**Living Life With Purpose**

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**The Way Church**

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Message Title: Living Life With Purpose

Message Truth: To live a life of purpose for Jesus Christ will require a large investment and personal sacrifice.

Message Scripture: Matthew 25:1-13

Last week we discussed the fact that we must fall in love with the Word of God and we must require much from the followers of Jesus, because He requires much from them. Today, I would like for us to think about our approach to everyday life. If something is worth having, then we generally will invest a great deal in obtaining it. On the job, we work hard because we know hard work is what is required to be successful. College students study for tests, because they know it is what is required to get through the course. We understand those things worth having will require extensive input and hard work. People living with a purpose invest a great deal. After all, there is a college degree down the road or a job opportunity down the road. People who live life with a purpose, count the cost, and are willing to invest much. I don’t care what area of life you talk about, when we live life with a purpose it will require a great deal from us. The purpose drives us to dive in and do the work. If a young lady has a desire to be a good mother, then she will do certain things, she will invest, she will sacrifice. If a man wants to be a good husband He will invest, he will sacrifice. If someone truly wants to get in shape, they will go to the gym; they will invest the time, and effort. There is one area in our life where this “profit requires investment” kind of breaks down, it is the area of entertainment. In areas of entertainment we want to invest little and receive a great deal. When we go to the movies, we don’t expect to work hard. We want our popcorn just right, great seats and good sound. But we certainly don’t want to have to vacuum the place, wipe off the counters and clean our seats. When we go to the ballgame, we want guys walking around selling us the good stuff; we would rather not have to walk to the concession stand. We want the guy walking up and down the isle to throw us the peanuts and hand us a drink. When we are entertained we expect to do very little. Do you see the problem with Church today? We walk in God’s house expecting to be entertained. The result is a do nothing, feel good mindset. It does not line-up with what Jesus demands. Jesus requires much input, and we must give Him much. We must give him everything. We have to stop looking at the Church house like the movie theatre; you don’t pay your admission and expect to do nothing, quite the opposite. You pay your tithe and then serve the kingdom. You pay your tithe and then you do the work of the kingdom.

**Matthew 25:1-13**

**“Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 Now five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish. 3 Those who *were* foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, 4 but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5 But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. 6 “And at midnight a cry was *heard:* ‘Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!’ 7 Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. 8 And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us *some* of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ 9 But the wise answered, saying, ‘*No,* lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’ 10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. 11 “Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’ 12 But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.’ 13 “Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.**

**TRUE SALVATION REQUIRES ALL OF YOU**

In this scripture these ten young ladies were to be on watch and be ready for the bridegroom. They were to light the way for entrance of the bridegroom. Traditionally, this is what happened, they would be on watch ready, as soon as they received the announcement, the bridegroom was coming, and they would take their lamps and go light the way into the awesome ceremony. The virgins represent you and I, ministering the gospel in preparation for the bridegroom, which is Jesus Christ. As we look at these young ladies and what they represent, we see there was a level of purity in all of these women. However, purity does not equal wisdom, and purity in one area does not establish purity in all areas. True purity must encompass the full body of work. You see, ‘faith without works is dead’ (James 2:20). You could be a virgin and have hatred in your heart. You could be a virgin and drink everyday. True salvation requires all of you. I want us to think of the ten virgins today as ten churchgoers, ten individuals who come to church regularly.

**THEY ALL BROUGHT LAMPS…ONLY FIVE BROUGHT OIL**

Notice, they all bring a lamp. All of them bring their lamps, but only five of them brought any oil. Why would that be? Well, the obvious answer is written right in the scripture, five of them were foolish. They were not preparing for the coming of the bridegroom. There was no real investment on their part. Today, let us think of the lamps as the Word of God and the oil as our time in the Word of God. There are those who come in God's house carrying their lamps, (Bibles), but they have no oil. They have no oil because they have spent zero time in the Word of God. Although their lamps could be very powerful and able to light their path and show them the way, they have no oil. Your Bible will not do anything for you, if you don’t open it and study it. If you open it and study it, your Bible will come to life and you will live a life of purpose. These five young ladies were not living life with a purpose. They should have been preparing for the coming of the bridegroom, five were prepared, and five were foolish.

**GIVE US SOME OIL**

As they waited they slumbered and slept (Matthew 25:5). During sleep, we generally don’t know what is going on around us. This is what happened to these virgins, they all fell asleep. As they slept the bridegroom was on His way. At midnight a cry was heard. At midnight there was a cry announcing the bridegroom was coming. So all ten of the women grabbed their lampstands, trimmed their lamps and went out to wait on the bridegroom. The foolish said, give us some oil for our lamps are going out.

**NO!**

But the wise virgins answered and said NO! That is right, they said NO! You would think, as much as we are taught in the scripture the young ladies with the oil would have been instructed to provide for the young ladies less fortunate. Doesn’t that line-up with what we would expect Christians to do? I hope you see there is a very powerful point here, the Word of God says, **the wise** virgins said NO! The foolish virgins were not less fortunate. They made different decisions. You see that is the problem with many of us today, we don’t make the connection that the decisions we make in everyday life have a huge impact on our relationship with Jesus. The foolish virgins had the same opportunity as the wise virgins, regarding knowing what was required of them, they simply choose poorly. The wise virgins instructed them to go buy their own oil. They were not going to put themselves in jeopardy to save those who had the same opportunities they had. Unfortunately, the day is coming when they who once looked with contempt in their heart at the saints of obedience, and who hate the strictness of religion, will at death and judgment wish for the comfort found in the condition of true Christians.

**THERE IS AN EXPECTATION ON YOUR LIFE**

Please know this, if you are a professing child of God, if you come to this church and proclaim the name of Jesus Christ, don’t expect me, or any other child of God, to enter into worldly living to get you. There is an expectation on your life, if you claim the name of Jesus. You need to make decisions that line-up with who you say you are. Your decisions will have a great deal to do with your future circumstance. I believe this absolutely lines up with scripture, for example the prodigal son, (Luke 15:11-32). If you make the wrong choices, I will go to your house and deliver a warning, but I am not going to the parties and bars to get you. Understand, if you are lost I have to go whenever and wherever, but I go there preaching the gospel, not accepting the behavior. When I say preaching the gospel I mean just that, going and preaching repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

**MANY HAVE BOUGHT INTO THE LIE**

Unfortunately, many of you have bought into the lie that you can be a part of the world and be just fine with Jesus. You know what I mean; we attend the parties and get-togethers, but without participating in sinful activities that accompany many of these happenings. We even use scripture to support our efforts. I once thought it possible myself to be present and show a positive example. I even called it ministry. I thought being there and not doing certain things would be a witness. I have changed my mind. This scripture is pretty clear, the wise virgins said NO, and they didn’t go with them to buy oil, they stayed right where they were supposed to be, prepared and ready for the King. If we are not careful, we will twist 1 Corinthians 5:11 to do what we want to do. We will quote Paul when he said, ‘I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some’ (1 Corinthians 9:19-23).

There is a problem with the use of these scriptures in this way, if preaching repentance is not the purpose for being there. If you are not preaching repentance to them when you are there, then why are you there? You are not preaching the truth by just being there. Jesus was offensive and those that He offended did not ask Him back, as a matter of fact they killed Him. When you think about it John the Baptist preached repentance, Peter preached repentance, and Paul preached repentance. They all faced the same fate. So why do you keep being asked back? And what good is coming of your presence? Perhaps your words offend no one because your words are held in silence. I guess what I am telling you is, if your are not going to go there and preach, repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand, then you have a lot better chance of having and impact on your friends and family by saying NO! This is actually what I would recommend. When asked why, tell them. Will it offend them, yes, Jesus offended many, and Paul’s words offended many. Ask yourself this, when are you best teaching and training them that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life? Are you teaching more by attending sinful activity and saying nothing or by saying no and explaining why? You see, if Paul was at the party he would be preaching and offending many; consequently, Paul would not have been invited back to many parties.

**IF THERE IS NO TRUE OIL INSIDE YOU**

I want us to look at the oil not only as the Word of God, but also the Spirit of God. You see some of you are just like the five foolish virgins, you have a lamp, and you have trimmed your lamp, but the flame is going out. You have heard the Word of God, even flirted with the idea of surrender to Him, but you have never surrendered your life into His hands. You have played both sides of the fence, one foot in the world, and one foot testing the Kingdom waters. However, you have never given your life to Christ and thus you have never been filled with the Holy Spirit. You don’t have that precious sustaining oil. So what are you are doing about it? If you do nothing about it, your lamp will remain just like the lamps of the five foolish virgins, it is going out and going out fast.

**I WILL BE OK I HAVE PLENTY OF TIME**

Listen you may be at the so-called watchtower, you may be at church each week, but you don’t have a relationship with Jesus. You know it, and have known it for a while, but you take the attitude ‘I will be ok, I have plenty of time.’ You have convinced yourself of this by telling yourself over and over; however, one day a cry will be heard, trumpets will sound, and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is going to bust through the clouds. The very moment He returns will be like a thief in the night (1 Thessalonians 5:2), but the entrance will be unlike anything we have ever witnessed. Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Philippians 2:10-11). People please understand you and I are not promised tomorrow. When Jesus returns you have no more opportunities. When you die, you have no more opportunities. Stop playing games with Jesus, the bridegroom is coming and you must be ready.

**THERE IS NO SKIRTING INTO HEAVEN**

Many individuals are like the foolish virgins; they are in waiting, but making no preparation. They somehow feel like they have done all they need do. They believe themselves to be good people, they come to church, take care of their families, and they believe it is enough. They believe they will somehow, skirt into heaven on the coat tails of their parents or spouse. Surely someone will let them borrow some oil at the last hour. Unfortunately, the answer they will receive will be an emphatic NO! The wise will enter into glory, as the unwise search for oil. They will search for oil through tribulation and despair. Unfortunately, they will return to find the door closed. They will knock and plead, but they will hear the piercing Words the foolish virgins heard, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.’

**THE KEY IS FOR JESUS TO KNOW YOU**

The key is for Jesus to know you. If He knows you, you will be wise, your lamp will be full of oil and you will be prepared and waiting. You will not only be at church, but you will have a relationship with Jesus Christ. You will not only be here worshipping, but you will come here, with an open line of communication with your Lord and Savior. You will come here not only with your Bible, but you will have read it and studied it. You will come here on watch for what is next. You will come here with a purpose, and you will leave with a clearer purpose. Today is the day of salvation. You have the choice you can be foolish or wise. I leave you with this very difficult scripture,

**Isaiah 5:14-15**

**Therefore Sheol has enlarged itself And opened its mouth beyond measure; Their glory and their multitude and their pomp, And he who is jubilant, shall descend into it. 15 People shall be brought down, Each man shall be humbled, And the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled.**

***2 Chronicles 36:16 But they mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, till there was no remedy.***