Called and Anointed - Part 3

Extra Oil

(Matthew 25:1-13)

As we continue with part three of our series “Called and Anointed” the assignment the Spirit of God has given us today will be familiar to some of you and yet God brings us here once again to explore its hidden treasures. This passage of Scripture is normally applied in the context of the end times giving us a better understanding of the return of Jesus for his church, but today we’re going to go even deeper.

If you remember, last week we talked about the call and anointing of David as the horn of oil was poured out on his head. And it was a messy business, it was slippery, it was oily, dripping down his face, onto his clothing, and puddling around his feet. And so, today we want to continue, we want to get into the flow, because God is up to something greater.

If you would turn with me in your Bibles or own your phones, or whatever you read the Word of God on, and let’s go to the gospel of Matthew, chapter twenty-five? We’re going to look at verses one through thirteen and I want you to participate because we are the church, we are the called-out ones, and so we want to be ready. We want to be positioned when the oil is poured out, because we want to get in the flow of the Spirit.

A.W. Tozer, once said, "The key to victorious living is not found in our strength, but in our submission to the Holy Spirit." And so, just imagine for a moment, the privilege to partner with the omniscient God, the ruler of the universe, the great I am of Israel. The one who is the…

“Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6).

The holy one before whom everything is uncovered and laid bare and yet that is the privilege, the opportunity, the potential presented to us. That God would pour out himself, clothing himself, and the dwelling within us.

And so, as we come to our text, we can’t overlook the supernatural implications, ignoring the relevance, because the Holy Spirit tells us,

“The one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world” (1 John 4:4).

In Matthew chapter 25, Jesus is talking about those who are Called and Anointed, but there’s a conflict presented in the text. The problem is that those who have been Called and Anointed are not ready, they’re not prepared for the times that they’re in. And so, this morning, we’re stepping into the classroom, coming under the tutelage of our master teacher. Jesus is our rabbi, he’s an amazing teacher, and he has the profound ability to explain heavenly things in ways that earthly people understand.

It was for that reason that Jesus spoke in parables, short stories to teach us and explain things that we can’t understand. And so, he uses metaphors, images and allegories, to give us a deeper understanding of heavenly things, spiritual things, things that are unseen, because as the Scripture says,

"As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isaiah 55:9).

And so, he’s using familiar things, visible things, to describe the unseen so that we might have a deeper understanding of the truth that is being presented.

Over and over and over Jesus said, “the kingdom of heaven is like.” And he said, “It’s like a landowner, it’s like a king who wanted to settle accounts, it’s like a merchant looking for fine pearls, it’s like treasure hidden in a field, and in our text today he begins talking about marriage. He says in verse one,

"At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise.” Matthew 25:1-2).

“The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. The wise, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep” (Matthew 25:3-5).

"At midnight the cry rang out: 'Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him” (Matthew 25:6).

Jesus is determined to help us understand that which is unexplainable. This passage is about an unexpected moment when they all fell asleep. And Jesus is teaching us to prepare for a moment like that, a time that hasn’t come yet, because he knows that some are not going to be prepared. And so, not only is he teaching us about the sudden and unexpected moment of his return, but he is teaching us to make the most of our time. To be ready, to be prepared, and he says,

"At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like…” (Matthew 25:1).

And he begins to tell this story to teach us that we can’t wait until it starts to rain to build the ark. In other words, you can’t wait until game day to begin practicing, you can’t wait until you’re on an interview to prepare your resume, all of that work has to be done in advance.

That’s why Jesus said,

"Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it?” (Luke 14:28).

Because you’ve got to be ready, you can’t go to the bank for a business loan without a business plan. Everything has to be done in order and in advance which is why God encourages us to live by faith and not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7). In other words, God is expecting you to be ready right now because he is expecting you to be ready for what is next.

And so, he is teaching us in this parable that when he unexpectedly calls you off the bench, when he calls you into the game, you have to be prepared. You have to be ready because the moment of his coming will surely come at a time when you least expect it. But the truth is that those unexpected moments and a Jewish wedding don’t really help us understand the parable today. When Jesus says,

"At midnight the cry rang out: 'Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him” (Matthew 25:6).

I feel like a deer caught in the headlights, because in our Western culture, our concept of marriage, our point of reference is not the same. In other words, our marriages are not like that, we may have some bridesmaids, but we certainly don’t have ten virgins waiting with lamps at midnight.

And so, let’s back up for a moment, because we need to understand what Jesus is talking about as the basis for communicating what he is trying to teach in this parable. In other words, we need to understand that a Hebrew wedding in Jesus’ time often extended over several days, with a number of steps, and it had multiple parts.

In fact, it wasn’t unusual that a Hebrew marriage began many years before the wedding with a betrothal or engagement. This was a contract or covenant that was often made by the parents while the bride and groom were still children. That was likely the case for Mary, the mother of Jesus, because the Bible tells us,

“Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child” (Matthew 1:18).

In other words, that wasn’t supposed to happen, they were in covenant, but they weren’t married yet.

And so, what Jesus is describing to us here is a later time in the engagement. The groom has an established trade, a house has been built, and everything has been prepared. I’m reminded of the words of Jesus when he said,

“I am going to prepare a place for you… I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am” (John 14:2-3).

And so, now the time has come, they’re already in covenant, but there are two more parts to the celebration. First is the consummation of the marriage at the bride’s home where she’s waiting with her maidens for the arrival of the groom. And then, following the consummation, the wedding party moves to the house of the groom in a festive procession for the wedding feast.

Now, in our text, the bride is waiting for the bridegroom to come, she knows he’s coming but she doesn’t know exactly when he’s coming. In the same way, her bridesmaids didn’t know, because they didn’t have phones, they couldn’t FaceTime, and so they had to be ready at a moment’s notice. But watch what Jesus says,

“The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep” (Matthew 25:5).

Now, I know we’re living in a time where everybody wants everything instantly, we want a play-by-play run down, and if you stay too long at Walmart people begin to panic, wondering where you’ve been. But we’ve got to learn to wait patiently, we’ve got to stay ready, because Jesus tells us you don’t know the day or the hour (Matthew 25:13).

In other words, in the context of this parable, you have to be prepared, you have to be patient, you have to be disciplined, you have to be smelling good, so that when he comes, he might present you to himself holy and without blemish (Ephesians 5:27). And so, I had to give you all of that in introduction so that we can truly appreciate what Jesus is trying to teach us here. Now that we have a better understanding of Hebrew culture, we can understand why they are waiting at midnight.

And so, are you ready? …Jesus said,

"At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom…” (Matthew 25:1-2).

And so, the story goes that there were ten virgins in the same place, at the same time, waiting for the same event, each having the same opportunity, each given the same experience, and they all had the same lamps. The only difference was that “five of them were foolish and five were wise.”

“The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. The wise, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps” (Matthew 25:3-4).

In other words, all of them had the same potential, all of them had the same opportunity, but only five of them were prepared to wait. The other five were unprepared because they underestimated how long it would be. They were there, they were dressed up, they had their lamp, they were walking the walk and talking the talk, but they didn’t have any extra oil. And so, at midnight when the cry rang out,

"Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him” (Matthew 25:6).

All ten of them were given the same experience, each of them had the same potential, but only five of them were able to take advantage of the opportunity.

In the same way, each of us got up this morning, we breathed the same air, we got dressed and came to the same place, but some of us are ready and others of us are not. Some of us are hungering and thirsting for righteousness and others of us are not. Jesus tells us,

"Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out” (Matthew 25:7-8).

There’s nothing worse than waking up and realizing that you’re unprepared because you thought it would be easier than it is or sooner than it is. There’s nothing worse than the regret of getting serious too late in life, in ministry, in marriage, or in business. And it doesn’t matter where you apply this truth, it is a one-size-fits-all truth. The Bible says,

“A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man” (Proverbs 6:10-11).

Jesus is talking about a sleepy, lethargic, indifferent, lukewarm church. They’re all in the same place, both the wise and the foolish, the prepared and the unprepared, and they all fell asleep. And so, Jesus said, because you are neither cold nor hot, and you’re lukewarm, I am about to spit you out of my mouth (Revelation 3:15-16).

I believe the purpose of this parable is to wake you up, to sound the bell, to ring the alarm, because Jesus wants you to be ready for the opportunities before you. In fact, I feel like somebody is waking up out of their slumber right now. Somebody is about to seize the moment, ready to take advantage of right now, stepping into the opportunity that you’ve been given, but potential without preparation will only lead to exasperation.

In other words, you’ve got to bring some extra oil and this is so important because what God has for you is bigger than what you’ve imagined. It’s bigger than what you thought, bigger than what you were preparing for because…

“God is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us” (Ephesians 3:20).

And so, you’ve got to bring some extra oil, refusing to underestimate your future, being ready for something that hasn’t even happened yet, so that you are ready even if it takes all week.

In other words, if you’ve got extra oil, you’ve got enough power, you’ve got enough glory, to do what you’ve got to do, to go where you’ve got to go, and to see who you’ve got to see. And so, you’ve got to have extra oil, because it may come at the most unexpected time, it may come when you’re tired, it may come at a bad time, but when God opens the door, you’ve got to be ready because,

“No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him" (1 Corinthians 2:9).

And so, it’s foolish not to prepare for what’s about to happen in your life. It’s foolish to underestimate the power of an opportunity and miss your potential. But what many foolish people do when the time comes and they’re not ready is that they turn to the wise and say,

“Give us some of your oil” (Matthew 25:8).

And what’s amazing is how many believers are made to feel guilty when they have enough for their calling, or their family, and some fool comes along asking for their oil.

But look at what Jesus said in verse nine, “No, they replied, it’s not our fault you didn’t get ready, it’s not our fault you didn’t prepare, it’s not our fault you didn’t take this seriously.” He said,

“There may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves” (Matthew 25:9).

There may be somebody here, somebody listening, and you’ve got just enough oil for the favor, for the position, for the opportunity before you. And so, you need to be careful not to be guilted into trying to be everybody’s Savior when they don’t have enough, because for every wise virgin there was a fool. In fact, the Scripture says,

“Do not answer a fool according to his folly, or you will be like him yourself” (Proverbs 26:4).

And so, I’m trying to help you today, because Jesus said,

“I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore, be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves” (Matthew 10:16).

In other words, let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No' because you can’t be a wise virgin and not say “No.” In other words, you will miss your opportunity, because the Lord says,

"While they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut” (Matthew 25:10).

I know it’s difficult when you’re related to them, when you grew up with them, when you feel sorry for them, and especially when you’re in love with them, but just open up your mouth and prayerfully, lovingly, gently, respectfully, and firmly say, “No.” Wisdom demands that you know how to say, “No” because if they wasted their oil, they’re going to waste yours too, and for every wise person in here, there’s a fool trying to burn up your oil. And so, you can’t be their provision, enabling them to continue in their reckless irresponsibility.

"Later the others also came. 'Sir! Sir!' they said. 'Open the door for us!' "But he replied, 'I tell you the truth, I don't know you” (Matthew 25:11-12).

The answer the Holy Spirit gave you today is to just say, “No,” because there are some people in this room who are depleted, not because you didn’t have enough oil, but because you couldn’t say no. And today, we need to be wise enough not to underestimate the time, the cost, or the length of the journey. Jesus said to his disciples,

"Therefore, keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour” (Matthew 25:13).

And the wise virgins recognized that it was almost midnight and they said, “No” because they weren’t sure how long it would be before daybreak.

This is for somebody who was wise enough not to underestimate the possibilities, recognizing that marriage could be harder than you thought, raising children could be harder than you thought, running a business could be harder than you thought, and we are in a season right now where you may run out of oil if you don’t learn how to say no. In other words, you’ve got to stop spending everything, because we’re in a midnight season and you’ve only got a jar full of oil. And so, you’re going to need to keep some in reserve, because you’ve only got a jar full of oil.

One more thing I want to mention before we close is that Jesus said,

"All the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps” (Matthew 25:7).

In other words, they all responded immediately, because everybody had a lamp. And so, to trim the lamp means more specifically to trim the wick, it’s the wick that is the object of conversion, it’s dipped down into the oil, it’s the wick that transfers the oil to the flame, that brings out the light, but right now the light has grown dim.

Now, if you know your Bible you recognize that oil is a type of anointing, a type of the Holy Spirit, but in order to convert the anointing into light, there has to be a wick that is dipped down into the oil and soaking it up. In other words, we’re all here, but not everybody is soaking. Everybody is listening, but not everybody is soaking, I know that because the Lord said,

“They have eyes to see but do not see and ears to hear but do not hear” (Ezekiel 12:2).

But I know there are some Called and Anointed people in this room that are soaking up this oil that is coming forth and they are converting it into light.

There are some others of you that need to trim your lamp, you need to dip your wick in that oil, soaking it up, converting that anointing into revelation.

Jesus is telling us that in these last days the oil is this thing that is missing and so we’ve got some people who are walking the walk and talking the talk but they aren’t soaking up the oil and making any light.

We’ve never been exposed to so much information like we are today, we’ve never had opportunities like this before, and we’ve got all kinds of lamps but we’ve got less oil. Years ago, we didn’t have the technology, we didn’t have as much information, but the anointing of God would saturate the church, people got delivered, people were slain in the spirit, and so we just need some more oil. The Bible says,

“Be filled with the Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18).

We are the church, we are the called-out ones, but we need more oil, we must be filled with the Spirit, we need a fresh anointing until the power of God falls in this place. We need some extra oil, the kind of anointing that binds people together, that tears down barriers, that opens doors and sets the captives free. We need some extra oil, trimming our lamps, so that they’re saturated in the oil, oil that covers our family, that covers our bodies, the kind of anointing that will last into the new day.

I’m talking about oil that will remain past the last song, oil that will get in the car with you and have you sitting in the parking lot with tears running down your face. I’m talking about the kind of oil that will get deep down in your spirit, flowing through this place right now in the name of Jesus, because…

“He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come” (2 Corinthians 1:21-22).

In other words, this Word is for you, soak it up, because the bridegroom is coming. The time is short, everything is winding down, we’re going to see our King coming in clouds of glory.

"At midnight the cry rang out: 'Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!' (Matthew 25:6).

And so, I’m looking for some wise people, those who are prepared for the times that we are in, because the only thing that matters is that you stand firm, that you keep the faith, and that you’re filled with the Holy Spirit. The Bible says,

“Do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here” (Romans 13:11-12).

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