

## 1/13-19 #6 Being Watchful in Life and Faithful in Service

**CP1I** For life, we need oil, the Spirit of God, even His filling, that we may be enabled to live the virgin life for the Lord's testimony: **A** "At that time the kingdom of the heavens will be likened to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom" (Matt.25:1):**25:2** And five of them were foolish and five were prudent. **3** For the foolish, when they took their lamps, did not take oil with them; **4** but the prudent took oil in their vessels with their lamps. **1** Virgins signify the believers viewed from the aspect of life. **2** Believers, who are the kingdom people, are like chaste virgins, bearing the Lord's testimony (the lamp) in the dark age and going out of the world to meet the Lord; for this they need not only the indwelling but also the filling of the Holy Spirit. **3** Lamps signify the spirit of the believers, which contains the Spirit of God as the oil: **a** The believers shine forth the light of the Spirit of God from within their spirit; in order for the divine light to shine into man's inward parts, God's Spirit as the oil must soak (mingle with) man's spirit as the wick and "burn" together with man's spirit. **4** The prudent virgins took oil in their vessels with their lamps: **a** Man is a vessel made for God, and man's personality is in his soul; hence, "vessels" in Matthew 25:4 signifies the souls of the believers. Through regeneration we have the Holy Spirit in our spirit. This causes our lamp to burn. But the question is whether or not we have the extra portion of the Holy Spirit filling our soul. Although we have the oil in our lamp, we need the extra portion of the oil in our soul. This signifies that the Spirit must spread from within our spirit to every part of our soul. Then in our soul we will have an extra amount of the Holy Spirit. If we have this extra portion, we are prudent....If we are wise, we will pray, "Lord, have mercy on me. I want to have Your Spirit not only in my spirit but also in my soul. Lord, I need the infilling of the Spirit. I need the extra portion of the Holy Spirit to fill my entire being."

**CP2I4c** The word "buy" in Matthew 25:9 indicates that a price must be paid; having the filling of the Holy Spirit is at a cost, such as giving up the world, dealing with self, loving the Lord above all, and counting all things loss for Christ; if we do not pay this price today, we will have to pay it after we are resurrected. **9** But the prudent answered, saying, Perhaps there will not be enough for us and for you; go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves. **B** Every day we need to be watchful by paying the price to buy the Spirit as the golden oil so that we may supply the churches with

the Spirit for the testimony of Jesus and be rewarded by the Lord to participate in the marriage dinner of the Lamb. **8** We need to redeem the time in these evil days to be filled in spirit by speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, by giving thanks to the Lord at all times for all things, and by being subject to one another in the fear of Christ. **Eph. 5:17** Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. **18** And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissoluteness, but be filled in spirit, **19** speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and psalming with your heart to the Lord. If we do mean business with the Lord's present-day move, we must be filled with the Spirit every morning of every day. We need to confess our sins, but we also need to pay the price. The Spirit who came into our spirit was given freely, but the saturating Spirit to fill our entire being, especially our soul, is not free. It is something that we have to pay the price for, that we have to buy. When we as sinners repented and confessed our sins and believed in the Lord Jesus, we immediately got regenerated, and the Spirit was given to us freely. But daily we need His filling, His saturating, from our spirit to penetrate our soul. We need to pay the price...Many of us love our beds more than the Lord. In our daily life we may love a lot of things. Even though these things may not be sinful, they are replacements of the Lord. We may not give our first love to Him but to many other things. Now we have to drop all these other things.

**CP3II** For service, for work, we need the talent, the spiritual gift, that we may be equipped as a good slave to accomplish what the Lord intends to accomplish **A3** Talents signify spiritual gifts; the filling of the Spirit in life enables us to use the spiritual gift in service (work), and the spiritual gift in service matches the filling of the Spirit in life, that we may be a perfect member of Christ. **E** We need to use the Lord's gift to build up the church by serving others with Christ and ministering Christ as grace to them. **Matthew 24:45** Who then is the faithful and prudent slave, whom the master has set over his household to give them food at the proper time? **2** We need to supply others with Christ as their spiritual food at the proper time **a** We need to speak Christ to all kinds of people daily in season and out of season **b** We need to desperately endeavor to build up a habit of speaking in any meeting. Whenever we meet together, this is one of the proper times, the appointed times, for you to minister the

proper food to the Lord's folks. Suppose, however, that I was sloppy, not reading the Word. If I did not labor adequately in the Word and came to speak to you, I would just be ministering to you "a cup of coffee and some doughnuts." To cook a nourishing, good breakfast requires your diligence. ...We must be diligent in seeking the Word so that we could prepare to serve good food when we come to the meeting.

**CP4IIIES** Through any involvement in the world, we render the Lord's gift useless, letting it lie waste under the cloak of certain earthly excuses. [Matthew 25:14](#) For the kingdom of the heavens is just like a man about to go abroad, who called his own slaves and delivered to them his possessions. [15](#) To one he gave five talents, and to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability. ... [16](#) Immediately he who had received the five talents went and traded with them and gained another five. [18](#) But he who had received the one went off and dug in the earth and hid his master's money. **G** We should always abound in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labor for the Lord in His resurrection life with His resurrection power will never be in vain but will result in the fulfilling of God's eternal purpose. The five-talented slave made a profit of five talents, and the two-talented slave made a profit of two talents. This indicates that they used the Lord's talent in full, without any loss or waste, so they both received the same reward. ...The earth signifies the world, so to dig in the earth signifies getting into the world. Any association, any involvement, with the world, even a little worldly talk, will bury the Lord's gift to us. ...We should ... not go into the world to enjoy ourselves with the stupefied, drugged, and worldly people. ...We should have a job to maintain our living, but we should not dig into it. ...I also encouraged all the young people in the churches to get the highest education, but do not dig a hole that buries the talent the Lord gave you.

**Testimony** I testify that I cannot meet the Lord's requirements without fully using the talents (spiritual gifts) He has given me to serve and to work. I changed jobs in 2011 to a joint venture between a Japanese and an American company. When I changed jobs, it was their 50th anniversary. About four years after I started working for the company, the president of the head office told me the following. ① The U.S. headquarters acquires 100% of the company's stock and makes it a wholly owned subsidiary. ② I was

informed that all the executives of the Japanese subsidiary, except me, would be laid off, including the president. I was very surprised that the list of layoffs included the president. At the same time, I was braced to know that I was highly evaluated by them. About a year later these things happened. After this acquisition, I was lifted higher by them. Sometime later, for the Lord's work, I was arranged to coordinate and give the messages at a special national conference in Nepal in 2016. I went to Nepal immediately after my business trip to the United States. While waiting for my connecting flight at the airport in Hong Kong, I asked myself, "Am I too busy to meet the Lord's needs?" In 2015 and 2016, the increase in the number of people on the Lord's Day of the church was less than 10%, which was the first time since the church in Kobe started in 1992. Because of this I had felt conflicted inside for a long time and started praying to leave the company after the special conference in Nepal. After returning to Japan, I fellowshiped with my wife, and then with the main brothers and sisters, and decided to take early retirement. After my decision to leave the company, the number of people in the church reversed from October to December 2016 and began to increase again, finally reaching a 10% growth rate in 2016. Although the spiritual gifts given by the Lord are useful in business life, they are primarily for the purpose of increasing and building up the church in numbers. I thought I was serving the Lord to the best of my ability as a businessperson, but through this I realized that I had partially buried my gifts in the ground.

Later, the number of people in the church increased by more than 15% in 2018-2019. During the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020 to the first half of 2023, we were blessed by preaching the gospel online using YouTube and Zoom and holding the Lord's Day meetings. One Lord's Day meeting had approximately 800 views on YouTube. We praise the Lord that the gospel has been preached even during the coronavirus pandemic. However, with the special conference in May 2024 as a turning point, we shifted our Lord's Day meetings from Zoom to on-site locations (with some exceptions). Due to this change, the number of people at the Lord's Day meeting is currently down from just over 200 to about 170. In 2025, the base number is 172.5, with a target of 193, an increase of 11.9%.