



March 14, 2021

“Get Ready ‘cause Here I Come” Part 2 of 3

Matthew 25:1-13

Pastor Gary Hamrick

In today’s study, Pastor Gary shares a message about The Parable of the Ten Virgins. In this parable Jesus gave a warning that some would be ready for his Second Coming and some would not. Those who won’t be ready aren’t really born-again Believers. It’s true that these people may go to church, sing the songs, give money, and volunteer their time, but the fact is that they don’t have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. One of the saddest things in any church is a nonbeliever who thinks that he or she is a Believer. As someone has said, these are people who “play the part but lack the heart.” In today’s message, Pastor Gary encourages us to be certain of our salvation so that we can be ready when we die or be ready when Christ returns, whichever happens first.

## 1. The Joyful Anticipation Of The Lord’s Return

### a. Motivates Us To Holy Living

i. [2 Peter 3:11-12, 14](#) - *“Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of person ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? ... Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless.”*

ii. [Luke 18:8](#) - *“... when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?”*

### b. Calibrates Our Perspective On Life And The World Around Us

i. [2 Peter 3:10, 13](#) - *“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. ... Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.”*

- ii. Pastor Gary said, “Do you know what happens in a world when people don’t know Jesus? All they focus on is everything [in this world. They become preoccupied, worried, and obsessed with everything happening around them.] ... As Christians, we know about the Second Coming and so our gaze is fixed upward... While the rest of the world is looking down, we need to be looking up. [Our] hope is Jesus and he’s coming again!
  - 1. **Luke 21:28** - *“Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.”*
  - 2. **Job 19:25-27** - *“For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; and after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!”*

## 2. Parables

- a. Jesus often used parables to express a deeper spiritual truth by using commonplace examples and illustrations.
- b. Jesus used parables to make his hearers think.

## 3. Ancient Jewish Wedding

- a. This parable is about a wedding party.
  - i. The bridegroom is mentioned, but there’s no specific reference to the bride, but it’s obvious that the bride is part of the parable because of the reference to the bridal party of the ten virgins, who might also be called bride’s maids.
- b. Betrothal
  - i. Pastor Gary said, “The betrothal is more than an engagement. In our Western culture, [we have the engagement and planning for the wedding]. A betrothal is much more serious than an engagement. [Betrothal] was a legally binding contract between the parents of the groom and the parents of the bride. This [would have been what we would call] an arranged marriage. This was [part of their] culture. In a betrothal there would [have been] a bride price or a dowry paid by the family of the groom to the family of the bride. ... To seal the contract [a bride was price given]. ... Vows were [also] exchanged. ... [A person] could not get out of the marriage unless there was a divorce and the only reason there might be a divorce [was] if there was unfaithfulness by either the groom or the bride. ... Once the couple exchanged the bride price and the vows, and the contract was entered into, in this

arranged marriage, the groom would go [away] for about [one] year, and he would build a home... [Usually], that was an addition [built] onto [his] father's house. ... During that year he was exempt from any other obligation, including military service."

1. **Deuteronomy 24:5** – *"When a man has taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war or be charged with any business; he shall be free at home one year, and bring happiness to his wife whom he has taken."*

c. Return Of The Bridegroom For The Bride

- i. Pastor Gary said, "When the [groom] returned it would be unannounced. And that is why everybody was anticipating [his return]. ... The bridal party would know that it's been about a year, [so they knew they had to be ready and watching], because he was going to be coming at any [time]. ... [This usually happened] at night, so [the bridal party would come] with lit torches to draw attention to the whole village to make it more spectacular with fanfare. The whole village would be led out [in a] procession [with] the bridal first. ... [Everyone would follow the groom] back to the home he had built] for the bride, and the whole village would gather [for] the wedding banquet."

d. Wedding Banquet

- i. Pastor Gary said, "[The wedding banquet] would last about seven days, and during that seven-day period is when that couple, for the first time, would physically, sexually consummate their marriage."

4. Salvation

- a. Pastor Gary said, "The betrothal is like our salvation. [In that] Jesus is the groom and [Christians] are the bride. We enter into this relationship [and] it is binding. The bride price [was] paid by [Jesus, the groom], and that's his blood that he shed on the cross. ... We are living in the betrothal period. Jesus has purchased us from sin and death. He has secured us because he loves us, and the Bible often uses this analogy that he is the bridegroom and we, the Church, are the bride. ... He's coming again. [He's gone away] to prepare a place for us."

- i. **John 14:2-3** – *"In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."*

5. Rapture Of The Church

- a. Pastor Gary said, "He is coming to take his bride home. So, we are waiting for

the bridegroom, [Jesus], to return. And then, afterwards, the rest of the [book of] Revelation, which talks about a tribulation period that follows the Rapture of the Church... There's going to be a generation of people who never experience death. ... There is going to be a trumpet call of God, and Jesus [will come] in the clouds and he physically – it's going to be a miraculous event that's going to happen – snatches Christians off of the planet and up to heaven [they will] go. ... And so, he comes for his bride. He comes to rescue us to take us home to be with him. [Jesus will come again, and he will bring his bride, Believers, with him to rule and reign on the earth for one thousand years.] Revelation 19 tells us that when [Jesus] establishes his kingdom, he has a wedding banquet..."

- i. **1 Thessalonians 4:16-17** - *"For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord."*
- ii. **Revelation 19:6-9a** - *"And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, 'Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.' And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linens, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, 'Write: "Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!" ' "*

## 6. The Parable Of The Ten Virgins

- a. Pastor Gary said, "[This parable] has to do with phase two, which is the Rapture of the Church. ... [Jesus was] talking about his imminent return. He was saying that [we better be watching and waiting]. ...
  - i. Of the ten virgins or bride's maids, five were wise, having oil for their lamps, and five who were foolish, had no oil for their lamps.
  - ii. The Greek word for lamps is lampas, which means a torch.<sup>1</sup>
  - iii. Pastor Gary said, "Jesus [said in the parable] that they were all there, they were all watching, they all fall asleep, which is not necessarily bad, they were [just] living life [because they didn't] know when [the groom] was going to come back... But when they awakened, and they heard that [the groom had arrived] five were ready and five were not. In this story Jesus is the bridegroom... and we are the bride's maids who should be waiting and watching. Now, don't get tripped up on every nuance on every detail within a parable and miss the bigger

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong=G2985&t=NKJV>

point. Sometimes people look at this parable and they pick apart every single word! ... **The bigger picture that Jesus [was] trying to paint is the idea that some Christians are ready, and some are not because some are not really Christians at all. That's the sobering truth of this parable.** ... Here's how we know this. In the Bible, oil is symbolic of the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament the prophets would anoint kings with olive oil [and] drench them with oil. It was symbolic of the outpouring of God's anointing, God's Spirit to come upon them. In the New Testament we see the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and the indwelling of God's Spirit at the time of conversion, and the overflowing work of God's Spirit at the baptism of the Spirit. In other words, the Holy Spirit represents both the indwelling and the empowering of God's presence in our lives. ... What Jesus is really saying to us, as tragic as it is, is that five are really born-again and they are waiting for the return of Christ, and five just aren't even Believers at all." (Emphasis added)

- b. Some people "look the part" but "lack the heart"
  - i. Some people will do many things, just like born-again Believers, but that's not the evidence of having a real and vital relationship with the Lord.
  - ii. Going to church services does not make you a Christian.
  - iii. Pastor Gary said, "[The] truth is that churches are filled with people who are part of the crowd, but not really part of the faith. Sometimes that's the case because people want to know Jesus but they just don't yet understand him and so they come to learn more about him, [and] that's great, but **the reality is that sometimes churches are filled with people who are part of the crowd but not really part of the faith because they don't really want to know Jesus at all... they just like to hang out at the church because it makes them feel better. ... They like to hear but not do. They like to learn but not believe.** They like to be a part of the wedding party, but they don't really want to get to know the bridegroom. [In] every church there are Believers and nonbelievers, and that's great and that's the way it should be, and the hope of every church is that Believers grow in their faith and that unbelievers come to faith in Jesus. But the most dangerous thing... is for a nonbeliever to think that he or she is a Believer." (Emphasis added)
- c. You cannot have a relationship with Jesus on "borrowed faith"
  - i. Pastor Gary said, "Jesus was simply illustrating the fact that sometimes people turn to other's faith instead of having a faith walk for themselves. They look to friends, [parents, or a spouse.] You can't get it from them. You have to have a personal relationship with Jesus

yourself. It can't be borrowed from [someone]. You can't vicariously live it through [someone] else. ... One of the most beautiful things is to be raised in a Christian home with loving Christian parents who expose you early to the things of God and the ways of God. And, it's a beautiful thing if you offer that to your children. But one of the most challenging things in a home like that is for those children to grow up and realize that they have to own their faith for themselves. You can't [live off of your mother's faith or your father's faith or your grandmother's faith or your grandfather's faith]. You can't borrow their oil, so to speak."

- d. A time will come when the door is shut
  - i. **Matthew 25:10-12** - *"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.' "*
  - ii. Pastor Gary said, "This is not a parable about [people who are serious about their faith and others who aren't so serious about their faith]. No! This is the difference between saved and unsaved. [Some] have the Holy Spirit [or they don't have the Holy Spirit]. ... The door was shut. There's actually an endgame to all of this. ... There are two clocks, basically. There's a clock that marks the time left on your life and there's a clock that marks the time when Jesus comes again. And, if the time runs out before you make a decision for [Jesus] the door will be shut, and you will have no access to heaven. ... There is a limit to his patience and there is a point at which Jesus will come or you will die. One of those is going to happen first, and then what? If you don't know him the door is shut. ... [We] are not guaranteed tomorrow and [we] are not guaranteed another hour, not another minute. So, get ready. ... He's coming again, or you are going to see him face to face."
    - 1. **2 Peter 3:9-10** - *"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night..."*

### Discussion Questions

1. Read **Matthew 25:1-13** to provide a foundation for your Bible study time.

2. Read and discuss the Scriptures Pastor Gary shared regarding the ways a joyful anticipation of the Lord's return motivates Christians to holy living. (See #1a above)
3. Read and discuss Pastor Gary's comments about the ways a joyful anticipation of the Lord's return helps Christians have a proper worldview. (See #1b above)
4. Provide an overview of Pastor Gary's outline concerning the different aspects of an ancient Jewish wedding. (See #3 above)
5. Read and discuss Pastor Gary's remarks concerning the betrothal period being like our salvation. (See #4 above)
6. Read and discuss [1 Thessalonians 4:16-17](#) and [Revelation 19:6-9a](#). (See #5 above)
7. Spend time talking about Pastor Gary's comments concerning the rapture of the Church. (See #5 above)
8. Read and discuss Pastor Gary's remarks about the parable of the ten virgins. (See #6a iii above)
9. Allow the people in your group to share their experiences about being in the "look the part but lack the heart" group. (See #6b above)
10. How did the Holy Spirit work in your life to bring you to the moment in time when you made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ?
11. Spend time talking about the ways many people embrace living as though "borrowed faith" was all they need. (See #6c above)
12. Read and discuss Pastor Gary's comments about the fact that the Bible clearly teaches there will be a time when the door will be shut. (See #6d above)
13. Read and discuss [2 Peter 3:9-10](#).
14. Allow the people in your group to share the names of loved ones, friends, and others they are praying for. (Make sure to include time for prayer for the unsaved as you close your meeting)
15. Close your meeting by allowing the Holy Spirit to lead your time of prayer.

\* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New King James Version (NKJV)