

The Contender

"CONTEND FOR THE FAITH WHICH WAS ONCE DELIVERED UNTO THE SAINTS" JUDE 3

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Sunrise-Sunset, Part 2



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We ended part 1 of this message talking about how, to the natural eye, it looks like there are multitudes of Christians in the world today, but close examination reveals that an awful lot of them are just people with a lot of ideas about religion. This is all, right in line with a prophecy given by Amos in the 8th century B.C. which says,

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“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north, even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.” That is found in Amos 8:11-12, and if it never applied to any other time in the history of mankind, it sure applies to this present age of time. The society as a whole has plenty to eat and drink; and from the standpoint of natural reasoning, it looks like there are enough Christians in the world today to contradict this prophecy of Amos. But when you know the truth, you know the true word of the Lord is scarce, among them. Every city you go into here in America, you see huge church buildings of every shape, form, and fashion. Even the little country towns all have their share of churches; and as you drive through the countryside, you see them along the way, Cripple Creek Baptist Church,

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Soft Swamp Methodist Church, Weeping Willow Presbyterian Church and all such like. But I will tell you something saints, Do not get up in one of them, and try to preach the revealed truth of God’s word; for they will literally run you off. All they want is a religious philosophy that will appease their minds, and make them feel religious. You can trace it right back to Cain, there in the very beginning of the history of mankind. He wanted to be religious; but he was not willing to worship God in the proper way. He had his own ideas about worshiping the Creator, and when his offering was rejected, he became bitter. Instead of repenting, and turning to God, he let his bitterness drive him to murder his half brother Abel, and the Bible tells us that he went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod. You can read those early chapters of Genesis, and see what that Cain line of humanity turned out to be like. Then in chapter 6, it speaks of a time when the Seth line began to intermarry with the Cain line, and those mixed attributes in the children from those marriages have passed on down through mankind to this very hour of time. Therefore it is

no wonder that you find so many people with religious ideas today; and yet so very few that really hunger after the true word of the Lord; and those who do hunger and thirst after truth, are not able to find it in very many places. Churches today are more like lodges. They really do have a fellowship; but their fellowship is built around things their flesh can agree with, so that leaves no place for the truth of God's word, because the flesh and the Spirit are contrary the one to the other. The sad truth of the matter is that whatever these carnal minded, so called Christians do, reflects back on everything that is called Christianity, because those making the judgments do not know the difference between true Christians and make believers. Nevertheless, regardless of what the word may say about Christianity, the true church of the living God, still has a commission to fulfill; as long as this grace age lasts. That commission is, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," and it became effective there in Jerusalem, almost two thousand years ago, when the Lord sent the promise of the Father upon those who had obeyed His word, and waited in that upper room.

WHAT THE HOLY GHOST WILL DO

When Peter used his keys, to open up the kingdom to those that would believe and obey the gospel, it set something in motion that was designed by the Creator, to redeem all of His lost children, and put them on talking terms with Him, and it will remain in effect until all of those who were foreknown of Him, have been redeemed; and in all of this time, people who could never really yield themselves fully to God, have still been allowed to partake of many of the blessings God has poured out for the benefit of His true children. That is why you read in the scriptures that He sends the rain on the just and the unjust. But when it comes to perfection; He is only perfecting His true children that love His truth. Now as we have already said, there are a lot of people out here in the charismatic realm of religion that measure everything by whether a person speaks in tongues or not; mostly because of what happened there in that upper room, in Jerusalem, on the day of Pentecost. But I want to ask you a very simple question; and I want you to think about it. If everyone who speaks in tongues truly has received the baptism of the Holy Ghost, how come so many of them reject so much of the word of God? Will not the Holy Ghost in a true believer, bear witness to truth, when it is encountered? I say yes,

because the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of truth. But you find multitudes in the world today, who seem to believe that the Holy Ghost is just something to play with. As for what happened there in Jerusalem with that 120 disciples, you have to consider the time, and the setting, and the people that needed something to convince them that god was doing a new thing in the earth. If the Holy Ghost had come with no more manifestation than what the Baptists, the Methodists, and the Presbyterians of today believe in, No one in the streets of Jerusalem would have had any reason to recognize that scripture was being fulfilled. It took that manifestation of tongues, to get the attention of all those others Peter was given the opportunity to preach to. Therefore let me just say this, I am not against anyone speaking in tongues, I could wish that you all did. But then I expect to see something more from your life than just merely speaking in tongues; and certainly, there is no scripture giving anyone any authority to make a doctrine out of it. When the Holy Ghost comes in, your religion should become more than just a head belief with a set of rules to live by. The Holy ghost is a revelator, a teacher that will guide true believers into all truth. How? By dealing with their intellect from within. That is why Jesus told His disciples, I have yet many things to say unto you, but you are not yet able to bear them; for without the Holy Ghost, their minds could not grasp what the Creator was in the process of doing.

But let us go back to the 2nd chapter of Acts, and see what started happening, once the Holy Ghost came.

THE CHURCH'S FIRST MIRACLE

In the 2nd chapter of the book of Acts, you see where the first 120 disciples received the Holy Ghost. Then you see the Holy Ghost reveal a prophecy of Joel being fulfilled. Those disciples knew that prophecy was there in Joel, but without the Holy Ghost, they did not know what it pertained to. But when the time came, Peter stood right up and preached a sermon on it, by the revelation of the Spirit he had just received; and three thousand other Jews believed, and were baptized, as he presented Jesus Christ to them. The Bible does not tell us that they spoke in tongues; it just says, they that gladly received his word were baptized, and tells that there were three thousand of them. Whether they spoke in tongues or not, is not the important thing; the important thing is the way their lives were changed from that moment on. The first thing they did was get baptized; and there again, people assume things that they have no right to assume. You have churches that teach their people that the apostles took those believers out and sprinkled them, simply because the Bible does

not say they were immersed. Brothers and Sisters: I deal with these things in this way, If Jesus was immersed, then I know the apostles immersed believers also. Sprinkling was not even heard of; in that early apostolic church. That is something added later on, for the sake of convenience; but it does not fulfill the purpose of exemplifying death, burial, and resurrection to newness of life, as set forth in the 6th chapter of Romans, where Paul dealt with it extensively. I have always said, The scriptures interpret the scriptures; if the Holy Ghost is allowed to direct our thought, and reveal them to us. Well when we come to chapter 3, we find a record of the first miracle done by the church, after the ascension of Jesus. Peter and John went up to the temple to pray. Praying in the outer court of the temple area, was a Jewish custom, and we have to assume that these Jewish Christians were meeting there to pray also. No doubt on this particular morning, most of the church had already gone up to the place where they met together, and Peter and John were coming along, just the two of them together, when a certain cripple man which lay at the gate of the temple daily, asked an alms of them. This man had been doing that very thing for years; and I could not help but wonder how many times Jesus had passed right by him, as He went to and from the temple. It is easy to say, Why did He not heal him the first time He ever went to the temple? But we have to remember that Jesus only did what the

Father directed Him to do and the Father was saving this miracle for the Church; as it moved out, to carry on the works Jesus had been doing. After all, that is what Jesus told His disciples they would do; as we have already read in John 14:12. He said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and great works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." Greater works, only in the sense that there would be more people doing these works, and it would be a universal thing, instead of just there where Jesus ministered in human form. In verse 13, He said this, to show where their authority would come from. "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." Some interpret that verse to mean that they can ask for fine cars, million dollar mansions to live in, and all sorts of thing that they can heap upon their flesh. But I would have to ask them, How is the Father glorified in the Son, through all of that selfish carnality? We must leave the lust of our flesh out of this, and apply it to the work of God; for that is what Jesus was talking about, when He said it. Therefore in the light of all that Jesus has taught, we have to recognize this incident there at the temple gate as something ordained of the Father to plunge the Church into their foreordained ministry. We do not know whether God had given Peter a dream, a vision, or what; but one thing is sure; when the crippled man asked

for a little offering, Peter knew exactly what to say to him. With that Holy Ghost anointing upon him, Peter simply said to the man, "Look on us." Which in this case meant, Listen to what we are going to say. Then he said, (as the man looked at them, expecting to receive an offering) "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." Peter was not just hoping something would happen; this was a voice of authority, for Hew knew he was being directed by the Father, just like Jesus had been, when He did such works. Verse 7 says, "And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. (8) And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping, and praising God." Brother! That man had been crippled all his life; and now, suddenly, he is able to walk and leap, and dance, and as he did, he got a lot of attention. He went right into the temple court with Peter and John, leaping and jumping up and down and glorifying God; so those Jews there praying, began to look up from their prayer books to see what was going on; and when they did they recognized the man as the one they had seen begging outside the temple gate, for years. This was the first miracle done by the Holy Ghost through the apostles, so as their attention was drawn to the man that was healed, these Jews began to inquire about what had happened; and

they all turned their attention to Peter and John; the instruments God had used. Then, Peter, recognizing what was happening, said, "Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? Or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?" This gave Peter another open door to preach Jesus Christ to a lot of Jews, so he stepped right in, and started, saying, "The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our father, hath glorified His Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied Him in the presence of Pilate, when he determined to let Him go. But ye denied the Holy one and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you: And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. And His name through faith in His name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by Him (Jesus) hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all." By the time Peter finished this sermon, he had another mad bunch of Jews; but there were also 5,000 more believers, ready to be baptized, and the Lord was adding to the Church daily; so it was time for the rest of the great commission to be activated. Jerusalem had been preached to; so it was time to move out into all Judaea, Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth, and the way God brought that about; was to allow a great persecution strike the Church and scatter the Christians. When Saul

raised up, and started arresting them, and casting them into prison, they began to flee, fearing for their lives; and as they went they could not help but testify wherever they went, of what had happened in Jerusalem. That is how Phillip ended up down in Samaria, preaching Jesus Christ to them.

SAMARIA RECEIVES THE GOSPEL

Let us go to the 8th chapter of Acts now, and follow what took place down in Samaria, when Phillip preached Jesus Christ to them. Jesus had already preached to the Samaritans, through His encounter with the woman at the well, and many of them believed on Him then. Therefore when Phillip began to preach, and testify of all that he had seen and heard, something really began to happen there in Samaria. Let us begin in verse 4, and read a few verses. The thing that really brought the persecution of Christians to a head, was the stoning of Stephen, which is covered in chapter 7; and that is when Saul really began to make havoc of the Church, causing the Christians to flee from Jerusalem. Then in verse 4, you begin to see how God was using this persecution to fulfill the rest of the commission. "Therefore they that were scattered

abroad went everywhere preaching the gospel. Then Phillip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Phillip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. (He was only a deacon when he was still at Jerusalem; but notice what these verses say about Phillip's ministry in Samaria. He had miracles following his ministry.) For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them; and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed, and there was great joy in that city. But there was a certain man, called Simon, which before time in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. But when they believed Phillip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also; and when he was baptized, he continued with Phillip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done." From these verses, we get a good picture of what was taking place there in Samaria, as Phillip preached, and testified, and the power of God healed the sick and crippled people. People were getting baptized right and left, but they were not receiving the Holy

Ghost; so let us read a little more, and notice something else. "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: For as yet He was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." It was important that they receive the Holy Ghost, just like they at Jerusalem had received, for that is the only thing that puts you into the Church of the living God. Please be mindful of the fact that we are not talking about speaking in tongues; we are talking about the infilling experience of receiving the Holy Ghost, that we see in verse 17. "Then laid they (Peter and John) their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost." There are two things to take note of here. It says that Simon believed also, and was baptized, and followed Phillip. But verse 18 lets us see that he was different from the others that had believed, for he was trying to buy with money, something he could make a show with, still desiring to be looked upon as some great person. Another thing we will want to notice, without referring to it as an evidence, is that these believers no doubt spoke in

tongues, when they received the Holy Ghost; for Simon saw some manifestation that caused him to desire for himself, what he saw manifested through those apostles. He was a man that liked a lot of excitement and attention; and the world is full of that kind, even yet today. They will do anything just to get attention. Nevertheless we do not need to accept the fact that the Holy Ghost did bear witness of His presence, by some manifestation that could be seen or heard. That is how God got the attention of those Jews there in Jerusalem, on the day of Pentecost; and caused them to realize that something different was taking place; so even though the Bible does not say so, it is reasonable to believe that these Samaritans also spoke in tongues, when they received the Holy Ghost; and no doubt that is what caused Simon to want to get in on it, and maybe recapture some of the attention he had formerly received from the people, through his powers as a sorcerer. "But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. (Peter really rebuked this man for what he had tried to do, so notice verse 21.) Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God." He then called upon him to repent of the wickedness of his heart and seek God's forgiveness. You can read the rest of it, if you like. Our main concern at this time is to show how the

gospel of Jesus Christ was received by another race of people, other than pure Jews. Therefore here is what I want you to see. Just as it took some kind of outward manifestation of the inward presence of the Holy Ghost in those first disciples, to cause those Jews in the streets of Jerusalem to see that they had something the rest of them did not have: it likewise required an outward manifestation of His presence in those Samaritans, in order for the Jewish Christians to be fully convinced that they (the Samaritans) had received. It was not the speaking in tongues that was important; it was the gift of eternal life that they had received, that was the important thing. Brothers and Sisters: Rather than Christians of today, being concerned about an evidence of the presence of the Holy Ghost: they ought to be concentrating on bringing their lives in line with this word of God, that was recorded by those first recipients of this wonderful gift of eternal life. The setting is completely different now. It is already an established fact that God will give this gift of life to anyone who will believe and obey the gospel of Jesus Christ, regardless of race, color, station in life, country of residence, or anything else, so there is no manifestation required to prove to anyone else that you have the Holy Ghost. The way you prove you have the Holy Ghost, is by allowing Him to lead and direct your life. But this gift of eternal life is an individual thing, not subject to anyone else's feelings. God only can give it; and no man can

take it away from you, so you need not prove anything to anyone, in order to walk with God. But I will say this, Whatever is in you will sooner or later manifest itself in one way or another. If you are a true child of God, other true children of God will recognize the kindred Spirit; and if you are make believer, children of God will sooner or later recognize the absence of that kindred Spirit. But let us move on now, as we seek to follow the course of events that came with the dawning of this day of salvation.

GOD PREPARES PETER **FOR THE HOUSE OF** **CORNELIUS**

Go with me to chapter 10 where we will see the Holy Ghost poured out upon a group of Gentiles, and how by a manifestation of that Spirit, those Jews with Peter were made to realize that these Gentiles had received the absolute same thing they had received. The 9th chapter of Acts tells us of the conversion experience of Saul, as he went about persecuting Christians, and also of some of the works of the Holy Ghost through the apostle Peter, leading up to the even we are going to look at, here in chapter 10. Peter was in Joppa, a little town that lay on the outskirts of what we know today as Tel Aviv. He had just seen a man healed of

Palsy, and a woman named Dorcas, raised from the dead, and during those days there, he stayed in the house of another man named Simon, who was a tanner. But about 60 miles up the coast from Jerusalem, in a town called Caesarea, was a Gentile man that had been proselyted to Judaism. A man that feared God; and that contributed to the poor people of Jerusalem, and prayed to God for leadership and direction. His attitude toward the Jewish people, caused him to fast and pray, and seek the will of God for his life, so God gave him a vision. He saw the angel of the Lord coming to him and saying, Cornelius, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side; he shall tell thee what thou ought to do. Now right at that moment, Peter would not have been able to tell Cornelius what he, as a Gentile man, ought to do. But God was not going to allow it to remain that way. While those men from Cornelius were on their way to Joppa, God was dealing with Peter, getting Him ready for what was about to happen. As meal time approached, Peter was hungry; but he decided to go up to the roof of the house and pray, while he waited for the meal to be prepared. Those flat roofed houses were used for many things, sort of like we use a patio, so it was not unusual that Peter chose that place to pray. But think about this. There he was, up

above where the food was being prepared, so I can just imagine the aroma that was hitting his sense of smell, as he talked to God about guidance and leadership of his life. Well God used that very setting to speak to him. The scripture says he was very hungry and would have eaten, but before they got the food ready, he fell into a trance, and saw heaven opened, and something like a huge sheet tied together at the four corners, descending unto him. In it were all sorts of four-footed beasts of the earth, creeping things, and fowls of the air. Then he heard a voice saying, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But he said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. In other words, I am holy. That just shows his human nature, and how he felt about these things. He was a Jew, and he had the Holy Ghost; but he had lived under the law all his life, and up to this point God had not dealt with him concerning these things of the law. Furthermore he had no use for Gentile people, because the law says they are just like dogs. The time had come for God to deal with the Gentiles; but first He had to deal with Peter's mind, and this vision was designed to do that. The voice spoke back to Peter saying, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done three times and then the whole display was taken up into heaven where it descended from, and Peter was left wondering what it all meant. About that time though, the three men sent by

Cornelius were at the gate, inquiring about a man by the name of Simon Peter. That is when the Spirit said to him, “Behold, three men seek thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.” What a contrast! Right there in the very beginning of this dispensation, before anyone had ever been schooled on how to recognize the voice of the Spirit of God, this man whose very nature was hostile toward Gentiles, heard the voice of God, and obeyed it, and went right down to those servants of that Roman centurion and said, “Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what is the cause where of ye are come?” The men told their story, of all that had transpired in Caesarea, and how God, by an angel, had told Cornelius to send for him, to come to his house that they might hear words of him. He called them in and gave them lodging over night, and the next morning he took six other Jewish Christians, and went to Caesarea with the three men, not having the slightest idea of what he was supposed to say to them, once they arrived. All he knew for sure, was that the Spirit had said, “Go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.” No doubt his mind ran through a lot of possibilities on the way. But he actually had to get there and hear the whole story from Cornelius, before he received the anointing to know what to say.

GENTILES RECEIVE THE GOSPEL

When they arrived at the home of Cornelius, he was waiting for them with a lot of his relatives and close friends, and according to his Gentile background, he fell right down at Peter’s feet and worshiped him. He did not know any better; that is the way that Roman religious society was taught. But Peter knew better, so he reached down and lifted the man up and said to him, “Stand up: I myself also am a man.” Rome still claims Peter to have been the first pope, but Peter never had any part in such an idea. Even when he was still under the law, he knew man was not supposed to bow down and worship any thing other than the Creator Himself. That is what Jesus told Satan also, when Satan was testing Him. When Peter got Cornelius back on his feet, he said to all of them, “Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore what intent ye have sent for me?” Cornelius told him the whole story, which you can read in the 10th chapter of Acts, and then it was Peter’s turn to speak again. Down in Samaria, they just simply laid hands on people who were already believers,

and had already been baptized, and they received the Holy Ghost. But here in this setting, the whole lot of them waiting to hear him speak, were Gentiles: that he had always looked upon as unclean people, unfit for a Jew to have any dealing with. Yet he knew that he was there by the direction of the Spirit of God, and he knew also that he had nothing else he could say to them, except to tell them about Jesus Christ, and what He had accomplished on behalf of lost mankind; so in verse 34, we pick up the beginning of his sermon. "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him." He gave them a quick run down of what they (the disciples that walked with Jesus) had seen and heard, and how the prophets of old bore witness of Him in their long range prophecies. As he spoke to them, they were all sitting there like little birds; just waiting to be fed. God had seen their yielded hearts and the hunger of their souls, so He just simply bypassed the usual procedure, and astonished those Jewish believers that came with Peter, by giving these Gentiles the Holy Ghost, before they were even baptized. Notice, as we pick up in verse 44. "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also

was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God." Why was it necessary for these Gentiles to speak in tongues, when they received the Holy Ghost? To convince Peter and those men that came with him, that they could not refuse to baptize these for any reason whatsoever, since God had already given them the same thing the Jewish believers had been receiving. Peter was not preaching an evidence message; but when God gave them this manifestation, he could not help but accept the sign. That is when he spoke up and said, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." One thing about Peter, when he recognized God in something, he was for it all the way. But now we want to leave Peter, and look in on another apostle. This one started out persecuting Christians; and then became the apostle to the Gentiles, and most of the New Testament epistles were written by him. We are talking about the apostle Paul of course.

PAUL - AT EPHESUS

In his first missionary journey, Paul went to Asia, to Lystra, Derbe, and the

region round about. Then after a certain length of time, He felt like it would be good, to go back to those same places where they had been before, and see how the believers they left in each place were doing. He took Silas with him, and started right back over the same area, but found himself restrained by the Spirit, and in a night vision, saw a man of Macedonia standing, and saying, "Come over into Macedonia, and help us." He then turned West, and answered that call, and it was on this second missionary journey that the Galatian, the Thessalonian, the Philippian, as well as the Corinthian assemblies were established. Then on his way back, he came through Ephesus, and left Aquila and his wife Priscilla, whom he had met in Corinth, there. They were two Jews that had been deported from Rome, and they became powerful witnesses of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul left Ephesus with his heart set on going to Jerusalem, promising to return to them, if the Lord would permit. In his absence from Ephesus, another Jew named Apollos, a disciple of John the Baptist, came to Ephesus from Alexandria, Egypt, preaching John's message, concerning the Christ that should come. For some reason, he did not know what had taken place, since he heard John preach like that. Therefore being well instructed in the Old Testament scriptures, he gained some disciples there at Ephesus before Aquila and Priscilla got hold of him, and brought his revelation up to date.

He then went on his way, and the next thing we see is Paul coming back to Ephesus. With this little short fill in, we will now go to the 19th chapter of Acts, and begin reading in verse 1. "And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, (they were disciples that had believed Apollos' message concerning repentance, according to what John had preached) He said to them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." That was their way of saying, We know nothing at all about the Holy Ghost. We have never even heard it mentioned. "And he (Paul) said unto them, Unto what then, were you baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on Him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." After bringing their revelation up to date, the next thing Paul did was baptize them in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, according to the New Testament formula. Modern evangelism of our day will tell people it didn't matter whether they are baptized or not, just as long as they repent and believe. They will baptize them in the trinity titles, if they want to be baptized, but

they place no real importance upon baptism. To the early apostolic church, it was important; for they had a revelation of what it was done for. Scriptural baptism is to symbolize death, burial, and then resurrection. Death to the old self, and then a new life in Christ. Then you are ready for the indwelling presence of the Spirit of God. Do you actually believe God would place His Spirit in a vessel that absolutely refused to accept scriptural baptism in the name of Jesus Christ? Do not fool yourself. God is not going to cut corners, just to satisfy your carnal beliefs. He gave those Gentiles at Caesarea His Spirit, before they were baptized, but I assure you, not one of them refused baptism when the time came. Those disciples there at Ephesus were following the message of a man whose revelation was way behind time. That is the way denominational churches are today. They are still living way back in the Reformation period. But the big difference is, these disciples of John's message, were ready to have their experience brought up to date, and most of what the world looks upon as Christians today, are not.

TWELVE BELIEVERS
RECEIVE HOLY GHOST

After those twelve disciples there at Ephesus were baptized, Paul laid his hands on them and they received the Holy Ghost, speaking in tongues, and prophesying. Did it have to be that way? No. But that is the way God ordained it to be. They spoke with tongues and prophesied, displaying two manifestations of the Holy Spirit. God did that, for a sign to Paul, showing that He had fully accepted the Gentiles. Therefore Paul stayed right there at Ephesus for three years, preaching the gospel, and teaching those new Christians how to walk godly in Christ Jesus. It says, there in chapter 19, that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. During that three years, seven churches were established in Asia, from the revival spirit at Ephesus. Paul never preached anything about tongues as an evidence; he just preached the gospel and God Himself gave the manifestations to suit His purpose. You just simply have to realize that there is more involved than speaking in tongues. The Holy Ghost is a revelatory Spirit, and a teacher that instructs and leads those in whom He dwells. Therefore when you see people lock their feet, and refuse to move, and find them constantly denying truths of the word of God, you have every reason to question the spirit they have in them; for the Holy Ghost will not cause you to say not to truth.

PAUL - ESTABLISHING DOCTRINES

Let us take a few minutes now, and look at the revelatory aspect of this Spirit. I keep reminding you of what Jesus said, in John 16:12, and I have a reason for doing that. He told His disciples, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." In other words, you cannot understand them now. "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come." We all accept the fact that Jesus said that; but have we actually considered the full scope of that statement? Let us see. As Christianity became established in various regions of the then known world, and Satan got his chance to use elements of flesh to cause confusion in different assemblies, there came a time that certain things had to be dealt with. This Spirit of truth in those apostles, caused them to address themselves to the problems that arose, and as they did, important church doctrines were established. They dealt with morals, with proper conduct, with things to come, and with the spirit of antichrist; that would always try to discredit, or change the things of the word of God. You will not find preachers like Billy Graham, touching the doctrines set forth in these epistles very much. They

keep themselves out of trouble by preaching mostly from the four gospels. There is nothing wrong with preaching from the four gospels; but all you will ever have is baby Christians, if that is as far as you take them. Now, let us look at some of the things the Holy Spirit taught, to fulfill the words of Jesus, in John 16:12-13. When Paul was still at Ephesus, in that great revival, someone got word to him that there were problems in the Corinthian Church, so what did he do? He wrote them a letter, dealing with those problems; and Christians ever since then, have used this letter to deal with similar problems, in their respective ages of time. In chapter 1, he dealt with a dispute about whose disciples these were, saying, Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul? In other words, Put away these petty differences; and follow Jesus Christ, the one who died for you, and rose again. In chapter 3, he referred to them as carnal babes in Christ, because of their petty differences, and so forth. He reminded them that they were the temple of God, because the Spirit of God dwelt in them, and reminded them also that the temple of God is holy. But when you come to chapter 5, you find him dealing with a case of fornication he has been made aware of, there in their assembly. He said in essence, I have already judged this deed, even without being there. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, and

the power of the Lord Jesus Christ with you, deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit (of that person, or persons,) may be saved in the day fo the Lord Jesus. He said in verse 9, "I wrote unto you in an epistle, not to company with fornicators." Brother, he is giving them guidelines to live by. When you get over to chapter 7, you find him dealing with marriage and divorce; and I want you to know he laid it down as a doctrine, and they knew what he meant. They did not have to go around asking, What did he mean by that? We are looking at things that had to be dealt with in the light of grace. There was no way Paul could take the law, which was given to the Jews, and apply it to Gentile Christians in this age of grace. God's righteous principles have never changed. But under grace, He has a different method of dealing with wrongs; and He revealed those methods to His apostles, by the Holy Ghost, as the need arose.

In chapter 11, you find Paul dealing with leadership, long hair, and the proper way of partaking of the Lord's supper, or communion. Then in chapters 12-13-14, he deals with the gifts of the Spirit, what they are, and the proper use of them. These are all things Jesus could not teach His disciples, before they had the Spirit of God in them, to enable them to understand. "I have yet many things to

say unto you." Is that little verse becoming more meaningful to you as we look at these things which have been revealed to men of God by His Spirit? All of those early Christians expected Jesus to return in their lifetime. Therefore as some of the older ones began to die, the others began to be concerned, saying things like, We thought Jesus was coming back. What is going to happen to our loved ones that have died? Well that caused Paul to wrote what we read in 1st Thessalonians 4, and in 1st Corinthians 15, where he dealt with the resurrection; and the catching away of those saints still alive when Jesus returns. He did not learn anything about the order of these things, from the Old Testament. They were typed, and spoken of; but not explained. The same goes for what he dealt with in Ephesians 1, which was written while he was a prisoner in Rome. Notice verses 4 & 5, and tell me where he got that. "According as he (the Father) hath chosen us in Him (Jesus Christ) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: Having PREDESTINATED us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." How many of your modern day evangelists will even read that first few verses of Ephesians? Or Colossians 1:19 and 2:9, which deal with the Godhead? Their following will not permit them to get into these doctrines of the New Testament

epistles; except to denounce them, as certain ones have done. In 2nd Thessalonians, chapter 2, Paul speaks of the coming of Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto Him, and then says, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin (the Antichrist) be revealed, the son of perdition: Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." He has the falling away, the return of Christ, the resurrection and rapture of the Church, and the deeds of the Antichrist, all wrapped up in those few words of verses 1-4.

THE BEGINNING OF MORAL BREAKDOWN

This falling away, mentioned in 2nd Thessalonians 2:3, brings me to a point I want to emphasize. Fifty years ago, most of the denominational churches still had respect for the word of God, and for the righteous principles therein. America was founded, a nation under God. The Bible was used in all branches of our government as a guide in establishing laws of morality and right principles. Fifty years ago, you would not have found a

homosexual admitting to the fact that he or she was one. In fact, even 40 years ago, if a person in the military service of this country was found to be a homosexual, they were given a dishonorable discharge. But look what they tell you today: We are American citizens, and we demand our rights. You have no right to discriminate against us. All of this is a result of Christianity failing to hold up a standard. We are in the clutches of that great falling away; and all the signs point to the soon return of the Lord for the rapture of the Church. Where did it all start? Most of what we are seeing today, is because of a breakdown of the American home, that actually started in the W.W. 2 era, when so many mothers left their homes and went into factories to work, because of the shortage of manpower. When the war ended, and the men came home, a lot of those mothers chose to stay in the factories, instead of returning to their former role of homemaking. This eventually produced a generation of teenagers and young adults that grew up in life, without a mother there to guide them. I am not casting any stones; I am only giving you a little history. We all know some of those mothers were forced to keep on working. They had no other choice. But out of that era came a trend, that eventually bred the feminist movement, and little by little, opened the door for a complete breakdown of the way of life this nation was founded upon. When women of America began

to compete with the men, both in the offices as well as in the blue collar jobs in industry, too many of them stopped thinking of themselves as the mother of their children, and as homemakers. You know what I am talking about. Now they are bank presidents, insurance executives, heads of huge corporations, and all such like, and the devil loves what they are doing; because they have to ignore the word of God to go to the lengths they have gone to. Women preachers are demanding a place in the pulpits of America; and scripturally, we know for sure that this is wrong. Nevertheless they are doing these things, and what makes it even worse, along comes their little daughters, bound and determined to do what mommy is doing. The Church no longer has any influence on them; it is just the opposite. The spirit that is on them, has moved into the churches, taking a lot of other spirits with it. That is what moved the age into its apostate condition; the world influences the churches of the land, more than the churches influence the world. When this feminist movement hit the churches; in came dope, immoral dress, worldly music, and just about anything else you can think of. So called Reverends, with their hair hanging down their backs, have hit the streets, protesting just about everything this country ever stood for. They have lost the revelation of what the word of God is all about. That is why we have a famine in the land

today. A famine is not something that hits suddenly; it slowly creeps up on you. We read the prophecy in Amos, concerning a famine that would hit, a famine for the hearing of the true word of God. When there came a generation that had no respect for the word of the Lord, He just slowly began to cut it off from them. Why give it to them, if they do not want it? When the word of God began to be cut off, then in come the sodomites, with their dope and every filthy practice the world has ever known, right into the churches that once stood for a holy way of life. As long as our nation upheld scriptural principles, perverts had to stay hid in their closets; they dared not step out, and demand equal rights. Well does this mean that God does not have a true witness in the world today? Oh, no. He has some eagles scattered over the globe, that make up the true body of Christ; and they appreciate the revealed word of God, when they are privileged to hear it. That is why Jesus said, Wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together. The eagles know where to go, to be fed. Saints, I am thankful that there is still food in the land today; even in the midst of this great famine. Surely we can see that the scriptures are being fulfilled, at a very rapid pace; getting things ready for the return of Jesus Christ. The true Church has the revealed word of God, while the apostate church has AIDS and every fowl spirit out of hell. Society in general does not want to admit that

AIDS is a curse sent from God, to an immoral society of people. But whether they admit that or not: surely they are not too blind to recognize where it strikes. Their life style is what breeds it; but they are too devil possessed to turn around. That is why it is so ridiculous for these charismatic preachers to harp on a great world wide revival, that is sweeping the land today. If what they are saying were true, then we have been reading the signs of the times wrong, and we are not close to the end after all. I believe everyone of you know better than that, for scripturally, everything is falling right into place. We have to be close to the end.

DISASTER AHEAD

We have gone through quite a few scriptures, discovering what the dawning of this day of grace started off like; and we have much history that tells us what it was like in the Dark Ages, when the light of the sun (Son) was blotted out by dark clouds that rolled in. That of course, is the condition Zechariah prophesied about in the verses we used to begin this message. I want to read those two verses once again, before we continue on, for I do not want you to lose sight of why we are dealing with this subject. We are endeavoring to show

by the scriptures that the light, spoken of in this prophecy, is just as bright and beautiful as it was in the dawning of this glorious day. We are in Zechariah 14:6-7, reading a prophecy that actually picks up somewhere in that day, without telling anything at all about its dawning. "And it shall come to pass in that day, (this day of salvation) that the light shall not be clear nor dark: But it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light." It is that evening light that the living element of the bride of Jesus Christ is perfected, and made ready for her translation. Hallelujah! As the little song goes, We are going to see the King. I honestly do not believe it will be very much longer. But, Saints: There are things in the not too distant future, that will without a doubt, bring a lot of heartache and sadness to an awful lot of people. If I did not know Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, and know from the word of God that the things taking place in the world today were foretold in prophecy, I might be like a lot of others are today. I might be on the verge of committing suicide. The way things are moving, there could well be a condition in the very near future, hit this country, that would be worse than the great crash of 1929 & 1930. I was a little boy when that hit, but I can remember coming home from school one day, and hearing the adults talking about the crash. Then later, heard the old timers

tell how bad it was back then. The steel mills at Gary, Indiana, were closed down. Oil refineries were shut down, and many other places, simply because the bottom dropped out of the economy. Life's savings were lost; and for a long time there was no work, for people to even make any money. Then when it finally did begin to turn around, a lot of people in Kentucky and southern Indiana, went to Gary, trying to get a job. But you can imagine how it was; maybe for every one job that opened up, there were hundreds of applicants for it. Brothers and Sisters: I am not trying to scare anyone; nor do I want you to go away feeling bad; but the sun is getting too close to the western horizon for us to just drift along, feeling that everything is all right. There is definitely a shaking ahead. This nation has built her economy on a false security. She has too little backing her dollar, and she has spread herself too thin, trying to support other countries. I heard on the TV news that our indebtedness is equivalent to that of Mexico, Venezuela, and so many other countries all put together; and do you know what? There is no way you and I can pay it off. That is why I say, There are heartaches ahead. All of this is referred to in the scriptures, as the beginning of sorrows. To the world at large, there is no hope; for their security is a false security. If the dollar is all you are living for, then get ready to run for your life.

FULFILLMENT OF GOD'S WORD

We have known for years that the war described in Ezekiel 38 & 39, will take place sometime before Gentile time runs out, gospel-wise; and we have known also that Russia would be foolish to come against Israel, without first doing something to disable this country; so I am just simply saying to you today, Be wise Christians; do not just drift along unaware of the hour we are living in. The last stock market crash occurred in the last months of President Hoover's presidency, a Republican president; and the one we have now is in the last months of his presidency; so some of what we are seeing may be politically motivated, to throw public opinion over to the liberal side. But regardless of which way it goes, I am glad to be on the Lord's side. I am glad our salvation is not dependent on the stock market. Nevertheless what I intend to deal with for a little while, is the 25th chapter of the gospel of St. Matthew. When Jesus spoke these parables, there was one particular word He used a lot. The word I am referring to is T-H-E-N, a word that gave a future tense to the things He was talking about at that time. But I want to take a little time here, and show you, by the help of the Lord, that T-H-E-N, is now,

concerning some of the things that were to take place; and some of the conditions that were to prevail; especially these two parables recorded here in Matthew 25. I believe we can examine these two parables in the light of the time we are now living in, and come to an unquestionable conclusion, that they are being fulfilled in our day and hour. First we have the parable about ten virgins, all going out to meet the Bridegroom. That means they are all looking for the coming of Jesus Christ. They are all expecting one day, to be wed to Him. The other parable is about a rich man, preparing to take a long journey; and how he delivered unto his servants his goods, for the sole purpose of them investing what they received, for a future gain. The conclusion of this parable, is that there is a day of reckoning, when each servant has to give an account of his investment of what was committed to him; and judgment is made, based upon how they handled their entrustment. Both parables have a literal application, but ideas about that application, run in every direction among those professing to be Christians. Nevertheless our lives are definitely going to be affected by them, before any of us ever see Jesus in His corporal body of flesh and bones. Of course, many will ask, How can this be, especially concerning the ten virgins? Was there not a cry made, Behold the Bridegroom cometh? Yes, and I believe we can show that this cry has already gone out. This parable of

the ten virgins only has an end time application. But the parable of the talents has been in effect all down through the age of grace; and only the reckoning has an end time setting. Naturally those original servants are all dead; and if there were any fitting this description of slothfulness among them; they are not going to be resurrected along with the righteous ones, just to fulfill this parable. The only ones coming out of the ground in the next phase of the resurrection, are those that went into the ground, ready to meet the Lord. But there will be some living ones here in the end time that will fit both categories, some faithful, and some unfaithful.

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

As we first look at the parable of the ten virgins, let me remind you once again that T-H-E-N is now. We are now living in the fulfillment of this future tense parable given two thousand years ago. Therefore I ask you: If THEN is now, how should we see ourselves in the light of the revelation of this parable? Around the turn of the century, there was a sudden move of the Spirit of God, giving God fearing people this experience of the baptism of the Holy ghost. In the early years of this great move of God, much

emphasis was upon the supernatural aspect; namely speaking in tongues, prophesying, and on divine healing. This was God's way of confirming to the Church that Jesus Christ truly is the same today, that He was back in the first century of Christendom. People have a tendency to read John 14:12, which promised that the disciples, or believers would do the same works He (Jesus) was doing, and apply it only to the apostolic era of the New Testament Church; so I just want to remind you that believers of this hour, are filled with the same Spirit those apostles were filled with; and within the anointing of that Spirit is the potential for everything you read about them doing back then; even Jesus. It was not the physical flesh that made Jesus stand out, nor was it the flesh of the apostles, that made them stand out. It was the acts of that Spirit in them, that attracted the multitudes. The scriptures even tell us that there was nothing about the flesh of Jesus that would cause people to be attracted to Him. As we have said, He was without sin; perfect in every way. But for thirty years, He was just that, and no more. He was not God; nor did He have any power to perform miracles, until after He was incarnated by the Spirit of the Creator, after John baptized Him. After that, He not only performed miracles, He taught spiritual truths in a way that man had never heard them before. His acts, and His words, caused Him to stand out above every other man that had ever lived. What He

taught made sense. He could put a picture together that up until that time, had only been like a maze to them. He took one little boy's lunch, and fed a great multitude of people. He healed sick and diseased people who had no hope left, before He came on the scene. What was He doing all of this for? He was demonstrating the power of the great Creator, and preparing a people to do likewise, after He was taken off the scene. Then He said, I am the light of the world. That is why He could look at His disciples and say, Ye are the light of the world, for it would be that same Spirit in them, reaching out into the world, after He was gone to set at the Father's right hand, that would be the light of the world. What did He mean by the term light? Well light reveals, by pushing back darkness. When you take the revelatory attributes of the Spirit, and join them with the supernatural attributes, you have what we call light; the light that lost mankind was without. First, Jesus reflected that light to the world. Then His disciples reflected it, and it has been the true people of God ever since, that has been the light of the world. Even when the church world itself was bound by tradition and almost total darkness: God still had His chosen few that were filled with that Spirit of light. Some people have a tendency to believe there was no light at all, during the darkest hours of the Dark Ages; but I want you to know for sure that there has never been a time since the days of Jesus, that God did not have vessels of

light in the earth. Knowing what we know today, makes it hard for us to realize how it must have been for those vessels of light, at a time when they were almost swallowed up by the forces of evil and darkness; but God always made sure that the light of the world was not put out completely. From that little glimmer of light that remained, the Reformation was born; and from that time until now, God has been in the process of restoring to the Church precious truths that were laid aside during that time. The world as a whole, loves darkness; but the children of God love light, and they seek light. No wonder then, that we are hated by our families, and by our used to be, close friends; they are just like bugs and creeping things; they love the darkness. Light is only loved and sought after by the true children of light.

WISE - AND FOOLISH - VIRGINS - AND TARES

Let me try to get on now with this parable about ten virgins. Naturally the numbers are only figurative, calling attention to the fact that some will be wise, and some foolish, as this age closes out. Another thing we need to realize is that the term virgins, points

to the total representation of the Christian world, excluding tares of course; but only God knows for sure who is a tare, and who is a foolish virgin. By the Spirit in us, we are able to discern certain things; but we would have to have the Spirit without measure, in order to know for sure who is who; Because the professing church is made up of three distinctive groups. The wise virgins, the foolish virgins, and the tares. The wise virgins are anxious to see Jesus. The foolish virgins want to see Him sometime, and the tares could not care less about seeing Him; for they are just living for today. They are not virgins at all; they are make-believers. As for the ten virgins: you will notice that they all slumbered and slept. Why? Because their denominational organizations made them feel secure. Organizational religion functions just like a business; namely by the zealously of human instrumentality. All of this organization has a tendency to make people feel secure; but it is a false sense of security; because it has no solid foundation. But according to the parable, a midnight cry went forth, Behold the Bridegroom cometh! Naturally the cry awakened all the sleeping virgins. They could all accept the fact that the cry pointed to the eminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ. Some thought in terms of His visible return and others thought in terms of His appearing in the clouds to receive His bride. But in reality, when the prophet messenger to this age made

that cry: it was a call to the bride Church, to first see the living Christ in His word, and make themselves ready for the time when He would appear to receive them unto Himself. Just to emphasize how far organized religion has drifted from the true revelation of the word of God, I will just mention something I could not help but notice on the way to church this morning. As we drove past the Elizabeth Methodist Church, I noticed how some of the people coming across the street were taking their last puff of their cigarette, before flipping it to the ground, and entering into the church building. I am not condemning them, for except for the grace and mercy of almighty God, I would still be right among them, doing the same thing. But when you stop to think that the Methodist Church was founded by the teaching of John Wesley, a man who preached that without peace and holiness, no man shall see the Lord, you cannot help but realize that the whole movement has drifted into a sound sleep, whereby they no longer hold sacred those truths their founder cherished in his heart. The message of his hour was sanctification; but it was by the same Spirit that leads people to repentance, and causes them to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior. The purpose of the Holy Ghost has always been to clean up the lives of those who accept Jesus Christ as their Savior. The purpose of the Holy Ghost has always been to clean up the lives of those who accept Christ, and deliver them from the

powers of darkness that has kept them in bondage, apart from God. In the early years of Methodism, one could not puff on cigarettes, cigars and pipes, and sit among those sanctified saints very long. You either got under conviction, and surrendered; or you got so miserable, you had to get out. But now you could not preach sanctification in the Methodist Church for love nor money. They would very quickly vote you right out the door. They still have the letter of the word of God; but the Spirit of holiness is no longer among them. The Spirit and the word must agree, in order to produce light. What is light? It is an illuminating factor, that penetrates darkness. What is darkness? In this case, darkness is religious traditions, religious rituals, and man made customs that can never produce anything acceptable to God. People without the Spirit, feel comfortable sitting in those systems of religion, because it gives them a sense of security without exposing their fleshly weaknesses. But I ask you, What is the gospel for? To please our flesh? No. It is to deliver us from the bondage of our flesh, and perfect us; not destroy us. Now let me say this, Even though the midnight cry is designed to awaken all of the sleeping virgins; it does not literally awaken all of them at the same instant. It is a message in the world today that is having its affect over a period of time. That is why I always stress the fact that we ought not gauge everything by our own situation; for

we heard things twenty some years ago, that people in remote regions of the world are just now hearing, and the Church that Jesus Christ is coming back for is a universal body of believers, made up of people from every nation under heaven, and any message delivered to the Church, has to have time to affect the whole Church, and not just our little local assembly. Sure, the midnight cry sounded twenty some years ago; and, sure, there were a lot of virgins awakened immediately; but God is using instruments from that awakened element, to relay the cry around the world, that all may have their opportunity. Now please bear in mind that this cry is not supposed to wake up denominational religion as a whole; it is only supposed to awaken those predestinated seed sitting in those systems. That is why it is written, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." That is a part of the cry that went out; for it is literally impossible for a true child of God to get dressed up in a proper revelation of the word of God, while partaking of the antichrist deeds of those systems of religion. Organized religion is not looking for Jesus Christ in His word. They read the written word and argue and fuss over what it means; but there is not a wise one among them to give them the true revelation of it; for the wise ones, with the true revelation, have already obeyed the call to come out. God has

not purpose at all in perfecting His true children, just to leave them sitting in one of those systems somewhere. Some who have received the Holy Ghost while still in their old denominational churches, have entertained the thought; I will stay where I am; and maybe I can help someone else. Well you may stay for a little while; but sooner or later, even if your own hunger does not lead you out of there, you will go anyhow; they will see to it. Do you know why? They do not want what you are trying to give them. They do not even want you around them, glorifying God, and speaking in tongues; so they certainly are not going to hold still for anything beyond that.

THE HOLY GHOST MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Now Saints: I have been accused of being against any manifestations of the Spirit, simply because I teach against tongues being the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost; and that is simply not true. I am not against anything that is a true manifestation of the Holy Ghost. I just simply disagree with teaching something as a doctrine, when there is not scriptural authority for it. Tongues is one of the manifestations of the Holy Ghost, but not necessarily an evidence of His

presence; for even demon spirits speak in tongues. I wish every one of you who truly are children of God would not only speak in tongues, but also prophesy, jump up and down, shake all over like an earthquake, and even lay in the floor under the power of the Spirit. But when the manifestations are over with, I expect you to walk right. I do not want to see any of you coming in here dressed like the world, with the smell of tobacco on your breath, and worldly music playing on your radio, and then have these experiences. That is not to say that you could not come like that, and have the Spirit deal with you like that; for He can. He can deal with you any way He purposes to, but when He does, it is to deliver you from your old ways of life, not just to make you feel good while going on your same old way. In other words, I believe in all of the manifestations of the Spirit of God, and I want all of you to feel free to yield to Him at all times, but as you do, I expect to see some evidence that He is in you, by the way you live your every day life. When He is in you, it is supposed to make a difference. But like I have said many times before, He does not force you to live right, but He enables you to. So if your experience of salvation is a true experience, it will give you the desire to live a holy life; and the Holy Ghost in you will enable you to fulfill that desire. When I was in the Methodist Church; I thought that was the only right thing there was in the whole world. It just goes to show how blind we can be; without that

Spirit of light in us. I just have to praise God for lifting me up out of that old dead system. He gave me something that has changed my life. That same Spirit that placed conviction on me and caused me to yield my life to Jesus Christ, also gave me the desire in my heart to be like Him. Not physically, but in surrender and obedience to the will of the Father. I have been privileged to see Jesus Christ in His word; and that is the only way I have any scriptural authority to expect to see Him, until I meet Him face to face, along with all the rest who truly are watching for His return. When we accepted Him as our Lord and Savior, we saw Him only in His word; therefore here in the end of the age, as we look to Him for our perfection, we have no right nor reason, to expect to see Him any other way except in His word.

JESUS WILL WED ONLY **ONE VIRGIN CHURCH**

Let us try to get a picture in our minds of the ancient setting Jesus used in this parable of the ten virgins. We all realize we are not carrying literal mechanical lamps around in our hands. But Jesus used this ancient setting to portray a spiritual truth. A parable presents a similarity of what it is pointing to, and should never be

looked at as though every detail should have to match perfectly. For the sake of better understanding what He is getting at though, let me just say a few words about the kind of setting Jesus used here. In ancient times, when people were invited to such an event, the household itself did not have sufficient light to light up the whole terrain, where the usual festivities of such an occasion would take place. Therefore it was the custom for all of the invited guests to bring their own light. That way, no one would be able to come and enjoy the festivity, with the eating and dancing, and whatever else might be done, without contributing something themselves. A lot of people in the world are always ready to participate in anything that is taking place, just as long as they can do it at someone else's expense. They want to be included, but they do not want to contribute anything themselves. But the bride of Jesus Christ is not to be that way. Furthermore I want you to understand that there is only one virgin, bride Church, that Jesus Christ is going to marry. The numbers in this parable are symbolic, used only in the sense of showing that among the ranks of believing people in the world, there will be two categories of them, when the grace age closes out, some that are fully prepared to go with the Lord Jesus to the wedding supper, and some others that are not fully prepared to go with Him. It is up to every individual believing Christian, to submit

themselves completely to the Spirit of God, and allow Him to wash them with the water of His revealed word, and enable them to get dressed up in a revelation, that in the eyes of God is a suitable wedding garment. The one virgin Church that the Lord Jesus will come for, will be made up of these individuals who have been so dressed; and also bonded together in perfect unity; so that they, even though many, can still be looked upon as one body of believers. Now the lamps these virgins all had, symbolized the light of the gospel that put them under conviction and turned them to the Lord. But the oil that keeps those lamps burning, is the Holy Spirit, in the measure received by the wise virgins. Now for you who may be wondering how the foolish had any light at all, if they did not, or do not have the baptism of the Holy Spirit, let me say this: Every truth of the Bible carries a certain measure of the Spirit with it. That is what brings conviction in the first place. Remember, Jesus said no one could come to Him unless they were drawn by the Father? It is that convicting measure of the Spirit of God that does that. But those who come to Christ Jesus because of that conviction, must also follow Him in scriptural baptism and receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost, in order to get into the category of wise virgins. If all they ever do is just join some denominational church system and rest on that initial convicting experience, they will never be dressed in a revelation sufficient to

be looked upon as a wedding garment. Furthermore even though the parable speaks of those who were ready, going in with Him (Jesus) to the marriage, and the door being shut, we are not to look at it as though they went into a building. This is a universal setting that must have an application among people of all nations, races, colors, and so forth; so you have to realize that what the wise go into, is a revelation; and the door that is shut, is the door to that perfecting revelation, that the foolish played around too long to get into. When the cry went out, Behold, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him: Jesus was not standing in mid air, waiting for the bride to get ready. No. It was a cry that caused the wise virgins to awake, flee from those denominations, and meet Jesus in His word. Looking at this, from the standpoint of a natural setting, it is the time when serious courtship starts. A young man and a young woman will begin to express certain feelings toward each other, and begin to make plans to marry and spend the rest of their lives together. Very few of them are together for the rest of their lives any more, but nevertheless they promise that in their wedding vows, and while they are courting, you do not see them walking down the street, one five paces behind the other. They are so close together you cannot see daylight between them. Is that not right? That points to the fact that they love each other. Now this is a natural illustration that we can all understand,

but we have to give it a spiritual application in order for it to shed light on this parable.

TRIMMING YOUR LAMPS

There are an awful lot of people who go to church in our day that are not in love with Jesus. They are not close to Him at all. They really do not know what pleases Him; because they have lost contact with Him. They no longer know how to talk to Him. I am not trying to make anyone feel bad; but time is running out. We do not have another 20 years to play around. If your lamp is flickering, it is up to you to recognize it and take the necessary steps to get it burning brightly. When I first began to hear about some of the things Bro. Branham was preaching, I began to look at myself, sitting there in Methodism, how flickering, my light was. As I compared my testimony to what I read in the book of Acts, about the first generation of Christians, and then in 1st Corinthians 12, and Romans 12, I realized I was not where I wanted to be in my Christian experience. There was too much that just simply did not measure up to what they had. Well, Bro. Jackson: What did you do about it? I began to trim my lamp. In the natural, when you trim a lamp, you trim the charred crust off of the substance the oil flows through, so the

oil can again flow free, and cause the light to burn brighter again. That black char that builds up on the wick, just keeps on getting thicker and thicker, and the more it builds up, the less oil that is able to get through; and finally the light begins to flicker, and eventually goes out. Well how do we trim our lamps spiritually speaking? We all know you just have to get rid of that crust on the wick of a natural lamp; but what is the spiritual comparison? There is a long list of comparisons, but the place to start is to get baptized according to the revelation of Acts 2:38. "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." You get rid of that trinity baptism, and receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and allow Him to get rid of all those old dogmas and creeds of organized religion. There is no life at all in any of that. You begin to start exalting Jesus Christ; not as the 2nd person of a trinity; but as the ONLY person of the Godhead. He who is God, was in Him (Jesus) in the fullness of all His attributable qualities, enabling Him to demonstrate the power and authority of the very Creator, to that element of mankind He walked among; and He wants every one of us to have that same Spirit in us. Not in the same measure Jesus had, but certainly in the same measure those early apostles and Christians of their generation had. The five wise virgins of the parable we are looking at,

represent an element of 20th century Christendom, that do have the baptism of the Holy Ghost; and are determined that by the help of God, they are going to walk with Him in truth, all the way to the end. They have come to realize that there is no virtue in denominational church membership, nor in all those man made rituals and programs they once tried to keep up with. The virtue is in your attitude and obedience toward the revealed truth of God's word. Those who have set up against truth, and closed their mind to it, have had taken from them, every potential God ever set before them. Their system is dead; and they are dead with it. God is not going to revive any of those old systems; they have already served their purpose. But within those systems, there remained an element of individuals that eventually wake up, because of all the commotion in the world, and they begin to come around where the wise virgins are. But the wise virgins are already locked into a revelation that these others cannot understand. These in the foolish category, know that God has saved them from many things of their old sinful way of life. But when they come into contact with the message that awakens the whole thing, it's not a Baptist message, nor is it even a Pentecostal message, in the sense of what denominational Pentecost believed and taught. This awakening message incorporates every truth any of those founding fathers of those organizations ever stood for, and a lot

more, that none of them ever even heard of. It takes the baptism of the Holy Ghost for anyone to believe it right. But listen to me now. In the actual fulfillment of this parable, the words recorded here will never be spoken. In the natural, if someone wanted to get some of your lamp's fuel, and you knew you did not have any extra, you might say, God down here to such and such a place, where they sell the kerosene, or olive oil, and you can buy what you need. But in the spiritual realm, these words will never be spoken. What this actually means is those who are sitting under the teaching of this perfecting message, already have the Holy Ghost. Naturally we are talking about the wise virgins; and not including everything that may be hanging on to them. But the point is, This message that the wise virgins are feeding upon, is not a message of receiving the Holy Ghost, like they have out here in the charismatics. Therefore when the foolish element (those who have slept past the reasonable awakening time) start to come around and realize their need for the Holy Ghost; it just makes sense to send them to those places that deal in that kind of a message. That is not to say that no one ever receives the Holy Ghost in the gatherings where this message is preached; but that is not what the emphasis is upon. The Holy Ghost is one of those basic elements of your salvation experience that Paul dealt with in Hebrews 5 & 6, saying that from there, we are to go on unto

perfection. Therefore in reality, by the time a lot of these people get through playing around in the charismatic gatherings, and realize that they are not getting anywhere, in the way of attaining spiritual stature it will be too late for them to get into the revelation of this message.

SOME ARE ALREADY LOCKED OUT

I try to keep reminding you that this has to be considered in the light of a worldwide scope. You cannot give the full application of it to what you have observed in your home town. A condition, or phase of it, that prevailed in your town 20 years ago, might just now be reaching some other area of the world. Therefore to some, the door is shut already, and to some others, in another area of the world, it is still wide open; and Jesus has not appeared yet to any of them, except in His word. Now I realize that if you are not in this message, what I am saying is not going to make any sense to you: but those who are in it, will agree that this message and the charismatic message cannot be lumped together. The charismatics want the Holy Ghost, so they can speak in tongues, prophesy, and pray for the sick to receive divine healing. But the emphasis on the Holy Ghost in this message, is that no one,

absolutely no one will ever be able to understand the true revelation of God's word, without it. In other words, we are not in the business of selling the Holy Ghost. (I say it like that simply because of the wording of this parable; "Go rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves") but we realize that every wise virgin has it, or they would not be a wise virgin. Every last one of us had to take the necessary steps to receive the Holy Ghost; we were not born into this world with it. I can assure you, I spent my time in those places that deal in the Holy Ghost (so to speak) until I received what my soul was hungering for; but I have to thank God for the fact that I am not still hanging around those places, still sucking on a spiritual milk bottle. My appetite now requires the meat of God's word, something I can grow on. There had to be the Tommy Hicks', the Oral Roberts', the A.A. Allen's, and others, or this parable never could have been fulfilled. But those who have taken the place of those who have gone on, are still out here preaching for what they call, the greatest revival this world has ever seen; and they know nothing about trimming wicks. All they have is a Holy Ghost message. They do not want doctrine. They live strictly for the sensations of the supernatural. Now saints, what I am going to say now, can only be applied in the areas of the world, where the description fits. But for 20 some years there has been an element of people from just about all of your major denominations, out here

running from one meeting to another, going to buy oil. They could not follow us. The truth of the matter is, they wanted nothing at all to do with us, after Bro. Branham started preaching doctrines. As long as he just preached salvation messages, and prayed for the sick, they all loved him. "Bro. Branham: You have got to come to my church next." But when he began to include the doctrinal truths of the Bible in his messages, they started attacking him; instead of begging him to come for a meeting. What did they say about him? He had a great gift, but he went off the deep end with it. Praise God! If what he taught is considered going off the deep end, then let me go off of the deep end too, for it fed my hungry soul. What he taught made them mad; and made me glad. I'm not glad they are mad, I'm just glad I was privileged to hear what I heard. Because of what he pointed me to, I see a beautiful plan of God when I read the Bible. Yet they read the same words and do not see a thing. Why? The door is shut. You can come to a building any time you want to, but you cannot come into the revelation held in the hearts of those people that meet in that building, just any time you want to, while you are still running with that other crowd. It just simply does not work like that. It is an unstable soul that tries to hold a place with both groups. A lot of people whose true desire is to be out there where the big excitement is, still want to hang around with people who have a revelation, just so they can learn what

you believe. They have no real desire to sell out for it themselves; they just want to gain enough head knowledge of it, to be able to discuss it at will. That kind never walk close enough to the Lord for you to even suspect that they love Him. Those who are truly walking with Jesus are not always running ahead of Him, trying to see just how much they can find out. He will not always allow you to go full speed ahead. Sometimes He stops long enough to test our patience; therefore if we are truly walking with Him, when He stops, we will stop too. It is really a matter of keeping in step with Him. It is perfectly all right to desire to speak in tongues, shout, dance, roll on the floor, or anything else that the Spirit of God has ever caused anyone to do; but out of all that should come a genuine hunger for the perfect will of the Father to be manifested in our lives; and that includes doctrines and discipline. I would like to see everyone come to the knowledge of the truth of God's word; but because of this parable, and many other scriptures, I know that can never be. There has to be an element of what is referred to as Christianity, to fulfill each and every category mentioned in the Bible. There has to be an element to fulfill 2nd Thessalonians 2:7-12, where it speaks of God sending strong delusion upon those who have no love for truth, but rather have pleasure in unrighteousness. These particular ones believe the devil's lie and are damned, so even though they may be running right along with the foolish virgins,

they are not foolish virgins; for the foolish virgins will purge themselves through martyrdom, during the great tribulation. These who are damned, because they have no love for the truth, and God sends them strong delusion, have to be tares; regardless of how holy they may appear to be. They love to get hold of something that will make them feel good; but they have no respect, nor love for the revealed truth of God's word. They will sell it for a good time, every time. I hope you can see that everything out here in charismatics, is not necessarily foolish virgins buying oil; the tares run in that crowd too. Likewise, not everyone who sits where truth is taught, are of the bride Church element, for the tares are in there too. I just have to say something right here; and you can take it for what it is worth. I do not mean to belittle anyone. But when I hear someone talking about how much they love Jesus; and I turn around where I can see then, and they have their hair wacked off up to their ears, and their lips painted up like a clown, and sexy clothing like women of the world wear to display themselves, I cannot have much confidence in their testimony. Neither can I, if it is a man; and he has hair hanging down his back, and wearing an old shirt and trousers to church, that look like they belong out on the golf course, or in a garage working on greasy cars. Now please do not misunderstand my statement. I am not saying that a man has to wear a suit and a tie to church; but I do feel like a

person whose spirit is right, should be interested in presenting a little better image than what you see out of a lot of people who profess to love the Lord so much. God can save a person, anywhere, and under any condition, no matter what they are wearing; but Christianity has always portrayed a different image than that of the crowd that runs after the things of the world; and I do not believe it should be any different now. You can observe people, and before very long, know where their interests are. If they have their mind on worldly pleasure, and on identifying with the world, it does not take too long for a spiritual person to discover it. If it takes a plush hotel suite, and a water slide, and all sorts of other gimmicks, for you to feel like you are in a Holy Ghost environment where you can relax, you are also reading the book wrong. While you are basking in the sunlight of physical pleasure, without a care in the world, maybe you should spend some time meditating on why those Christians of the early years of this age had to spend their time in dark, damp dungeons, freezing to death, or dying of starvation; or why so many of them were killed in other ways, because of what they believed. Most of what is called Christianity in this hour, will never have to suffer any persecution because of what they believe. Because what they believe is not a reproach to the worldly crowd around them. They co-exist by doing most of the same things. I am not opposed to Christian

people enjoying themselves; but when they get to the place where it takes sports events, games and gimmicks, in order for them to enjoy themselves, there is something badly wrong. I would rather sit out here on a hillside and listen to a coon dog, than to be found in some of the places a lot of people consider to be a Holy Ghost environment. The devil has painted them a wrong picture of what Christianity is, and they are so overwhelmed with it, they cannot read the Bible, and see the difference. The delusion is out there. Some will give themselves completely over to it, and some others will shake loose from it, but only in time to end up in the tribulation, where only martyrdom can cleanse their salvation robes, that have been spotted by the things of the world.

DIFFERENT MEASURES OF THE SAME SPIRIT

Brothers and Sisters: Nothing we can ever say will ever make wise virgins out of those that are destined to be foolish virgins; but we can look at what is going on around us, and lay it alongside the scriptures, and know where to take our stand in the midst of it all. Many of these who look and see you going in that door of revelation, will warn you about getting mixed up in anything so crazy. But there is

something in you, that bears witness of the truth of it, and you go in anyhow. Brother, once Jesus Christ starts communicating with you in a revelation, you never have to change your mind again. When you try to live by man-made doctrines, you are always having to change your mind. But a genuine revelation of some scriptural truth, becomes a part of you, and it is impossible to throw it out for something else. Then when those foolish virgins are standing outside, trying to get in, and cannot, the little bride that was ready, will already be locked inside; and will be in the process of knowing what those seven thunders are saying. Something will happen in the world, to bring these parables into total fulfillment, before the Bridegroom Himself ever shows up to take His bride to glory. We have not read the scriptures we have been referring to, because most of you are well familiar with the wording in the Bible. But maybe it would be good for you to go ahead and read the first 13 verses of Matthew, chapter 25, just to get it fresh in your mind. But remember this, Even in verse 12, where it would sound like the Lord Himself is speaking from within a building somewhere, saying to the foolish. "I know you not," it is still the Holy Ghost speaking. Jesus Himself will not be visibly on the scene until you get to the 31st verse, where He literally comes to earth, to sit on the throne of David, ruling all nations with a rod of iron, for one thousand years.

In the parable He is not in a building; He is in His people in Spirit form, and they are in Him in a revelation, and it is the Holy Ghost, saying to the foolish, "I know you not," meaning, I have not had the same intimate relationship with you, that I have had with these, meaning, those that were ready to be locked into a revelation with Him. But as I have already stated None of us are going to see Jesus literally; before we rise to meet Him in the air; and not one foolish, nor one evil servant, will rise from the ground. We are going to look at this other parable here, and then try to bring this message to a close, for I believe we have had a pretty good look at the events between sunrise and sunset, in this dispensational day we are living in. When time progresses to the point where verse 31 is moving into fulfillment, we will not be looking at a parable, we will be looking at the visible King of kings, and Lord of lords, and all who have been made ready back here, under the conditions of these parables, will be standing right there with Him, ready to rule and reign with Him, for one thousand years. Therefore realizing how close we are getting, to the conditions of verses 31-46, and realizing that these parables must have their fulfillment before that time, we surely must realize also that, THEN, in the parables, pointed to the very hour we are living in. That is why I say, THEN, is NOW. For over twenty years now, the wise Christians have been going into a revelation of the

word of God, that is working in them, to bring them to perfection; and at the same time, there has been another element of people whose lives have been touched by the Holy Ghost, and all they have cared about was the manifestation of that portion of that Spirit they received. I want you to pay attention to how I am saying this; lest you misrepresent it, when you endeavor to repeat it to someone else. That element of virgins referred to as foolish, definitely DO have a measure of the Spirit of Christ. They would not even be called virgins, if they did not. Therefore we have to get real technical about our terminology here. It is obvious that even though they have received something, they are yet without the revelatory part of the Holy Ghost, that the wise virgins have. Are we, knowing this, going to say that they do, or do not, have the Holy Ghost? You have to let the scriptures themselves settle that question for you. When you go to 1st Corinthians 12:13, you find the apostle Paul saying this, "For by one Spirit (the Holy Ghost) are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been ALL made to drink into one Spirit." There, is the baptism of the Holy Ghost; and all of those that Paul referred to as the Church, or the body of Christ, had it, and Jesus said in John 14:26, that this Spirit would be a teaching Spirit, and would teach those that received it, all things. He said also in John 16:13, that this Spirit would guide those who

received it, into ALL TRUTH. Then we go to 1st Thessalonians 4:13-17, and we find that those whom Paul knew to be the Church, (the body of Christ) will be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air. He also deals with it in his first epistle to the Corinthians in chapter 15. This phase of the resurrection, along with the translation of all the body of Christ that is still living at that time, moves all of what the Bible calls, "The Church," to glory; to the marriage feast, that this parable of Matthew 25 points to. Therefore I ask you as sincerely as I know how: If those foolish virgins actually have the baptism of the Holy Ghost, that they claim they have, Why are they foolish? Why are they not led into all truth? Jesus did not say, Maybe He will teach you. He said, He would. Can you answer me? Why are they shut out, when the wise have gone in, if they have the baptism of the Holy Ghost, that the Bible says puts us in the body of Christ? When you see them over in the 7th chapter of the book of Revelation, giving glory to God, and learn that they have suffered martyrdom at the hands of the Antichrist, during the great tribulation, because of their witness for Jesus Christ, you know that they had to have something in them that made them willing to die, rather than to deny the Lord Jesus. But at the same time, our revelation of the word of God lets us know that if they were baptized into the body of Christ, as they all claim to be: they would be with the bridegroom

at the marriage supper, during those dark hours of the great tribulation, rather than here on earth, sealing their testimony with their own blood, during that time. You can look in chapter 20, verse 4, and it pinpoints it exactly, for there has never been another time in the history of the Church that could fit into that picture described there. You could see the beast at other times, when believers in Jesus were martyred, but not the image of the beast, nor that mark on their foreheads, and in the hands, of those that sold out to the beast. As I have said, I would like to see every one of them make it in. But at the same time, I realize that those whom the Lord has seen as foolish, will remain foolish. They will not suddenly become wise virgins. But Bro. Jackson: What about all these sitting here that have come out of the charismatic move? You just have to realize that God saw them as wise virgins all the time, even when they were still out there. This is the very reason they are in the truth now, instead of still being out there in that. But the point is, There is only one source of eternal life, and that is the Spirit of God and He is the one that knows our every thought and motive, and the only one that knows where each, of us stand, spiritually. I recognize some of the signs that follow each element; but I will never be found out here trying to separate the wise Christians from the foolish ones. It is the word of God that does that. When the midnight cry is heard, it is up to

every individual soul that is awakened by it, to decide which way they will go. But for the sake of understanding this parable, we have to realize that for over 20 years, the wise have been going one way, and the foolish another, and in both camps there is an element of tares; people who are just plain make believers. These are not called wise, nor foolish in this parable. Another thing we need to realize is that this parable is only applicable to one generation of Christianity; the generation that is still living when the rapture takes place. That is the reason Jesus said, THEN shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom. This is the generation of Christendom that God has determined to restore the apostolic revelation of the gospel of Jesus Christ to; and only the wise Christians of this generation are receiving it. As the Spirit of Christ begins to speak to the individuals professing to be Christians, the wise begin to be molded into the image He projected, when He walked upon earth in human form. But the foolish ones are too excited over the manifestation of that Spirit, to get very serious about taking on Christ-likeness in every area of their lives. They are so excited over the sensations, they have no time for revelation; therefore they are foolish.

WISE VIRGINS HEAR SEVEN THUNDERS

A lot of people worry about those foolish virgins. But listen to me saints: You do not need to worry about them. The fact that it is said to them, "I know you not," does not mean that they are rejected; and damned to hell. It is simply a case where the bridegroom says to some, (I will just use my own words.) We have never had the kind of love relationship that would qualify you to be in here as my bride. You see, it is the Spirit of the Father that does the choosing for the Son, who is the groom; and the Son will accept without question, what the Father has given Him. He asks for no more, nor no less. But as this condition for the wise nears its completion, something will take place in the world, that will shake the foolish, and cause them to realize that they have been going the wrong way; but it will be too late for them to turn around, and catch up with the wise which are already locked into a revelation with the Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, by the time that last wise one is in the revelation that perfects them, it will be time for those thunders to start sounding. Not to perfect anyone, but to inform the wise ones of their next move. Through those seven thunders of Revelation 10:3-4, the wise will receive prophetic utterances concerning the coming of the Lord; and how to answer the call, "Come up

hither." I do not know what will suddenly take place in the world that will cause the foolish to return, wanting what the wise have. That is some of the unwritten part. But I am fully persuaded that we are getting very close to it. For God will not allow this generation to be affected by this message the way it has, and then let it pass off the scene without fulfilling the last part of what is written about it. Therefore it behooves us to check up on ourselves and see if we are walking fully, in that love relationship that the bridegroom requires us to walk in. He has not laid our laws for us to follow. He has just simply been courting us through His word; revealing to us what He requires in a wife, and our response to that is likened unto a love relationship that will eventually lead to marriage. Remember though, when you are looking at a parable, not to try to make every little detail match perfectly. Parables deal with similarities only.

PARABLE OF TALENTS

In the next parable here in Matthew 25, Jesus does not start out saying, THEN shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto such and such. Do you know why? It is because this condition has existed in every age since the Church had its beginning. It begins in verse 14,

so let us look at it, and see if we can get a true understanding of its application. “For the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.” This speaks of a very rich man, going away, and leaving his investments in the hands of his servants, therefore when we give it a spiritual application, we know the man going away and leaving all his goods in the hands of his servants, could be none other than the Lord Jesus Christ, who possessed all the fullness of the Father; and the goods He left in the hands of His servants, was His attributable abilities. Notice now. “And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several (or individual) ability; and straightway took his journey. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, (he made investments), and made them other five talents.” It didn’t all happen at once; but over a process of time, his wise investments paid dividends, and doubled the initial investment. “And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his Lord’s money.” He was afraid to take a chance on investing it. You know how the Stock Market is, it is an uncertain thing; but if you are into it, you are required to take a chance. But the chance you take depends upon the wisdom you have gained in life. Nevertheless these

servants were expected to put their Lord’s money out for usury; that when he returned, he might have the increase. That is an easy picture to understand in the natural; but what about the spiritual application? What are the goods that the servants of Jesus Christ have had entrusted to them, and what are they expected to do with them? The goods He left with His servants, is none other than that which the Father had bestowed upon Him. There is an anointing which deals with the supernatural side; and there are anointings that deal with revelatory things, and instructive, and within each anointing, is the wisdom to know when to speak and also when to keep quiet. That is exactly how Jesus conducted Himself, when He walked among men, He did not jump into every situation that He had opportunity to jump into. That is why in the 3rd chapter of Acts, you see Peter and John speaking healing to a lame man, that Jesus Himself had surely passed right by, many times. It was simply a case of doing only what the Father directed them to do, and nothing more. Nevertheless when this parable went into effect, Jesus was not here in person to distribute His goods among His servants. His last instructions to them was, God back into the city of Jerusalem and wait until ye are endued with power from on high. Distribution of His goods started in the upper room where they had been waiting together in one accord, and within that distribution were not only gifts of the

Spirit, but also callings; and within those callings, there were areas of revelation, whereby each one knew what to preach, how to preach it, and also where and when to preach it. That is how the perfect plan of the Father went forth. Every man in his particular calling, was led by the Father, just like Jesus was. When those disciples came down into the streets of Jerusalem, from that upper room, speaking in tongues, they were not just having a good time with what they had just received, like the Charismatics of our day; they were coming among the people to make investments with the goods that their Lord had left with them. Of course we understand that the distribution was a work of Christ, by the Holy Ghost, just like the apostle Paul described in 1st Corinthians, chapter 12. You not only see nine gifts of the Spirit laid out there; but also callings wherein the gifts will operate. Verse 28 says this, “And God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.” This lets us see that not everyone does everything. Their particular ministries are allotted by the Holy Spirit, according to the perfect plan of the Creator, from before the foundation of the world. Verses 29 & 30 give us more insight on this fact, for Paul says this, “Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracle? Have all the gifts of healing? Do all speak with

tongues? Do all interpret?” The obvious answer is, No. Each servant is expected to be faithful only in the calling God has laid upon him. He should not try to do everything he sees anyone else doing, nor should he ever hold back from doing what the Holy Ghost has laid upon him to do. That is how we make proper investments of our Lord’s goods.

SOME ARE AFRAID TO INVEST

Every doctrine the New Testament Church has today, is written in the Bible, because those servants of that first age were faithful to invest their Lord’s goods. Suppose those servants had failed to invest, where would Christianity ever have gotten to? Let me ask you another question. Suppose every one of them had just gone out and done whatever they felt like doing each day? Do you think we would be able to look back today and say, All those first disciples of Jesus taught the same thing? Meaning, of course, that they all had the same revelation. They did not have the same kind of squabbling among themselves that you see out here in the world today. Not one of them ever looked at another and said, That is just your idea; and I feel that my idea is as good as yours. A man like that could never be looked upon as

a faithful servant, properly investing his Lord's goods. I received a letter a few days ago, from a man that came here a few years ago. He had been everywhere, just going in circles. God dealt with him when he was in Norway. He went to see Bro. Strommen, and Bro. Strommen talked with him and gave him some Contenders to read. Then after he returned to the United States, he wrote me a letter, apologizing for his attitude. He said he had let other people influence him, who had warned him against having anything to do with us here. Yet when he came here, he even preached one night, and then came back again, in the following Convention. I am sure now that he was given an opportunity to get himself straightened out. But when he left here, he got scared and failed to invest. People have a hard time laying down their old junky ideas; and picking up a new revelation that is really basic, and essential to their victory in Jesus Christ. Some people think of it, almost like gambling. They are afraid to step out into unknown territory. Sometimes when you start talking to someone about the Godhead, they seem to be scared half to death. A lot of people know in their heart that it cannot be trinity; but when you try to show them the truth, it is like pulling them off of something they have been standing on for so long, they are scared to move. Now my point in saying this is, Those first age disciples did not have anything to read, except the Old

Testament, which contained only types and shadows of what they were then walking in; so how did it happen that they all ended up believing the same things? Does that mean they all had the same ability? No. Some of them had to place confidence in the teaching of those who had the greater ability. Yet today, when we are supposed to be restored back to that, you still find ever so many who will say, Bless God, I also have the Holy Ghost; so I will only accept what the Lord shows me. Well we are supposed to accept only what the Lord shows us, but at the same time, realize, that He may show us only through the teaching of someone else. There is one thing I am absolutely sure of saints, Two true servants of God cannot possibly have revelations of the Spirit, that are contrary to each other. I refuse to accept that. Anyhow, in that letter, the man said, Bro. Jackson: I am sorry to be so late, I should have written this long ago. Because I have been getting the Contender regularly and have not sent anything to help with the expenses of printing and mailing it. Therefore I am requesting that you remove my name from your mailing list. He went on to say, I have learned many things as I have studied the messages through the years; but there is one thing that worries me, you talk like a man who believes that what you are saying is right; and that anything different is wrong. Brothers and Sisters: Others have expressed themselves like that also, through the years, but I say this,

Would I not be a fool to teach something, if I did not believe with all my heart that it was right? Others may preach, maybe it could be so, messages; but I myself, will not touch a subject until I know in my heart that I am on the right track. When you are called of God to stand for something, you just have to preach what He reveals to you, and let all the skeptics think whatever they choose to. But that is why I say, It is hard for some people to follow truth, because they worry too much about what someone else may say about them. These are the kind that take whatever little something the Lord does give to them, and hide it in the ground, so to speak, instead of investing it. They will look at a truth and say, Yes, I believe that is right, or, That sounds right; but I am just not quite sure about it. They keep listening to a voice in the background that is saying, Be careful now, lest you get off on false doctrine. You know where that voice comes from; it is always present. But the true servant of God will recognize it for what it is, and go ahead and invest whatever his Lord gives him.

Since Jesus used the terminology He did, I believe it is all right if I refer to Wall Street; which is a term used when referring to the New York Stock Exchange, located on Wall Street in New York City. When you invest on Wall Street, it is not how much you

invest that is important. The important thing is that the potential investor be sensitive to the trends of the market. He must take what he knows already; and weigh it against the rising and falling cycle of the present market, and make his decision accordingly, believing that he has made the right choices. A fearful investor is a miserable creature. Well when you transpose these thoughts into a spiritual setting, you just have to realize that the servants of Jesus Christ had to depend upon what they knew already about the principles of God, in order to trust what they had inside of them after the Spirit was given there in that upper room. When Jesus had said to them earlier, I have yet many things to say unto you; but you are yet not able to bear them: He knew they would not be able to understand deep spiritual truths, until after they received the baptism of the Holy Ghost; therefore none of those many things were ever spoken to them in person; they were all revealed to them by the Spirit of God that indwelt them later. All of the New Testament epistles were written by revelation, as the Spirit of God in those men revealed the plan of God to them. Furthermore what He revealed to them by His Spirit were things vital to the entire body of Christ; not only in the first age, but in every age. Now I ask you, Is God any less able to reveal things that are vital to this end time element of that body, as time closes out? Absolutely not. First of all, He is giving understanding of that which is

His written word, in order that the little bride may attain perfection, and be robed in a pure revelation of His word. But beyond that, when it comes time for Revelation 10:3-4 to be fulfilled: He is going to reveal some things through those seven thunders, that are not written anywhere in His written word. Professing Christians in general are so afraid someone will say something that will get them out into deep water, they are absolutely afraid to listen to anyone except their denominational theologians. But I say this, That is where they are all missing it; for God intended to keep the true Church in deep water. That is what it is all about. A born again soul simply cannot live on carnal reasoning; and God will never let a true revelation be put into a Bible school. The Bible was written by men who knew what God had invested in them; and they were not afraid to invest it all in the future; knowing that this was exactly what they were supposed to do. Remember the prayer of Jesus in John 17? He was praying for His present disciples, and then He said, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." He knew those men were going to invest what HE left with them, and that one day others would stand where they had stood, facing the same conflicts and pressure that they would face. If they had allowed themselves to look back to Judaism, they surely would have felt that they were getting pretty far out into deep water. Their relatives hated

them, the whole neighborhood was against them, and all they had ever trusted in, was suddenly of no benefit to them. It always costs something to walk with God in a revelation; but once that revelation gets a hold of you, there is no turning back. When you try to talk to someone in your old system about it, what do they say? You had better be careful; a lot of people have destroyed themselves like that. Yes, fools do, tares do, but not the Church of the living God. She is on her way to glory; and she is burning all the bridges behind her. Hallelujah! I'm glad to be among that number.

TAKING ONE STEP AT A TIME

Now as we turn our attention back to the wording of the parable we are looking at, the point is, You do not look at these goods, as just the nine gifts of the Spirit. You must also see helps, governments, and various callings as well. It was all put in the Church; to enable the Church to reflect Jesus Christ. But all of this was given by the Spirit. None of it has ever been attained by attending a Bible School. On the other hand though, anyone who has ever been baptized by the Holy Ghost has every potential in him, to be anything anyone else has ever been in the Church. That does not mean we

have the privilege of choosing what we will be; God Himself does that. But every one of these gifts and callings are of the same Spirit, just like Paul said in 1st Corinthians, chapter 12. They are allotted according to our several (individual) abilities, by the Spirit of God. But then, we are responsible for investing them in a wise way. Peter, Paul, John, and those other apostles that walked with Jesus, were like the 5 talent servant in the parable; they had the greater abilities. Were they afraid? No. Did they know everything before they started out? No. If they had, they would have written the New Testament before they ever went anywhere. But they started preaching what the Spirit gave them to preach; and most of the New Testament epistles were written for the purpose of dealing with specific questions, or problems, that arose later. Peter preached the first sermon by revelation, immediately after receiving the Holy Ghost; going right into the Old Testament to lay a foundation for what he was going to say. That is when he started investing. He started by investing a revelation. Then later, the supernatural, the miracles, and so forth; and all along the way, the revelation kept on growing. Paul had to be dealt with in a different way; but once he was conditioned by the Holy Ghost, he started a chain of investments that stretched all the way across Asia Minor, and over into the regions of Greece. His investments never did decrease; they got larger and

larger all the time. Why? Because he was not afraid to move out and walk in the Spirit in areas unknown to the old school of thought. There was no way a man like Paul could have hid what the Lord gave him to work with. There has to be those that fulfill the one talent part of this parable.

THE TIME OF RECKONING

All of those original servants that were dealt with in the first age, are dead; and the Lord is not going to resurrect anyone to fulfill the end part of the parable we are looking at. Therefore in order to understand the end part, where after a long time, the Lord of those servants comes to reckon with them, you have to look out here in the world today, and see how it is being applied. I will have to say this though; even though they are all dead also, In the closing days of that first age, someone was guilty of not properly investing the Lord's goods; for the Church soon began to lose something. Then by the time 300 years have passed, a lot, or we could say, Most of the original goods (talents) given to the Church to work with, had either been hidden, or lost. Therefore as we come back here to the end, where there is going to come a time of reckoning, we need to realize something else, lest we get a wrong picture. The Lord was not

present in human form, when His goods were distributed to those first age servants; and neither is He going to be physically present here in the end time, when the end time servants have to give an account of their investments, and be reckoned with. He will come in a revelation for that. Can you see it? That is why denominationalism will have no part in any of this; it was only given out by revelation, and the reckoning will be by a revelation, and all they have to look at, is a distorted picture of the whole thing. Let us read the rest of the parable now. Verse 19, "After a long time the Lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them." There is too much here to read it all; but most of you are familiar with it anyhow. The one that received 5 talents, invested and gained 5 more, and was granted to enter into the joy of his Lord. The one that received two, was treated the same way, because he also had returned double what he had received. But from him that was fearful, and afraid to invest, was taken the one talent, and given to him that already had ten. Verses 29 & 30 end the parable. "For unto everyone that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; (great tribulation) there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Remember now, the one talent servant did nothing at all to gain any increase. That is why it is said, "From him that hath not." The

point is, Jesus said the kingdom of heaven is like this; so we have to see somehow the Lord Jesus, the Lord of His servants reckoning with the end time element of servants, and rejecting the ones that have failed to invest what he gave them to be gin with. What is He expecting as a return on what He gave those first age servants? Not a great stock market; but an increase of believers in the body of Christ; so there has to be some here at the end time, that received something; and then became fearful and unprofitable. Let me see if we can visualize any of them. Not individuals by name, but types, that fit the parable. People who never gained one thing beyond what the Lord committed to them initially.

HOW SOME INVESTED

I will never forget how it was when the message of the hour first began to strike the earth. The messenger said, You Baptists need the Holy Ghost, you Methodists, Presbyterians, Catholics and such like, need the Holy Ghost. Then he would say, Tongues are for the Church, that is a part of it. He said the same thing about prophecy; but he was not majoring on gifts of the Spirit. He was only including them in the overall picture of what the Church of the living God is. What he did major on was, Let's get back to the word of

God; back to the apostolic revelation of it! Bro. Branham would pound the pulpit stand, as he would say that. Then when he preached on the Church ages, a lot of those people took that book and ran around quoting statements out of it, not having the slightest idea of what the whole picture pointed to. Concerning the messengers to the other six ages, he would say, I pick this man as having been the star messenger to that age, because of how the Holy Spirit confirmed his life and ministry and so forth; basing his choice strictly on the man's revelation, and the way the Spirit worked with him. Well as he stepped forth out of the ranks of formality, and tradition, he began to take this precious treasure of God, and invest it in human souls, like no man this side of the Dark Ages ever had. In doing so, he walked in an area where he had never walked before, but the point is, he was not afraid to invest. I also have read how Martin Luther started out. His life had been completely bound up by traditions of Romanism, when the Spirit of God began to stir him and use him. As the Spirit began to give him revelation of the word of God, he recognized it as a valuable asset, a treasure to his inner being. The more he looked at it, the more excited he became. Then he began to get a vision of the value of it, in the light of what it could do for other human souls, and that is when he first began to invest. Before it was over, he had created a revolution in Germany, that did not stop until it had shaken the

corridors of the Vatican. Then it found its way into Austria and before long, all of Europe was talking about this man. Just suppose he had been like some others that have been stirred by the Spirit of God, and been too afraid of persecution and pressures of life, to make an investment. How do you suppose the history of the Reformation would have been written, if that had happened? It was a case where the more he invested, the more excited he became, because of the increased revelation he received; and the more he received, the more he invested. He gained many souls for the kingdom of God by his faithful investments; but let us bring that picture over to our day, without going into the various phases of the Reformation, where God used various men in restoring truth from the word of God, back to the Church.

THOSE THAT ARE STRIPPED

The message of this hour woke up a lot of people, and the purpose of them being awakened, was that God wanted to deal with them concerning His word. He began to give them an understanding of things in His word that the church world could only argue and fuss about. In every message, Bro. Branham would refer to how those first age Christians were led by the Spirit, and about how the gifts of the Spirit were manifested through them, and

about the supernatural element, as well as the revelation they had. He spoke of how those men had to be invested with something that could counteract the fanaticism, and the rituals and creed of traditional religion, and how they were not afraid to speak what the Lord gave them to speak, even if they suspected that it could cost them their lives. The way he presented these things, caused a lot of excitement among those who heard him preach. I will never forget how so many young people got so excited as he preached on the Church Ages, and how they would say, I just pray that god will give me some kind of gift, so I can be a blessing also. That was in December 1960. Brother, an excited element of people returned to their homes, people from ever so many cities around about, and began to fast and pray for the leadership of the Lord, and for an investment of the gifts of the Spirit. But when the spring of 1963 came, and he preached the Seals messages, certain things were said, and then Church Order was established, and those same people took an absolute about face. They no longer prayed for the gifts of the Spirit, because somehow they got the idea that they could now receive everything they needed, through the things they had heard, and would hear. In other words, through a mental understanding of what Bro. Branham taught. Saints: Need I remind any of you that it is completely impossible to follow God all the way, when all you have is a carnal understanding of the revelation

given by the Spirit of God. They somehow heard things, that were not in the message of the prophet; and it made them forget about all the times he had stood and cried out, You need the Holy Ghost! Tongues belong in the Church! The gifts of the Spirit are for the Church, and so forth. Somehow they heard him say things, he did not say at all; and a lot of preachers laid down everything they had before that. What little bit of revelation they did understand at first, when God first led them to hear the little man preach: Jesus took it all away from them. All they have left is, God sent a prophet. They are back to the letter of the thing, without any revelation as to what the letter is pointing to. There is no possible way they could invest anything for Jesus; for all they have left is counterfeit; and therefore they are on their way to the great tribulation, which is referred to as outer darkness. No wonder they do not like us; they do not have the Holy Ghost; and without the Holy Ghost, what does that make them? Religious people without the Holy Ghost, are tares. It is sad, for I know where some of those people came from. They came out of United Pentecost, where they had formerly believed in speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of the presence of the Holy Ghost, and embraced all the other gifts of the Spirit as well, and now the believe in none of that. Therefore when the Lord Jesus comes, in a revelation of His word, to reckon with all His servants,

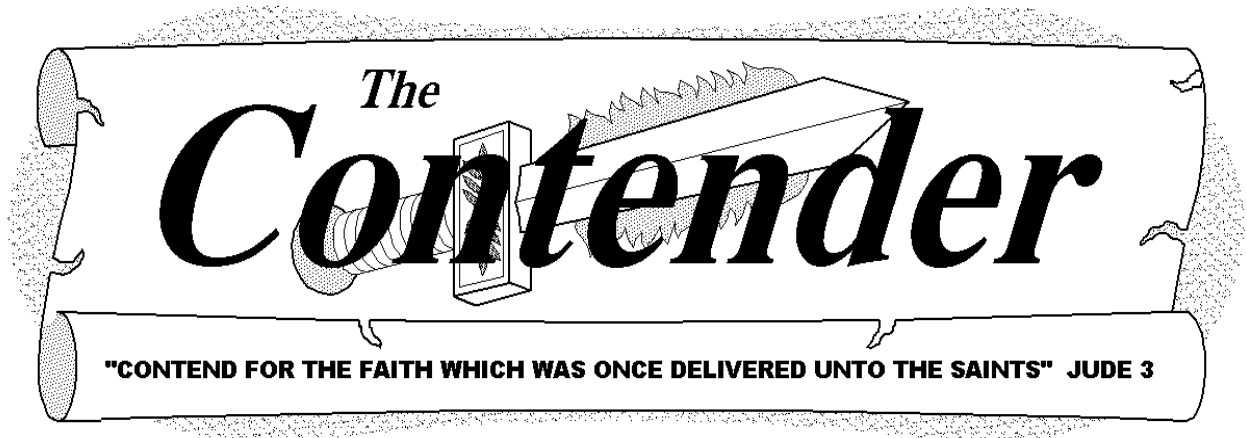
these that have laid everything down, regardless of their reason, will be stripped completely, and pointed to their destiny. Yet the Lord Himself will still not be here in person, no more than He was, when those first servants received His goods.

FAITHFUL SERVANTS - WICKED AND SLOTHFUL SERVANTS

When the Lord says to the faithful servants, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord:" the first thing they will enter into is the fullness of the body of Christ, that is applicable for their generation. What I want you to see, is that when Jesus appears in person, all of His faithful servants of all ages will be with Him. There will be no more judgment of any kind, of his faithful servants; that will be all over with. Only the judgment of the nations will be left, when Jesus returns in His physical body. That is what verses 31 through 46 are speaking of. Let me say a few more words about the talents; and we will close. Those who fail to invest what the Lord gives them to work with, are referred to as wicked and slothful. That is the Lord's

judgment of them, and it cannot be altered. Which leads me to say this, For quite a few years now, the Lord has been dealing with many people in the ranks of organized religions, giving them an opportunity to see something. Of course He already knew what each one of them would do, but in order to judge them, they had to be given their chance. Just look at the 6th chapter of John, where Jesus fed a great multitude with five little loaves of bread, and two little fish. Now while they were sitting their eating, enjoying this great feast, they all began to get a revelation of who He was. This is that prophet Moses spoke of. Let's take Him and make Him king right now. But do you remember what happened? The next day it was all taken away from them. It just simply lets us know for sure that when someone receives something, and knows it is from the Lord, and then lets fear take it away from them, the day is coming that they will have to answer for that. You may not have much to start out with; but every time you invest what you have, it comes back with increase, and you then have more to invest the next time, and it just keeps on building; and the Lord will say to you, "Because you have been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." But to those that fall into the one talent category, He will say, Take

therefore the talent from him and give it unto him which hath ten talents, and so on: and then, "Cast ye the UNPROFITABLE SERVANT into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." When the rapture takes place, all the faithful servants of all ages and generations will go up together to meet the Lord in the air; and all those still living at that time, who have been judged unfaithful servants, will be thrust into the great tribulation. When the tribulation has run its course, Jesus and all those faithful servants will return to earth to rule and reign for a thousand years. We have looked at events all the way from sunrise to sunset, in this day of salvation; so we will stop here, without saying any more about the Millennium; except to say this, Those who have walked with Jesus in this day of salvation, will be walking with Him over there. Hallelujah! I'm so glad to be one of them. May the Lord bless you. Amen.



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