that's the message here in this, I want to show you a

verse in Ezekiel and chapter 36 in this connection, in Ezekiel 36 we have a reference to this new covenant promise that we have, it's a prophecy about what's going to come in the new covenant and there's something very wonderful here which is prophesied about the new covenant which I find it's always blessed my heart because it's not even expressed so clearly in any new testament passage, Ezekiel 36, it

says here in verse 25, I will sprinkle clean water on you and you'll be clean and I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols, now that speaks a picture language of the cleansing of our heart by the blood of Jesus Christ as we repent and turn to Christ and we are cleansed from all our sins then what does God do, it's not only cleansing this is the new covenant,

verse 26 I will give you a new heart, it's not the old heart repaired, it's not a patch put on to the old heart, it's a completely new heart it's a completely new desires, completely new person, and I will put a new spirit within you, and I will remove this hard heart of stone and give you a soft heart, do you know under the old testament they all had a hard heart, it's a characteristic of old covenant people that their heart is hard once when the Pharisees came to Jesus and asked him why did Moses permit divorce I mean if God is holy God why did he permit divorce, when Jesus said no in the beginning God gave man to his wife and they were supposed to be one forever and Jesus said that's because of the hardness of your heart but in the new covenant it's not to be like that and there we see

that in the new covenant we are not supposed to have a hard heart we are supposed to have a soft heart towards all people if your heart is hard towards someone, you got to ask God to make it soft, when we are hard and unmerciful towards people or we despise them for their sins or look down upon people in some way or we are hard and unmerciful in our attitude because they made a mistake or did something wrong, it just shows that we are old covenant people, the Lord says he will take away that hard heart from us and give us a soft heart and notice he says I will put my holy spirit inside you this was not at all possible in the old testament and when the holy spirit is inside you listen to this, this is the phrase I want you to see this is the most important thing here, I will cause you to

walk in my statutes and you will be careful to observe my ordinances now the thing I want you to notice is, in the new covenant God says I will do it, that is this new garment in the old garment, you had to do it it's so important, I never get tired of emphasizing this difference between the old covenant and the new covenant, if you look at it there are two chapters that you must remember, Exodus chapter 20 is the old covenant Hebrews chapter 8 is the new covenant and in Exodus chapter 20, it's thou shalt, thou shalt, thou shalt not thou shalt not, thou shalt not, thou shalt, thou shalt not, it's just you must do this, you must not do this, you must do this you must not do this, but when it comes to the new covenant in Hebrews 8 he says, I will put my laws into your heart and I will write

them upon your heart and your mind, I will do this and I will do that that's what we see here in verse 27, I the responsibility goes from man to God oh I wish you could see it, it's so exciting for me, that if you can understand this very simple principle, that in the old covenant the responsibility was yours to live a holy life, in the new covenant God says, let me do it in you and it's because we are trying to live this according to new covenant standards by the old covenant principle, that we never seem to succeed we are trying to put a patch of this new covenant gospel into an old covenant life and the whole thing tears, this is bad, that is bad nothing works, it's not supposed to be like that, we got to throw the whole old garment away, Lord, I don't want any of that life I don't

want any of that, now the thing when you throw it all away, it includes not being interested in the things of earth, and that's what people don't want to throw away, they say we want to throw away that ya ya Lord do it all in me, but please let me keep these promises in Deuteronomy 28 where I'll be prosperous on earth, what is the result of such people maybe they make money but they live defeated lives they don't get victory over their anxiety and tension and bitterness and anger and so many things like that or they are lusting with their eyes and everything else, it's because they are trying to put a patch of the new into the

old, but look at this when I put my spirit in you, I will cause you now who's doing that?

God says I will make you to walk in my statutes, and I and you will, you will automatically, not you shall now you shall is old covenant, you will is new covenant, can you see this it's so wonderful, it was not possible till Jesus came and the Holy Spirit was poured out, that God can do a work in me, that I will please him because he does it in me you know it's like you get a little child to supposing you get a 3 year old who's just learned the ABC to write the alphabet, it's all not even in a straight line it's all crooked and lot of the letters are written backwards and the C and the E are backwards etc.

and his dad says, and the dad is an artist and the dad says let me do it, I am not going to do it I am going to hold your hand my little boy and you just yield to me, and this 3 year old boy writes an artistic A and an artistic B and C and D and the whole alphabet and he shows it to people and says you know I did this nobody can believe it, you did that you are telling a lie no we are not telling a lie, I live in victory it's impossible, yes I do, you can't believe it that a 3 year old can do that, but then you ask why is that C a little crooked, that's the place where I was a bit stubborn I thought I could do it better than my dad, and I said no dad let me do that that's the place where I got spoiled, but all the other places where I yielded, I yielded, every place where you have

yielded, yielded to the Holy Spirit has made you like Jesus, and the places where you thought doing your own will would be better, you thought you knew better than God you do it your way, those are the places where it went a bit wrong will we learn? will we learn to yield and the Lord says I will cause you to walk in my statutes, I will make you live this overcoming life that I have described in Matthew 5, 6 and 7 I will make you pure in heart I will make you humble, I will make you pure I will flood your heart with my love for other people if you will yield to me, it's a wonderful gospel I have proclaimed it for a number of years it has changed my life, the new covenant is not a self-improvement program, if it were a self-improvement program I wouldn't waste my time teaching it because

there are only certain people who can carry out a self-improvement program, you have to have a very strong will and many of us don't have that I don't have it, and if it were a self-improvement program I couldn't do it, I am not the type of person who can do yoga and control myself, no, some people can some people have got a tendency towards that, to do yoga and discipline themselves so that they can not lose their temper and all that, but it doesn't change the inside, the thought life remains the same, the heart remains the same, on the outside they have controlled themselves that's not Christianity, that's just a tear, so dear brothers and sisters, here is the wonderful news of the gospel, that we can be completely new, and the Holy Spirit can make us that's why Jesus says, I stand at

the door and knock if you open the door, I'll come in, it's just like that child this artist daddy saying, listen my son just don't be stubborn, yield your hand completely to me, just move along with my hand, I will cause you to write a perfect A, an artistic A I'll cause you to write an artistic B, I'll cause you to go all the way to Z your friends will wonder how in the world, a 3 year old like you could write the alphabet like that, I praise God for this gospel, all I have to do is yield ok, we go to a third parable that's in Matthew chapter 25, it's wonderful, we're not under the law like we see here, led by the Spirit, the Spirit teaching me to write this perfect alphabet, Matthew chapter 25 is another parable where Jesus spoke, and you know this is the story of the 10 virgins

Matthew 25 verses 1 to 13, we all know the story of the kingdom of heaven is like 10 virgins who were waiting for the bridegroom and the point here is number of things about them was similar they were all

virgins, which means they had a good testimony on the outside, if they were 5 virgins and 5 prostitutes, they would not have had a good testimony on the outside, all of them, but here were 10 virgins, that means they all had a good testimony on the outside, and that's the first thing to notice in this parable, they were upright on the outside he's talking about 2 types of Christians, both have a good testimony on the outside, and then it also says all 10 of them had lamps and in the beginning, all 10 lamps were burning, that's the thing I want you to notice because when the bridegroom

came the foolish didn't say, oh we don't have any light, no he said verse 8, our lamps are dying our lamps are dying, that means they were burning all that time so that's the second thing I want you to notice, they were all virgins, they all had lamps, and what does this light indicate let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works that external light indicates good works they not only had a good testimony, all 10 of them, but all 10 of them did good works on the outside, it's very difficult to distinguish when you have Christians who have a good testimony and who do good works to find out who is wise and who is foolish but yet Jesus said, 5 of them were wise 5 of them were foolish, what was the difference, the difference was not in their dress, the difference was

not in their being virgins or prostitutes, the difference was not in their lamps burning or not burning, all of this was the same, but there was something hidden inside, again it comes to the inner life, in the pocket of their dress, 5 of them had a vessel of oil you couldn't see that, it was inside the pocket you see 10 people standing there and 5 of them have wallets in their pocket and 5 of them don't how do you make out, here were 5 virgins who had a flask of oil in their garments and nobody could see, they all look the same and it's like that with Christians, the Lord was trying to say there is a difference, they all look the same on the outside, they all come to the meetings they all sing the same songs and they sing fervently all of them, they do a lot of good deeds, but some have

got something more inside which other people don't have, and that's the flask of oil what is this flask of oil, throughout the scriptures oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit right from the anointing oil that was poured upon Aaron and the priests and all the anointing oil that was poured on the kings and the priests, the prophets and the Old Testament it's always a picture of the Holy Spirit so it's speaking here about an inner life filled with the Holy Spirit, a flask full of oil it's speaking about a life where I believe the mark of being filled with the Holy Spirit is that our heart is filled with love, the reason why I believe it is, Romans 5 verse 5 it says the love of God fills our heart by the Holy Spirit that's the one verse in the New Testament which teaches us what happens when we

are filled with the Holy Spirit now some people go to the Acts of the Apostles to get that doctrine, I don't get doctrine from the Acts of the Apostles, the Acts of the Apostles is a history book, it tells us what happened and I remember once I was in a place with some Pentecostal people who said, doesn't it say in Acts chapter 2 verse 4 that they all spoke in tongues when they were filled with the Holy Spirit, I said right, it also says in Acts chapter 4 I said that they all sold their property after they were filled with the Spirit how many of you preach that doctrine, you just pick and choose from the Acts of the Apostles, I said no if you want doctrine, you got to go to the Epistles and in the Epistles it says in Romans 5 verse 5 that when the Holy Spirit fills our hearts, He fills

our hearts with love, the love of God that means I begin to love Jesus fervently, I know that's what happened to me when God filled me with the Holy Spirit and continues to fill me with the Holy Spirit, I just love Jesus more and more, I'm excited and I begin to love people more and more, I begin to love enemies and people who hate me and harm me, I can love them, I cannot do that on my own, the Holy Spirit holds

my hand and writes perfectly, L-O-V-E it's great, He does it, if I try to write it, I won't even know how to spell it, spell love, I'll write down H-A-T-E, love it's not, that's how a lot of Christians spell love because I don't know, I'm an evil man, I'm a child of Adam, but when the Holy Spirit holds my hand, He spells it right and He writes it perfectly He fills our hearts

with love and that is what some virgins had but the others didn't have, now all of us sitting here, as I look at you, you all look very holy I don't see an unholy face anywhere here all very humble, very holy very pure and a good testimony, I don't know that any of you are involved in scandals or any such thing like that but how do I know whether your heart is filled with love for Jesus, filled with love for other people, I just don't know, and I'm not trying to find out, I don't want to put my hand into your garment to find out you got a flask or not, God knows, but I want to tell you something if you will listen to me, in the day Jesus comes back that is what is going to make the difference that is what is going to make the difference, it's not your activity it's not your testimony,

it's not what other people think you are it's whether you have allowed the Holy Spirit to hold your hand and write L-O-V-E even towards those who hate you, to those who have harmed you to your enemies, God alone knows that, I don't know anything about your private life, you don't know anything about my private life but I know one thing in my life, the Holy Spirit filled my heart and He has taught me to love, that's the greatest thing to me it is even greater than ministry of the word I mean the Holy Spirit has gifted me to preach God's word I don't deny it, but that ministry has become effective because there is a flask of love inside, otherwise it wouldn't be effective I have always told God's people who preach God's word if you want to preach God's word effectively, you must have two

things in your heart two, one is God's word the other is God's people if you have God's word in your heart and God's people are out there God will not give you a prophetic word for them but if you have God's word in your heart and God's people in your heart He will give you a word for all of them, I found that through 40 years of my life, always it doesn't matter who they are, I mean I preached in villages to illiterate people, God gives me a word for them, I preached to PhD's business people, God gives me a word to them I preached to students, God gives me a word to them, I preached to older people God gives me a word to them, all you need is love, when you have love when you have love for students and young people and anybody, poor people, God gives you a word it's the flask of oil that

makes the difference many people think, oh I need another gift of the spirit, sure you need a gift of the spirit but if you have that external ability and you don't have this flask of oil of love in your heart you are not going to accomplish much in the long run what are you seeking for? if you are seeking for honor for yourself then you just want to show other people this light burning and I'll tell you another thing from this parable what was it that made these foolish what exposed these foolish virgins listen, the bridegroom delayed his coming, that's what it says here verse 5, the bridegroom was delaying it's not that 5 went to sleep and 5 did not go to sleep, it says they all went to sleep, naturally when you are tired you go to sleep they were not asleep spiritually, they were

asleep physically all 10 went to sleep, there also they were the same and the bridegroom delayed his coming, in other words the thing that distinguishes wise virgins from foolish virgins is that wise virgins can endure in love until the end it doesn't matter how long the bridegroom takes to come they can love because God is loving through them but the foolish virgins cannot endure for too long have you found that type of love where you hear a message a stirring message, you got to love your enemies, bless those who curse you and you say boy I'm going to do that, and you do that and it lasts for about a week or if you are

little more the yoga type maybe one month and then what happens finished, it's like the story I say about these old pankas, in the olden days the kings used to have

slaves who stood behind the screen and turned the fans and turned the fans, how long can you do it, half an hour when they get tired they got to get another person to do it, but when electricity came it just goes on and on and on and on, lights or fans or anything that's the difference, the power of the Holy Spirit makes us endure till the end the power of human determination to live a good life or to love your enemies or to bless those who curse you can only last up to a certain time and if the bridegroom delays beyond that time the light begins to die out, that's a mark of life under the old covenant, it cannot endure, it dies out it says about Moses face can you tell me why Moses hid his face with a veil I thought I knew the answer when I read the old testament the old testament said

his face was shining so brightly people were scared to look at him so he covered his face, that was one reason but I read in the new testament that Paul through the Holy Spirit had a revelation that there was another reason, it's wonderful 2nd Corinthians chapter 3 he says verse 13, there was another reason why Moses hid his face with a veil, a second reason, and the second reason was that so that the sons of Israel 2nd Corinthians 3.13 would not see this glory which is gradually decreasing in intensity this brightness you know under the veil, it didn't last forever he saw God and he came down from the mountain so glaring white that people were scared he put a veil but gradually that intensity decreased after some time he could take off the veil, it had gone, and we also have a veil

because the intensity of our life is decreasing and we don't want the people to see our backsliding our lamps dying out that is an old covenant life, but I have to hide something with a veil because I don't want them to see the glory decreasing in my family life the glory decreasing in my inner life, I want to have an area of my life hidden, I don't want to be like transparent glass, I want to be like frosted glass, wave out now and then, praise the Lord brother, sister, but I hide myself behind this veil and the new covenant is not like that, when the Holy Spirit comes and fills us and controls us, it's an altogether different type of life let the bridegroom delay and delay and delay and delay and delay further this flask of oil will keep on making it burn, no matter what the trials of

life are, if you remember from Pilgrim's Progress there is a place where Pilgrim has shown this picture of a fire burning and the devil pouring water on that fire, trying to quench it and quench it and pour more and more water and it never gets quenched, because somebody else is pouring oil from the side also beautiful picture, that's why some people's fire never burns and never dies out it burns continuously, no matter what the devil tries to do don't you want such a life my brother, sister, where the lambs will never die out, I wanted it, I mean for years I wanted it I said Lord, I want an anointing upon my life which never dies out, every year the anointing must be brighter the fire must be greater, I had a fire when I was 21 years old, I was on fire for Jesus and I'd go preaching in

different places, I was on fire for Jesus I'm 65 now, and I say Lord, that fire must be greater today, the fire of a passion, to love Jesus with all my heart, to live for Him to sacrifice for Him, to preach for Him, to travel for Him to go everywhere for Him, and to preach just as firely as I did 40 years ago, I can't do that because the devil is pouring water on me on all directions but the fire cannot be quenched, if you have the flask of oil and I want to tell you, this is the whole secret of the Christian life don't say so and so is troubling me, so and so is troubling me, let the whole world trouble you if the power of the Holy Spirit fills you you will burn brighter and brighter and brighter until the day the bridegroom comes, and you'll be among the wise virgins allow the Holy

Spirit to lead you, it's not this life under the law where you do all the right things and get a good testimony before people and come to all the meetings regularly and sing, it's much more than that my brother, sister don't ever be satisfied with a life where you do all the right things and your doctrine is right, and you can sign the doctrinal statement, I believe this, I believe this I believe all this, and you come to a good church, and you sing the right songs, you can sing nicely maybe you even got some responsibility in that church, are you satisfied because you got some responsibility in that church, God have mercy on you, I will never be satisfied if I'm not on fire for God everyday I don't want to be cold one single day of my life and I know the secret of that is this flask of

oil to open myself to the being of the Holy Spirit and say Lord I never want to do my own will hold my hand and write L-O-V-E perfectly through my life all the time, and if somebody pours still more water on this fire, the fire is going to burn even brighter because the Holy Spirit will make up more than that by pouring in more oil inside it's not your ability, it's not somebody telling you come on love that enemy, come on stop loving money, come on stop loving the world No, the Lord says let me do it I will take away the love of the world from your heart I will take away the love of money from your heart, I will take away the love of living for yourself from your heart, and I will put in you a passionate desire that's what drove these missionaries of olden times to sacrifice everything

to go for Jesus somewhere and to live for Him I believe we need to let the Holy Spirit do that in our lives, we must not be satisfied with this external Christianity that we have He who has ears to hear, let him hear Do you want this life?

Let's pray While our heads are bowed in prayer, I'm sure God has spoken to your heart I want to invite you my brother and sister God Himself, your Father, your loving Father who is silently planning for you in love, who brought you here to this conference to hear His word, He loves you if only you could see how intensely He loves you way beyond your wildest imagination exactly way beyond your wildest imagination He loves you, He desires the best for you He wants to make something out of your life so that you will not waste your earthly days living for earth but living for heaven, and He says My child, let me hold your hand, you don't have to do it Will you let me do it?

Will you yield to me? I will flood your heart with my love, the Lord says What He's done for others, He'll do for you Believe Him, what God has done for other people He will do for you, He'll give you such an anointing Your friends will be amazed, your wife will be amazed, your husband will be amazed What happened to you? Because He set you on fire Will you open to Him? Will you say God, I want this life At any cost, I'm willing to pay any price, I want to buy this oil I want to pay any price to buy it, Lord give it to me Give it to me at any cost, Lord If you are willing to pay any price, He'll give it to you Heavenly Father, You know the hearts of people here, You know those who are longing who are tired of the yoga and the discipline and failing who want the mighty power of the Holy Spirit Please do it Lord, do it in their lives, in all of our lives We pray in Jesus name, Amen

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