

Week Four

Making Ourselves Ready for the Lord's Coming by Being a Faithful and Prudent Slave

Hymns: 956

Scripture Reading: Matt. 24:45-51

§ Day 1 & Day 2

- I. **“Who then is the faithful and prudent slave, whom the master has set over his household to give them food at the proper time? Blessed is that slave whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. Truly I say to you that he will set him over all his possessions”—Matt. 24:45-47:**
 - A. **God's economy in faith is His “household” economy, His household administration, which is to dispense Himself in Christ into His chosen people that He may have a house to express Himself, which house is the church, the Body of Christ—1 Tim. 1:4; 3:15; Eph. 2:19.**
 - B. **The faithful and prudent slave is a steward in God's house, a household administrator, dispensing Christ as “food” to His believers—1 Cor. 9:17; Eph. 3:2; 1 Cor. 4:1; 1 Pet. 4:10:**
 1. Faithfulness is shown toward the Lord (1 Cor. 4:2; 7:25), whereas prudence is exercised toward the believers (cf. Col. 1:28; 2 Chron. 1:10; Phil. 4:5).
 2. In the manifestation of the kingdom of the heavens, the Lord will set the faithful slave over all His possessions; this will be a reward to His slave—Matt. 25:21, 23.
 - C. **Give them food refers to ministering the word of God and Christ as the life supply to the believers in the church; Christ as the life-giving Spirit is our food, embodied and realized in the word of life—24:45; John 6:57, 63, 68:**
 1. In order to enjoy the Lord as our spiritual food so that we can feed others, we need to receive His word by means of all prayer and by musing on His word, speaking His word aloud with much reconsideration—Eph. 6:17-18; Psa. 119:15 (see footnote), 48, 148; Josh. 1:8; Lev. 11:2-3; Ezek. 3:1-4; Col.

3:16.

2. We need to continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word—Acts 6:4; cf. Heb. 7:25; 8:2.
3. We need to prophesy to build up the church—speaking what we see with the living words of this life under the instant and fresh inspiration, anointing, and enlightenment of the Holy Spirit through the exercise of our spirit—1 Cor. 14:4b; Acts 5:20; 4:20; 22:15.
4. We need to pray ourselves into God to receive the life-giving Spirit as our supply, our spiritual food, to feed ourselves and those under our care—Luke 11:1-13.
5. We need to be life-giving “askers,” channels of the life-giving Spirit who can give life to others—1 John 5:16.

§ Day 3

6. We need to be “sons of fresh oil,” those who are continually being filled with the fresh, present, and consummated Spirit as the oil of gladness, to flow out the Spirit into the lampstand for its shining testimony, the testimony of Jesus—Zech. 4:6, 12-14; Phil. 1:25; Rev. 3:18; Matt. 25:9:
 - a. Day by day we need to pay the price to gain more of God as the golden oil in His divine nature so that we can become a pure golden lampstand for the building of the golden New Jerusalem—2 Pet. 1:4; Rev. 3:18; 1:20; 21:18; Matt. 25:8-9.
 - b. As we apply this matter to our experience today, we see that the Spirit who flows out of us is God, and God is gold; thus, when we minister Christ to others, supplying them with oil, we are actually supplying them with God; God is flowing out from us into them—Zech. 4:12-14; John 7:38-39; 2 Cor. 3:3, 6, 8; Luke 10:34.

§ Day 4 & Day 5

- II. **“But if that evil slave says in his heart, My master delays, and begins to beat his fellow slaves and eats and drinks with the drunken, the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour which he does not know, and will cut him asunder and appoint his portion with the hypocrites. In that place there will be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth”—Matt. 24:48-51:**
 - A. **To say in our heart that our Master delays is to love the present**

evil age and not to love the Lord's appearing—2 Tim. 4:8, 10:

1. The Greek word for coming is *parousia*, which means “presence”; to love the Lord's appearing, His coming, we must love His appearing, His presence, today—Matt. 24:3, 37; Acts 26:16; 2 Cor. 2:10; Hymns, #389.
 2. As long as we have today, we should love the Lord and His appearing, awaiting His coming and taking His coming as a warning, an encouragement, and an incentive—2 Tim. 4:8; Phil. 3:20; Rev. 22:12.
 3. We need to watch and be ready for His coming—Matt. 25:13; 24:44; Rev. 19:7.
 4. We need to beware of covetousness, not storing up treasure for ourselves but being rich toward God—Luke 12:16-20; 2 Cor. 6:10; Eph. 3:8.
 5. We need to remember Lot's wife, not loving and treasuring the evil world that God is going to judge and utterly destroy—Luke 17:28-32.
 6. We need to be watchful and beseeching so that the day of the Lord's coming would not come upon us suddenly as a snare—21:34-36; cf. Matt. 2:3.
 7. “Come, Lord Jesus!”—this should be the longing, cry, and constant prayer of those who love the Lord and His appearing—Rev. 22:20; Titus 2:12-13.
- B. To beat our fellow slaves is to mistreat fellow believers—cf. Acts 9:4:**
1. We should not judge and condemn our fellow believers but be kind to them, tenderhearted, forgiving them even as God in Christ forgave us—Luke 6:37; Eph. 4:31-32.
 2. We should not revile or criticize our brothers but consider them more excellent than ourselves—1 Cor. 6:10-11; Phil. 2:3, 29.
 3. We should not lord it over our fellow believers (such as making decisions for them) but serve them as a slave to feed them with the resurrected Christ as the life-giving Spirit—1 Pet. 5:3; Matt. 20:25-28; cf. Num. 17:8.

§ Day 6

- C. To eat and drink with the drunken is to keep company with worldly people, who are drunk with worldly things:**
1. Because of their divine nature and holy standing, the believers should not be yoked together with the unbelievers; this should be applied to all intimate relationships between believers and unbelievers, not only to marriage and business—2 Cor. 6:14; 1 Cor. 15:33; cf. Prov. 13:20.

2. We need to flee youthful lusts and pursue the all-inclusive Christ with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart—2 Tim. 2:22.
- D. The faithful and prudent slave will be rewarded with the authority to rule in the manifestation of the kingdom, whereas the evil slave will be cut off from the glorious Christ, from the glory of His kingdom, and from His glorious presence in His kingdom—Matt. 24:47, 51:**
1. To be cut off from the manifestation of the kingdom is to be cast into the outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth:
 - a. The outer darkness is the darkness outside the bright glory in the manifestation of the kingdom—16:28; 25:30.
 - b. Weeping indicates regret, and gnashing of teeth indicates self blame.
 2. To reign with Christ over the nations in the millennial kingdom will be a prize to His faithful and prudent slaves—Rev. 2:26; Luke 19:17-19.

DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

Matt. 24:45-47 Who then is the faithful and prudent slave, whom the master has set over his household to give them food at the proper time? Blessed is that slave whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. Truly I say to you that he will set him over all his possessions.

Matthew 24:45 through 51 are concerned with faithfulness and prudence... Faithfulness is toward the Lord, whereas prudence is toward the believers. Watchfulness is for rapture into the Lord's presence, but faithfulness is for reigning in the kingdom (v. 47). The household spoken of in verse 45 refers to the believers (Eph. 2:19), who are the church (1 Tim. 3:15). To give them food is to minister the Word of God with Christ as the life supply to the believers in the church. We all must learn how to minister the life supply to the household of the Lord at the appointed time.

To be blessed [in Matthew 24:46-47] is to be rewarded with ruling authority in the manifestation of the kingdom. The faithful slave of the Lord will be set over all His possessions as a reward in the manifestation of the kingdom of the heavens. (Life-study of Matthew, pp. 741-742)

Today's Reading

At the proper time we have to minister food, the life supply, to the Lord's people. Do not say that others have a gift of teaching to teach you the Word of God and minister spiritual food to you but that you do not have such a gift. There is not such a thought here. All of the Lord's servants received the gift for their commission.

Some... may say that in all of Christianity they only saw the practice of good preachers speaking to a crowd. They never saw a meeting with so many standing up to speak... One after another stands up like popcorn popping, [which] is altogether what we expect to have...This is the Bible's teaching (1 Cor. 14:24, 26, 29-32). We all have to learn to function. This is the reason that even in a ministry meeting, I always like to leave half an

hour for you to “pop up.” Do not just be stuck to your chair...You have to jump up to say something. For you to speak is to minister food to the Lord's household at the proper time.

Whoever serves food knows the proper time. If you are serving food every day, you have to make breakfast, lunch, and dinner...The proper time in the morning is breakfast. Also, good wives prepare the best sandwiches for their husbands to bring to the office for lunch at the proper time and are accustomed to preparing a big dinner for their family. In like manner, 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... Faithful... equals diligent, and slothful equals lazy. We must be diligent in seeking the Word so that we could prepare to serve good food when we come to the meeting. The eating time is the proper time, and the meeting time is the proper time. We have the proper time on the Lord's Day morning, on the Lord's Day evening, Tuesday evening, and Friday evening. The meeting times are the proper times when we all have to minister some portion of the life supply to our folks, to our fellow believers.

To the sinners the proper food that we minister is the gospel of Christ. The nurses in the hospitals know that they must serve the patients with different meals. Different food is ministered to different patients to meet their specific needs. It is the same with us. The entire earth is a hospital, full of sickness and full of all kinds of sick people. The church in a good sense is also a hospital, full of sick people. Therefore, we have to minister different words to them at the proper time. (CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, “The Way to Practice the Lord's Present Move,” pp. 515-517)

Further Reading: Life-study of Matthew, msg. 63; CWWL, 1961-1962, vol. 4, “The All-inclusive Christ,” ch. 6

DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

1 John 5:16 If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask and he will give life to him, to those sinning not unto death...

Phil. 1:25 ...I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of the faith.

The believers, the churches, and even the more all the sinners are around you. It is your duty, your obligation, to minister food to them. If they are sinners, you have to minister the gospel of grace to them as the food they need. If they are believers sick of something, then you need to minister some word from the Bible that suits their condition, either to nourish them, to heal them, to strengthen them, or to wake them up. To do this is to be a faithful and prudent slave, ministering the proper food to the Lord's possessions, which are all kinds of persons, at the proper time. When you enter into your office, you must realize that this is one of the proper times to minister the proper food of the gospel to the unbelieving ones. When you go to school, even if you are not going there to teach but to attend classes, all the classmates around you are the Lord's possessions delivered to you that you may take the opportunity, the proper time, to minister the gospel to them.

Every day is a proper time for us to minister the proper food to anyone... We all have to rise up and wake up to be diligent, to be faithful, to be prudent and not foolish, to minister the proper food to the needy ones at the proper time. (CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, "The Way to Practice the Lord's Present Move," pp. 517-518)

Today's Reading

In Philippians 1:24... the apostle's consideration was not selfish, but was for the sake of the saints. He was absolutely occupied by the Lord with the church. Paul realized that the churches needed more of the ministry of Christ.

Paul was a person full of Christ. When he spoke, he spoke Christ. When he lived, he lived with Christ. When he worked, he worked with Christ and ministered Christ to the churches. For the sake of the church, he was willing to remain in the flesh that he might minister Christ to the saints.

The faith [in verse 25] refers to what the saints believe in (Jude 3; 2 Tim. 4:7); progress, to the growth in life; and joy, to the enjoyment of Christ. Whether Paul was in prison or out of prison, he was a strong factor of the saints' progress and joy. Because of him the churches could have the growth in life and could be filled with the enjoyment of Christ. This should also be true of us today. In the Body life there is the urgent need of certain ones to function as channels of supply. We need members like Paul. When such members die, the transfusion of Christ is in a very real sense interrupted. But as long as such ones are with us, the transfusion continues unabated, and we can boast in them in Christ. The leading ones in all the local churches should be such channels, such means of supply.

Our living should matter greatly to the saints. But whether or not this is so depends on the degree to which we live Christ, minister Christ, and infuse others with Christ. I am sorry to say that, with respect to infusing Christ into the church, there are certain leading ones about whom it makes little difference whether they live or die. But with others their continuing with us or their being taken from us in death makes a great difference. I think of the example of a brother very dear to us, [who] surely was a means of supply to the Body... It made a difference to us whether this brother remained or went to be with the Lord. The same should be true of every one of us. It should matter to the church whether we live or die. But this depends on our living Christ, magnifying Christ, ministering Christ, and transfusing Christ from the depths of our being into that of the saints. If we experience Christ and enjoy Him in this way, it will make a difference to the church whether we remain or go to be with the Lord. (Life-study of Philippians, pp. 60-61, 63-64)

Further Reading: Life-study of Philippians, msg. 7; Life-study of Leviticus, msg. 36; Life-study of Luke, msg. 27

DAY 3

Morning Nourishment

Zech. 4:12 ...What are the two olive branches that are by the side of the two golden spouts, which empty the gold from themselves?

14 And he said, These are the two sons of oil, who stand by the Lord of the whole earth.

2 Cor. 3:6 [God] made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, ministers not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

[In Zechariah 4:3 the] two olive trees signify Joshua the high priest and Zerubbabel the governor at the time, who were the two sons of oil, filled with the Spirit of Jehovah for the rebuilding of God's temple (vv. 3-6, 12-14). The two sons of oil are also the two witnesses in the last three and a half years of the present age, who will be witnesses of God in the great tribulation for the strengthening of God's peoples—the Israelites and the believers in Christ (Rev. 11:3-12; 12:17)... These two [witnesses], Moses and Elijah, will support and supply the persecuted Israelites and the believers during the great tribulation. (Life-study of Zechariah, p. 28)

Today's Reading

The nation of Israel is the lampstand, signifying God's testimony. God's testimony needs the shining. For this shining there must be the burning, and in order for there to be the burning, there must be the supply of olive oil... To have the olive oil, there must be some olive trees. The two olive trees on the two sides of the lampstand are the two sons of oil, Joshua and Zerubbabel.

In Zechariah 4:11 there are two trees, and in verse 12, two branches. The two branches are part of the two trees. When the bowl of the lampstand is void of oil, the two trees will supply oil by flowing it out through the branches and into the two spouts. The oil will then flow from

the spouts into the bowl, and from the bowl into the lampstand.

The relative pronoun which in verse 12 refers not to the spouts but to the branches. These branches “empty the gold from themselves.” To empty the gold is to cause the gold to flow out. The word gold here refers to the oil. The oil and the gold are one. The oil denotes the Spirit, and the Spirit is God. Furthermore, in typology gold signifies God. The gold that fills the bowl is the Spirit; the Spirit is God; and God is typified by gold. As we apply this matter to our experience today, we see that the Spirit who flows out of us is God, and God is gold. Thus, when we minister Christ to others, supplying them with oil, we are actually supplying them with God. God is flowing out from us into them. We all should be olive trees emptying God from ourselves into others. In this way oil will be provided to the needy by those who are olive trees out of which God is flowing.

Let us consider further why the two trees are called two branches. In Zechariah 3 and 4 the same person, Zerubbabel, is signified by a shoot (3:8), a tree (4:3, 11), and a branch (v. 12). This indicates that Zerubbabel himself is not the source. If he were a tree complete in himself, he would be the source. However, he is a tree which is actually a branch of another tree, and that tree is the source. Moreover, Zerubbabel is also a shoot from the other tree. That tree is Christ. Christ is the unique olive tree, and both Zerubbabel and we ourselves are branches, offshoots, of Christ... Although Christ is the unique olive tree, out from Him many shoots have issued forth. The issuing forth of these shoots is Christ's branching out. These branches, or shoots, are now the many olive trees on earth today. Are you not such an olive tree? As bona fide Christians, we are olive trees. Strictly speaking, we are olive trees not in the sense of being separate trees but in the sense of being branches of Christ, the unique olive tree. As branches, we need to supply others with oil, that is, with the Spirit, that they may be enlivened. Praise the Lord that in Christ we are olive trees supplying others with the sevenfold Spirit! (Life-study of Zechariah, pp. 28-29)

Further Reading: Life-study of Zechariah, msg. 5; CWWL, 1988, vol. 1, “Speaking Christ for the Building Up of the Body of Christ,” ch. 3

DAY 4

Morning Nourishment

Matt. 24:48-51 But if that evil slave says in his heart, My master delays, and begins to beat his fellow slaves and eats and drinks with the drunken, the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour which he does not know, and will cut him asunder and appoint his portion with the hypocrites...

[In Matthew 24:48] the evil slave is a believer, because he is appointed by the Lord (v. 45), he calls the Lord “my master,” and he believes that the Lord is coming. Verse 49 says that the evil slave beats his fellow slaves and eats and drinks with the drunken. To beat the fellow slaves is to mistreat the fellow believers, and to eat and drink with the drunken is to keep company with worldly people, who are drunk with worldly things. (Life-study of Matthew, p. 742)

Today's Reading

The problem with the evil slave is not that he does not know that the Lord is coming, but that he does not expect Him. He does not like to live the kind of life that is prepared for the Lord's coming. Therefore, when the Lord comes back, He will cut him asunder and appoint his portion with the hypocrites. To cut him asunder means to cut him off. This signifies a separation from the Lord in His coming glory. This corresponds to being cast out into the outer darkness in the conclusion of the parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14-30)...The Lord... will cut [the evil slave] off from the glory in which He Himself will be. This is equal to being cast out into outer darkness.

Whoever is cast into outer darkness will be cut off from the Lord, from His presence, from His fellowship, and from the glorious sphere in which the Lord will be. This is not to perish eternally, but to be chastened dispensationally...The Lord would not assign duties to a false believer. Certainly the evil slave is a saved one. In Matthew, the book of the kingdom,

the issue is not salvation. The issue is the kingdom: whether we shall receive a reward to enter into the kingdom, or whether we shall lose the reward, miss the enjoyment of the kingdom, and suffer punishment and discipline where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Life-study of Matthew, pp. 742-743)

All of us should be those who are feeding the Lord's people at the proper time (Matt. 24:45) and using the Lord's talents in full (25:20, 22). On the negative side, we should not be those beating our fellow slaves (24:49). You may not do your duty to perform your service, but instead you are criticizing and sometimes even strongly opposing the brothers. You are not doing the work but beating the fellow slaves... Many of the elders in the local churches are afraid to do anything wrong. Once they do something wrong, nearly everyone knows through the use of the telephone. These telephone calls are all beatings. Many of the saints are beating the elders.

When something negative happens to any of the saints, some can never retain it. Passing on the news of this negative situation is a kind of beating. Sometimes you may have a subtle way of praying in the prayer meeting for a saint who is in a negative situation. You may not expose him at other times, but you expose him through your prayers. God knows your heart. The intention in your heart and in your prayer is not so pure. You may pretend to be so spiritual, not criticizing or judging people. You pray for people, but about ten percent of your prayer is a kind of judging. This is beating. The elders in one location may criticize the elders in another location. This is also beating the fellow slaves.

You waste your time of service in beating. Instead of doing the service, you beat the brothers, the fellow slaves... We all have to stop our criticizing, judging, opposing, and murmuring as a kind of beating. We must spend our time, our energy, and our everything to do a positive service for the Lord's interest. (CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, "The Way to Practice the Lord's Present Move," pp. 539-540)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, "The Way to Practice the Lord's Present Move," chs. 7-10

DAY 5

Morning Nourishment

2 Tim. 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, with which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will recompense me in that day, and not only me but also all those who have loved His appearing.

Phil. 3:20 For our commonwealth exists in the heavens, from which also we eagerly await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Since we know that the Lord's second coming is so precious, we should love the Lord's appearing (2 Tim. 4:8). The Bible concludes with "Come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev. 22:20)... In their hearts the apostles firmly believed that the Lord would come quickly, and they also lived a life in preparation for the Lord's second coming... Do not think that since we are clear concerning the signs of the Lord's coming, we can be slothful and can first love the world and then pursue the Lord when the last week comes... We should believe that the Lord is to be feared. In Luke 12 the Lord gave a parable concerning a rich man who endeavored to lay up wealth for himself so that his soul might enjoy itself and be merry. But God said to him, "Foolish one, this night they are requiring your soul from you" (vv. 16-20). Every "today" that we have is truly the Lord's grace. Therefore, as long as we have today, as long as we still have breath, we should love the Lord and His appearing, await the Lord's coming (Phil. 3:20), and always take His coming as an encouragement. (CWWL, 1990, vol. 3, "The Up-to-date Presentation of the God-ordained Way and the Signs concerning the Coming of Christ," p. 587)

Today's Reading

In 2 Timothy 4:1 Paul said to Timothy, "I solemnly charge you before God and Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom." This is an exhortation from Paul immediately before his martyrdom. He said that he had fought the good fight, he had finished the course, and he had kept the faith, and that at the judgment seat

he would be awarded the crown of righteousness, which would be awarded to all those who have loved His appearing (vv. 6-8). He reminded Timothy, and also us, by the Lord's judgment and kingdom, that we should have a living that loves the Lord's appearing. This will cause us not to be discouraged, not to backslide, not to become weak, but to remain faithful to the end.

When the Lord comes, He will come secretly as a thief to those who love Him and will steal them away as His treasures and bring them into His presence in the heavens (Matt. 24:42-43). Hence, we need to watch and be ready (25:13; 24:44). If we desire to be raptured, first we must be filled with the heavenly breath and have oil in our vessels. If we are rooted on the earth and occupied daily with the anxieties of this life and with earthly pleasures, we will not be raptured at that time. We should remember Lot's wife... She became a pillar of salt and was left to suffer in a place of shame... If we love the world, the Lord will leave us here to pass through the great tribulation so that we may be put to shame until we become mature and are raptured.

The Lord also reminded us to take heed to ourselves and to be watchful at every time, beseeching lest our hearts be weighed down with debauchery and drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that the day of the great tribulation come upon us suddenly as a snare...We should guard our hearts and give all the room to the Lord so that we may prevail to escape all these things and stand before the Son of Man (Luke 21:34-36; cf. Rev. 12:5-6, 14).

To attain maturity is not an overnight matter. Therefore, for His coming we must prepare ourselves, love Him, and grow in Him, that at His appearing we may be mature to be raptured and receive the reward. (CWWL, 1990, vol. 3, "The Up-to-date Presentation of the God-ordained Way and the Signs concerning the Coming of Christ," pp. 587-588)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1990, vol. 3, "The Up-to-date Presentation of the God-ordained Way and the Signs concerning the Coming of Christ," ch. 7

DAY 6

Morning Nourishment

2 Cor. 6:14 Do not become dissimilarly yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership do righteousness and lawlessness have? Or what fellowship does light have with darkness?

2 Tim. 2:22 But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

We should not be one who “eats and drinks with the drunken” (Matt. 24:49). This is to drift away further, a further fall from beating the fellow slaves. You have fallen away to the world and have become a world lover. The worldly people are drunk and even drugged with worldly things. They are stupefied with the present age. To eat and drink with them is to enjoy what they enjoy. In a good sense, when you are beating the saints, you are still interested in the church life. If you were not interested in the church life, you would never criticize the elders. Because you are so “burdened for the church” and so interested in the church life, you criticize the brothers and the sisters. Once you make the decision to forget about the church, to have no interest in the church, you enter into the loving of the world, and you keep company with worldly people who are always being stupefied by this age. A saint who loves the world has no heart to talk about what elders are good or bad. He may once have been beating his fellow slaves, but now he is fully occupied with worldly enjoyment. He is now eating and drinking with the drunken. Nearly every day may be a happy day to him, and nearly every weekend a pleasant weekend, because he is enjoying the stupefying of the worldly things. (CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, “The Way to Practice the Lord’s Present Move,” p. 540)

Today’s Reading

The slothful slaves who are not so faithful in the Lord’s commission have an excuse that the Lord is not coming back immediately, that He is

delaying His coming (Matt. 24:48). As a result, they begin to mistreat fellow believers and partake of the worldly things. Their excuse is that if the Lord would return right now, everything would be solved; they would not have the time to love the world. However, the Lord's word in Matthew 24 tells us He would not take this kind of excuse. At His coming back He will cut off, or cut asunder, His unfaithful slaves (v. 51). To cut asunder does not mean to cut into pieces. When we were saved, we became attached to Christ, the anointed One (2 Cor. 1:21). Even if we are in a backslidden condition, the Lord will not cut us off. But if we remain unfaithful and slothful, at His coming back He will cut us off from this attachment. He will carry out a cutting asunder between us and Him. We will be cut off from His glorious presence into a place that will be the portion of the hypocrites. The portion of the unbelievers is eternal perdition, but the portion of the slothful slaves is a temporary, dispensational punishment.

The way to be faithful is to scatter the Lord's word, which is food to every hungry one. The Lord's household is composed not only of believers but also of sinners. Who will go to feed the hungry, sinful people? We all have to say, "Me!" We have to go... We must do everything that we can to spread the Word of God.

Also, by His mercy and through His grace we must do the best not to beat the fellow slaves, the fellow believers. Do not criticize or murmur about them. Do not speak anything negative about them, because you do not have the time to do it. Your mouth was not made for criticizing but for speaking forth Christ. To criticize the brothers is to beat the fellow slaves. This will cause us to be punished. We should also not go into the world to enjoy ourselves with the stupefied, drugged, and worldly people. We have to be the sober ones. (CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, "The Way to Practice the Lord's Present Move," pp. 541-542, 544-546)

Further Reading: Life Lessons, vol. 3, lsn. 35

WEEK 4 — HYMN >>

Hymns, #956 Soon our Lord will come, the day is drawing nigh

Hope of Glory — Waiting and Watching

- 1 Soon our Lord will come, the day is drawing nigh,
Sound of His approaching we can hear.
Watchful we must be and always on alert
That the Lord our hearts with rapture cheer.

Chorus

- Glory! glory! Christ will come again!
Glory! glory! We with Him shall reign!
With a glorious body, ever with the Lord,
Singing all His praise with glad accord.
- 2 Soon our Lord will come, the Morning Star appear;
Night is deep, and soon will dawn the day.
Never with the current of the age we go,
That from trials we'll be kept away.
 - 3 Soon our Lord will come His servants to reward;
Those who love Him then the crown will share.
Watchful we must be and treasure not the world,
Love and serve the Lord, His burden bear.
 - 4 Soon our Lord will come and in His kingdom reign;
Satan will be bound, the world subdued.
We must fight the battle, overcome the foe,
On His throne He then will us include.

