

**18 December 2022                      Journey to New Discoveries Part 13**  
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**Scripture reference: Matthew 24:32-39 (NKJV); Matthew 24:1-3 (NKJV); Matthew 24:40-44 (NKJV); Matthew 25:2-13 (NKJV);**

Glory to God. Well, I pray that the Word of God through sound has already impacted your spirit man. It has already altering your thinking, and your hearts are prepared to receive the Word of God. And you are ready to not just receive it, but to keep it and hold it and incubate it, and let it grow in your heart so that you may enjoy the very life that the Word of God brings you. Hallelujah.

That is the good thing about serving Jesus, is that He is alive and His Words are alive in us every day. Hallelujah. So, I pray that the Words of God will be alive to you and in you, and for you as we minister the Word this morning. Amen. Do you receive that? [*Congregation: Yes!*]. Good, well turn around and just greet somebody and say, "Hello, I am glad you are in church today." That was awesome sound and song. You can be seated guys. Thank you. Hello, hello, hello [*Pastor John facing the worship team and greeting them*].

Glory to Jesus. Looks like more people in this church went on holiday before the holiday started and they are back already. Praise the Lord. Next Sunday is Christmas, so we are going to have a wonderful time on Christmas day, and there is no excuse for you to stay away because it is Sunday [*Congregation laughing*]. Haha, yeah. It did work. Praise the Lord.

So, I trust you are ready for the Word this morning. '*Hierdie goeie more oggend, Sondag oggend. Goeie genugtig maar julle lyk goed vanoggend, jong. Baie deftig, uitgevat en mooi gesigte, en ek sien julle, julle, alles van julle bewe sommer van die Heilige Gees. Hallelujah. Glorie, hallelujah.*' [*Pastor John and congregation laughing*]. '*En al die Afrikaners hierso vanoggend se, "Daar kom die Hemelse taal nou uit."*' [*Pastor John and congregation continues laughing*]. Just don't ask me to start speaking Xhosa or Zulu or something like that, you know. Not yet. Hallelujah. Praise the Lord.

Well, it's important for me to start off this message today by asking you, "How do you think a god is created?" Not the God, a god. How do you think a god is created? So, a god is created by the choice and the will of men. How do I know that? Well, from the garden of Eden, when Adam and Eve were in the garden of Eden, the enemy of God came up to them, the devil, satan, he came up to them and he asked them, "Did God say...?"

And so, when they gave the wrong answer, and they chose to put their will above the will of God. Effectively their will chose themselves to be God. Don't look so stunned. You know this already. Their will put themselves equal to God. So, they created the first god, other than God, on the earth, through the choice of their will. They created a god. If we talk about...in the Bible if we talk about gods that are worshipped. It is because men have created idols or false gods or other gods that they choose to worship as a reason of their choice. Not because God made them gods. Men have made them gods. And to be sure, they use the influence of the one who wanted to

be worshipped as the alternative god to the Most High God, Satan, Lucifer. He influences them through their own desires and their own passions to create gods. Yes?

So, come let's reason together for a minute this morning. What do you think are the kinds of gods, I mean, this is not complicated. What do you think the kinds of gods are that men have created for themselves? Sport. [*Pastor John nodding his head - yes*] Money, anything else? Entertainment. Power, prestige. All manner of things that you can think of that are in the earth, that are alternatives. Man has created for themselves.

So, let's take something that you and I may not think is a god. But let's just take somebody who works 16 hours every day, because they want to achieve. Do you think work becomes their god? (*Congregation answers; Yes.*) Because they have made no place for the Most High God. And they don't do it because they want to worship the Most High God, they do it because they want achievement. They want the results of their labour, their intelligence and their opportunity, and whatever else might be attached to that. So, that can become a god.

But in our modern-day world, if somebody is working 16 hours a day to achieve, nobody will say you are worshipping the god of work or self-achievement. They will say, "Keep going, boy, you got your values in the right way. The harder you work, the better you are going to do." Yes? Like somebody mentioned, sport has become a god. And so, I tell you what. All you got to do is this afternoon when the soccer world cup final is played, watch the fans in the stadium. Watch them. If they are not dancing and worshipping, I mean, you know, there are some guys, they even when one of their heroes comes around, they even go like this. (*Pastor John imitates bowing/worshipping*) I mean, they actually say, you know, you are the god of soccer, or the god of rugby, or whatever it is. They actually do that.

I mean, it is known, it is a fact that this is, there are alternative gods in the earth. And they are created by men. They are not just some weird thing that one day God decided. Why do you think abortion and the right to abortion has become such a big deal? The reason why it has become such a big deal is because men do not want to take the responsibility of life, they only want to have the capability of doing acts of immorality, without responsibility. And so always the argument for abortion comes up, "Well, what about the person who has been raped?" And so they take an entire value system and moral system and they reduce it to a marginal viewpoint of rape.

You know, and that so that the god, the god that wants you to offer up children to him, can do so without knowing that actually, you are offering up your children, the children, the newborn babies, you are offering them up as sacrifices to a god. Jah. So if we recognize and understand that the world that we live in is full of god worship. It is full of idolatry. The Bible often calls it idolatry. I'm just using these words today: god worship - different kinds of gods to worship. Well, then you can understand how important it is for us to make decisions for our lives that are for the Most High God, and continually make that decision for the Most High God. Hallelujah.

How many of you have ever had an experience where...it doesn't happen so much today because they tend to catch you with cameras so that you get the surprise in the post or email or whatever it is. I don't think we have a postal system anymore. I think everything is by "epos, ne?" But so, you get a Whatsapp, or you get a message, or you get an email, and it tells you you have got a surprise picture that has been taken of you speeding. But how many of you have been ever in your life going too fast, and then somebody jumps out in the middle of the road and [*Pastor John sighs*], your heart sinks? And then you say to yourself, "I should not have been speeding. I should not have been going so fast. Stupid. What was I thinking?"

Well, if you were faced with the same choice again, you would speed again. Because the only reason you change your mind is because you got caught. And the penalty of getting caught is a horrible thing. Jah? Well, for most people, the enemy has been able to fool humanity into saying there is no consequence. Because you can always manage the consequence somewhere down the line. So that is why credit cards are so popular. And that is why credit as a whole is so popular. And that is why having an immoral lifestyle is popular because somehow people feel like they can skirt around and they can manage the consequences. I will tell you what though, God is not mocked. And He says clearly in His Word, that if you sow to the flesh, you will from the flesh, reap death and destruction. But if you sow to the Spirit, you will from the Spirit reap life. And that is an important thing for us to remember.

Jesus preached two very long sermons in the Bible. He preached...the longest sermon that was recorded in the Bible was Matthew Chapter five, which begins with "Blessed are those." And it is the longest, written, recorded sermon that Jesus preached that we know of. The second longest sermon that He preached, was on the back of a question that His disciples asked Him as they were walking out of the temple. And in Matthew Chapter 24, which I had been ministering on: **<sup>1</sup> Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. <sup>2</sup> And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down."** (Matthew 24:1-2 NKJV). And then He sat on the Mount of Olives, with the disciples privately and He began to preach, He began to teach, He began to give them a discourse about the future.

I want to just give you two things that happened in this prophecy, this part of the discourse that Jesus gave occurred 70 years, 70 AD. So, Jesus, around this time, was 33 years old, and I began to say to you. I was teaching you last week and the week before the scripture that says, Tell us **"...when all these things will be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"** (Matthew 24:3 NKJV)

Then He goes on to say, watch out, you will be deceived. There are two things that happen. Jesus talked about the stones of the temple will not be left standing one after the other. Exactly one generation later, less than. Well, in the 40th year after Jesus was crucified, a man who had aspirations to become the emperor, the king of Rome, if you like, he marched into Jerusalem, and he committed all manner of evil atrocities on the Jewish people. He literally, after he plundered and took thousands of Jews into slavery. He literally burned and broke down the temple, to the point

where archaeologists that have done extensive studies on the temple literally find only one remaining stone and fragments of other parts of the stones of the temple.

Jesus said, "Not one stone will be remaining upon another stone." They literally could not and have not been able to find two stones from the temple. Only one, one stone and remaining bits of stones that came from the temple because of how Titus, the emperor, decimated the temple. That prophecy or this teaching by Jesus was 100% fulfilled in one generation, in one generation.

Do you remember that when Jesus was being crucified, Pilate was offering them Barabbas, or Jesus, they all shouted, "We want Jesus," you know, "Give us Barabbas, crucify Jesus," and then they all shouted, "Let His blood be on our hands." And so it was, less than 40 years later, all the Jews that were alive at that time were killed or taken into slavery by the Roman emperor or the future Roman Emperor.

People think, you know, in a time of frenzy when everybody is together, and such was the people pressure that even the strongest disciples, namely Peter, he betrayed Jesus, under people pressure, of frenzied crowds that were ready to kill and destroy just about everybody. That prophecy has been fulfilled. The rest of the prophecy and the teaching that happens in Matthew Chapter 24 has not yet occurred. If you remember, last week, I said to you say this, say this after me, "It has not yet happened. It has not yet come. The time is not yet."

Remember, the time has not yet. There is a whole bunch of things that happen that Jesus talks about. He talks about great tribulation that is going to happen, and He talks about many things that will occur. He says, there is going to be great, there will be false prophets, false Christs, false prophets will occur. There will be famines. There will be earthquakes. There will be many things that will happen on the earth and the time is not yet. But when these things begin to increase, then you can know that whatever is going to occur at the end of the age; occur at the end of the age, might be coming close. Which is why I have never really wanted to preach much on this subject because as I have said to you previously, just about anybody I have ever heard preach on the subject has always got the date wrong, or they have put an emphasis on something that is more, it's more about, "Look at what is happening in the world today."

So one of the things that happens, and I am just going to, I am going to just skip through these, and then I am going to come back to talk about one or two of these issues today. Jesus talks about the parable of the fig tree. And He says, <sup>32</sup> When the fig tree blossoms **you know that summer is near.** <sup>33</sup> **So also when you see all these things that you know it's near?** <sup>34</sup> **Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.** <sup>35</sup> **Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.**

Well, that fig tree blossom is symbolic of Israel coming back as a nation and bearing fruit as a nation. And so that generation would be 40 years. And so when Israel became a nation again and received nation status in 1948, people began to count the clock. And so then when He didn't come, when the thing didn't happen after 1988, then people say, "Well, it wasn't the Roman calendar, it was the Hebrew calendar and that calendar is different to... So that's why He didn't come then." And

so the date kept shifting to accommodate the end of the age or that generation passing away.

Well, here we are in 2022, going in 2023. It is long past that and many people that taught this didn't actually get it right. Verse 36, says, <sup>36</sup> **“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.”** <sup>37</sup> **But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.** <sup>38</sup> **For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,** <sup>39</sup> **and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be (Matthew 24:32-39 NKJV).**

Now, I mean, it is hard to imagine the catastrophe and the chaos that occurred when the floods hit the earth when Noah was around. If you can imagine, people were watching Noah build an ark, and he had all these dimensions and why would people ever have to build a boat those days? The earth was extremely fertile and very productive and people lived very comfortably from all the things that the earth yielded and provided. The earth had not yet been filled with all of the sin of men. And so the earth was productive. They didn't need to go fishing with boats. They didn't know what boats were. So when Noah started to build an ark, they wondered what this contraption was. And they mocked him and they said all kinds of weird things about Noah, “What is he doing? What is he doing? What is he doing?” Okay.

They kept on marrying, obviously, why must we stop for one nut job, and his family? You know, we are going to carry on lives, we are going to eat, we are going to drink, we are going to be merry, we are going to marry, we are going to give in marriage, and we are going to continue our lives as normal. So we don't have to change anything, because Noah was building an ark. Well, they didn't know that Noah had favour before God because he was a, he was a man who feared God.

And so when the time came, they must have marvelled at an event that they began to see unfolding before them, where all the animals were just making their way to the ark. And these animals kept coming into the ark. And they must have thought, well, this is quite a strange thing happening all of these animals coming into just and they are just showing up at the ark. What do you think Noah did? He went looking at the whole earth for many years, herding animals? No, God spoke to those animals and told them to *hamba* you know, get into that ark. And those animals, they just made their way over there. And Noah did his job and herded them into the ark. And these people must have been watching what was going on.

And well, the day came when God said, “Let's shut this ark up and it is going to start raining.” Can you imagine after a day of rain, two days of rain, maybe it wasn't so bad? But then it kept raining. And then the waters from the deep began to come up into the earth. And suddenly everybody began to realise after days and days of rain, there was no way to go. This is not stopping. And suddenly, this ark is floating. It is no longer static on the ground. It is floating. And now they want to get on the ark because they realize this is the only place to get saved. But there is no way of getting into it can you imagine? Must have been terrible. It must have been a terribly destructive thing.

So why did God do it? Because the Bible says that the heart of man was exceedingly evil. And he purposed whatever he purposed in his heart, he did it. And you can say to yourself, "But that is not me. I am not an exceedingly evil person." "Yes, you are." Without Jesus you are. And if you didn't have Jesus, you would be. The only reason that; the only thing that stops humanity from descending into one big cesspool of crime and self-indulgence, more than it is already, is the fact that the Holy Spirit is present on the earth because Jesus died on the cross.

And there are some things that yet have to be fulfilled by prophecy. This is a lesson for us because Jesus says that before the event that is going to call an end to the time of the church, and I am going to refer to it as that, rather than the end of the age, I am going to refer to it as the end of the time of the church. Okay? Until the time comes when it is the end of the time of the church, people are not actually going to take God seriously. They are not going to take God seriously. And the Holy Spirit is here to prevent more than the crime that is happening on the earth. It is only not escalating. I mean, whatever control there is on the earth, it is because the church is here. And the Holy Spirit uses the prayers of the church to hold back the absolute complete takeover of crime and immorality and evil and sin on the whole earth.

But with the advent of the technology growth that is happening throughout the earth, it is becoming more and more acceptable, and it is easier for sin to be everywhere all at once. So you can get a dictator, making a decision in China, to allow an experiment to happen on biological warfare, as to what would the impact of the pandemic be on the earth and alter the genetic viruses that can destroy certain human capabilities. Let's see what this has on the earth. Well, you might say, "Well, did the Communist Party of China decide to do that?" Probably. Probably.

If someone wanted to find a way of controlling the earth, and he was being manipulated by a spiritual force that saw the only way of the future is to control all of humanity to try to control the church. Look, he tried, he tried to control the future of the world by killing Jesus. And the Bible says that if they had known what would be the outcome of killing Jesus, they would never have killed Him. But they couldn't see what the outcome would be. So they killed Jesus. So you think he is going to stop there? He is coming after the Jesus look-alikes. The Christians. The church. He is not going to stop until there is no more Church on the earth. He is going to go after the church.

So, do you think he worries much about the church that is weak and ineffective and inefficient? He doesn't have to worry about them, they shut up all by themselves. They do. They don't want to talk about Jesus, they don't want to live like Jesus. They want to live like everybody else lives. They want to eat and drink and marry and give in marriage, and they want to continue like there is no other future that is necessary, other than eating, drinking, and behaving as everybody else behaves. So as long as I am successful in the system, I don't really care about my church life. I will do church on the side. Because I need to. I will just do church on the side, it is an insurance card for me. I will do church. But for the rest, I am going to make my own way in life.

So the devil doesn't have to worry about people like that. Because he is already got them following their own desires, their own will, and making choices for themselves. And you know how those Christians appease their conscience. They say, "Lord, lead

us, please.” And then they go ahead and do what they want to do anyway. Come on. And so do you think the devil bothers and worries about those people? He doesn't worry about them. They are already making themselves gods. The people the devil is most concerned about are those people that have decided to follow God with all their heart, with all their life with everything. And he tries to stop them.

I firmly believe that the scripture in Romans where says, where sin abounds, grace abounds much more. It is because God makes much more grace available through the Christians on the earth that have chosen to make the grace available through prayer, through life, and through giving themselves to God. That is how He makes the grace available. Jesus goes on and He says, **Then two men**, so will the Son of man be, the coming of the Son of man be. <sup>40</sup> **Then two men will be in the field one: will be taken and the other left.** <sup>41</sup> **Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left.** <sup>42</sup> **Watch therefore, for you not do not know what hour your Lord is coming.** <sup>43</sup> **But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.** If I had known that I would get a traffic fine I would have not speeded. Right? No. It is because you don't know that you do speed. So we need to have a greater strength in our lives and ourselves.

Don't we? <sup>44</sup> **Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. Matthew 24:43-44 (NKJV).** So that is how I ended the message last week. I said it doesn't really matter to me what theological perspective you have. What level of pre-trib, post-trib, mid-trib, whatever trib you want to talk about tribulation... post-millennial, pre-millennial, mid-millennial, whatever millennial doctrine you have, doesn't really matter to me if I am living my life every day as one that is expecting and fully living for Jesus. Then I am not going to be the one that is going to get caught out. If He takes me, I am there already in Spirit, I am there. It would be a surprise to me, me personally, it would be a surprise to me if I got left behind. Huh?

He goes on to say and He talks about the faithful servant and the evil servant. That is verse 45. And then He goes into the next chapter. And I want you just to see chapters 24, and 25, as one sermon. He talks about the wise and the foolish virgins. And then from verse 14 onwards, in chapter 25, He talks about the parable of the talents. And then He goes on to talk about in verse 31, the Son of Man will judge the nations, He will take the sheep nations and He will put them on His right and the goat nations and He will put them on His left, and judgment will occur. And then, He talks about and then, at the end of it, there is a plot to kill Jesus. And then there is the story of the anointing of Jesus at Bethany. And depending on how the Lord leads us to talk about all of these things, I will share it with you. Because I believe that there is, God is going to be doing a really supernatural work for us; in our health, in our finances, in our relationships, and the things that are important to God and important to us to fulfil what God has called us to do. He is going to restore these things to us. And He is going to do it now. He is going to do it now, because we got a job to do for Him. And this is a season where we got to live for Him, not for ourselves.

And so today, I mean, hasn't it be wonderful, hasn't it been wonderful that we are... that we are having such awesome *Sound and Song*? So I am going to just minister

what I can today. I am not going to minister all of what I could have done. I am going to focus for a moment on the parable of the virgins.

And so He goes on to say in Chapter 25, verse one, <sup>1</sup> **“Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. <sup>2</sup> Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. (Matthew 25:1-2 NKJV).** Do you see that Jesus was talking about - one will be in the field, two will be in a field, one will go and one will be left? Two will be grinding meal, one will go and one will be left.

I will tell you what, just because you are married to a Christian doesn't mean to say you are going to heaven. And if you are married to someone that is dedicated to God, and you are not, doesn't mean to say you are going to heaven because your partner is dedicated to God. Your walk with God is a personal individual walk with God - personal. You can not piggyback your way into heaven.

You know, there is that old saying, *he got grandfathered into a position*. You know, in other words, someone nurtured him and took care of him and grandfathered him into a place. Someone was watching out for him, someone was taking care of him. You can't grandfather your way into the grace of God.

You have to apply the grace of God for yourself. You have to live in faith and the love of God for yourself. Which is why I have an accurate understanding, Pastor Sharon and I in our walk with God, we have an accurate understanding that she can't pray my prayers for me. She can pray for me, but she can't pray my prayers for me that I am supposed to pray before God.

She can't do what I am called to do. She can't do those things for me, I have to do those things for God. My sons are not going to heaven, because they are my natural-born sons. I will tell you, it was a real thing for me when my sons were growing up, and I realized that the potential exists that they will grow up with my weakness. Because whatever my behaviour pattern was out of fear and unbelief, they would adopt it. Because they don't adopt it by words that you speak, they adopt things by the behaviour that you live. Only the grace of God and the intervention of God could change it, which is where the church comes into play.

I have said it many times, and sometimes when this comes out of my mouth, and I know Pastor Sharon says it a number, has said it a number of times... It feels really strange to say this, but I will tell you, all of the men of God that are our faith generals, our spiritual leaders, have said it more times than I have said it. “You do not make a decision for income or money or a career, or an education based on geographic location, or what is best for you, you make a decision for your life based on the church that God has called you to.” And sometimes, you have to change geographic location to get to the church that God has called you to because that is the way God works.

“Well, why is it so important, Pastor John, what church you are called to?” Let me put it to you this way; what if this pastor, standing on this stage, was supposed to be connected to Jerry Savelle, and fifteen years ago, or twenty years ago I got offended by something Jerry Savelle said or did to me? Or I disagreed with something that he



did or disagreed with something that he taught, and I became offended with it and I said, "Pfft, it is not that important to be connected to one person, I can be connected to other people."

And so then, I just, because of offence, I walked away from Jerry Savelle and I just connect with other people because I got offended, or I didn't like what he said about how to live your life in God. I got offended and I started connecting with other preachers. I wonder where we would be. It is quite possible that I would not be in the ministry today. It is quite possible that I might not even be married to Pastor Sharon today. Because being out of the will of God that way, allows the devil to come in and to steal, kill and to destroy all kinds of things in my life, because I blatantly disobeyed God as to who I am called to, and consequently who I am called with.

So, we are all called together. "Pastor John, people come and go from church all the time. So this is a normal thing with Christians, they come and go from church all the time, and they move to this city for a job, and they go to that place for a career, and they get a job opportunity there, You know, new entrepreneurial opportunity, some new job thing comes up and so they moved to another town and there is better schools in that town or better places in that town than in this town, and so they leave, they leave churches all the time Christians and churches all the time, for all manner of reasons. So, why shouldn't we? Well, that is what happened in the days of Noah.

This guy that preaches you have to be connected to a church that God's called you to, I mean he is a bit crazy doesn't he understand that life is about a lot more choices? You know, he is a bit radical. You shouldn't listen to that. He is a little bit radical. Well, you know, you can think like that. But I have watched many, many people's lives take a different turn and things happen in their lives and nobody will actually put it down to the fact that years ago, they made a wrong choice, out of the will of God they made a human choice and so five, ten, fifteen years later things are happening in their lives and they want to say, "Well, how can this happen to me?"

So, <sup>2</sup> **Now five of them were wise, these virgins and five were foolish.** <sup>3</sup> **Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them.** <sup>4</sup> **But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.** <sup>5</sup> **But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept (Matthew 25:2-5 NKJV).** Please, please join me in recognizing that they are all virgins. So this is a category of people. So let's use it, this is a category of people that in human terms would be called innocent, pure, untouched. Yes? So if you're a born-again, Christian, are you innocent, pure and untouched? Because your spirit man is born again. You are righteous. You are perfect in your Spirit, washed by the blood of Jesus, washed by the blood.

So if we all put ourselves all of us in that category of purity. We can do that. So they are all virgins, and they all have oil. They all have lamps and they all have oil. They all had the same things at their disposal to prepare for an event that is coming. Some of them said, "You know, we don't know when the Bridegroom is coming. So we are going to take some extra oil with us." So they prepared ahead of time for what could happen. The other virgins said, "We've got a lamp, it holds so much oil, we are in the right category of people, we don't need to take anything more." But that delay occurred and then when suddenly the Bridegroom came, and it took longer than expected. The ones that didn't prepare with extra oil, they suddenly realized he could

be delayed beyond our level and so according to Jewish custom, the bridegroom would need to see the burning lamp to know that you are available waiting for him to come and fetch you. The bride to be would display the lamp typically, they would put it in a house in the window and the bridegroom would come and fetch his bride and engage in a ceremony of marriage. It was a sign that she is waiting for him.

So in this case, the burning lamp was essential. No burning lamp, no sign to the bridegroom that you are the one that he is coming for. So that is why there is this whole panic about we don't have enough oil. So the ones who say, "We don't have enough oil," turned to the ones that have got more oil and say, "Give us some of your oil," and they said, "No, no, we are here for the Bridegroom not for you, you should have prepared ahead of time for what's coming." So they make a decision amongst themselves all five of them let's go and buy for ourselves more oil and while they're gone to buy more oil the Bridegroom arrives. So their timing was wrong. Their preparation was wrong therefore their timing was wrong.

So, a couple of things that I just want to say to you today. One thing is, you know, Brother Jerry is not Jesus. I mean, I know it sounds very nice Jerry, John, and Jesus. And I am happy to be in that category, with those guys and with my Lord. But you know, Jerry is not Jesus. But Brother Jerry is our spiritual leader; he watches over my soul, and he watches over us as a people. He is coming at the beginning of February. It is prudent for us to prepare. And this weekend was about preparation. It is prudent for us to prepare our hearts, and our Spirit. It is prudent for us to take leave and be here to prepare our hearts as much as we can. Be available to receive and participate in what God is bringing to us. In other words, we are topping up with oil now so when he comes that we are not low on oil and running around doing business out there and running around doing last-minute deals out there, while we should be in church.

As you know, we are setting up our schedule to accommodate you as much as we can, so that we have meetings in the afternoons and the evenings, and on the weekends we are going to have all-day church, Saturday, and Sunday. We are going to have our last church services on Monday afternoon and evening. If I had my way I would have church all day every day from the day that he arrives. Because to run around doing business in the day-time and then come, and you say, "What about the kids doing school?" Do you think they are going to actually fail because they are giving God five days?

Hey? Do you think their whole lives are going to fall apart because they miss school for three days? "But you don't understand, I never missed school when I was a kid and my kids never miss school." Well, that seems to be an institution for you. It seems to be almost a religious law to you. I wonder what would it be to break it for God. You think it would be uncomfortable for you? Probably. You think it would be worthwhile? Definitely. What kind of a thing do you think it would tell your kids that you are prepared to do? Are you prepared to put everything on hold to go after God?

"Well, I don't see you doing that." No, you weren't around when our kids were little. And you don't know that I put all manner of incentive trips, I gave it back to the company and requested if it is possible, that we take that money and use it for trips

that we would take our kids with us, and go overseas to conferences where the Word was preached, rather than have Sharon and I go with a bunch of people to five-star hotels and places like the Cayman Islands or the Hayman Islands in Australia and ski holidays in Europe and all kinds of places that would be very nice for us, but that wasn't where my focus was.

My focus was on God I wanted more of God and so we took that money and used it and took our kids with us and we went to church for weeks at a time, that was what we did. Ja neh. I think I got to move along here. So, <sup>5</sup> **But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.** It is a thing that happens to Christians, you know is that, there are things that can cause us to be in a place of fatigue if you like. But if you got oil burning, you won't miss out. It is only when you have got too little oil, in other words too little relationship, intimate, meaningful relationship with the Holy Spirit that you will run out.

So, they were all slumbering, they well sleeping.<sup>6</sup> **And at midnight a cry was heard;** that means some was awake. **Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him** <sup>7</sup> **Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.** <sup>8</sup> **And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'** <sup>9</sup> **But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'** <sup>10</sup> **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.** <sup>11</sup> **"Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!'** <sup>12</sup> **But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'** <sup>13</sup> **"Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming. Matthew 25:2-13 (NKJV)**

Well, what I said last week applies the same, "Are you ready?" If I am living in the state of readiness with my walk with God, I am focused on the Word, I am focused my life with God. I am living daily for the will of God to be done in my life and in your life. That is my assignment. If I am focused on that daily then I will be ready, I am ready everyday, I am ready for Him to say anything to me. So how do you know when that day is coming, Pastor John? I don't. I don't know. I got reading to you that the angels don't know, Jesus doesn't know, only God the Father knows what the end of time is going to be. I can look at all kinds of signs around me and I can wonder at them, my job is to stay prepared and ready. My job is to have my Holy Ghost oil filled up, Hallelujah! Praise the Lord.

My job is to be wise and not be foolish. So, what is a wise person, what is a wise Christian look like in our modern day world. What is the wise Christian look like? So, you know, you might say to me Pastor John I think I am wise because I manage my money very carefully, I do come to church regularly. And you know I even tithe, and I consider myself to have my life in order. Well that is standard practice for every virgin. You haven't told me anything yet that tells me you are ready. Come on. Please, don't get too quiet on me here this morning. I mean you are allowed to say; Amen, then I know you are still awake and not slumbering and sleeping. For just now I am going to 'cometh' and jump off the stage and come and shout at you and see if you are awake.

How then do we say that we are ready? Well, I might ask you to say; “What is your attitude towards the church? What is the attitude that you have towards other Christians in the church? What is it that you are...What kind of gods are you serving for you, that are important to you more than what God says you should be doing?”

You know, I am going to close now as I did last week and I am going to close with the same advice that I gave last week. And yes, I do listen to my own messages over and over again, because I consider myself to be a vessel that the Holy Spirit uses to bring forth messages to you. If I then believe that about what God has called me to do, then I should listen to my own messages and have messages that God can minister to my own spirit man through the same Word. As I listen to Brother Jerry and I listen to Pastor Sharon and others that I listen to. I am determined to be in a state of readiness. Amen.

So, I finish with this; you will hear it - my whole life is based on this. My whole life is based on this. How do you destroy, or how do you build a good marriage? One day at a time. How do you destroy a marriage? One day at a time. And so, how do you prepare yourself to be ready for God? Well, one day at a time. You have to live one day at a time. You got to live in faith now. You have to live in the Word now, every day. Everyday. That means that you have to make decisions every day that are God-based, not self-based because if you are making decisions that are based on your plan for your life then your plan will dominate everything that you think God has got planned for you. You want to test it? Do you want to test it?

I will tell you what you do; take all your plans, scratch through it and say, “I am not going to go ahead with any of my plans. I am going to wait until God speaks.” See if you can do that. See if you can do that. “But Pastor John, that is just not wise to live like that.” Really? Well, who tells you what’s wise? Well, surely people have to live life with a plan. Nobody lives life without a plan. You got to have plans. Come on, everybody has got to have a plan.

How do you know whether your plan is a God plan? Huh? How do you know whether your plan is a God plan? I can tell you how you can measure yourself. Just take stock of your life and see how much time you spend every day asking God what He wants you to do this day as opposed to what you prepare to plan for this day.

Keith Moore, I listened to a message by Keith Moore when he was in the early years of his ministry. He was just transitioning, he was doing some work for Rhema, Kenneth Hagin, at the Bible School and he was running his own travelling ministry at that time, and the majority of his income had now transitioned from being at Rheima to his own travelling ministry. And he was getting to the last quarter of the year the last three months of the year and he had no speaking engagements. If you are in a travelling ministry and you have no speaking engagements for three months then that is a quarter of your year you have no income coming in. So he went to the Lord about it and He said, “Lord I got no speaking engagements what is happening?” He said, “I want you to prepare to have no speaking engagements at the last quarter of the year. I want you to trust Me.” He said, “Well, that is all good for You to say.” He said, “But isn’t that what you are teaching the other people to trust God?” He said, “Yes.” So He said, “Trust Me. I want you to have no plans to preach.” Huh.

So he went to his wife, Phillis, and he said, "Phillis, I want to tell you what the Lord told me. He said I must have, make no plans to preach in the last quarter of the year." She said, "You know what that means; no income." He said, "I know, but God wants me to trust Him." Come on. Do you see where God was showing him that he was busy putting his trust in his ability to make speaking arrangements rather than trusting God without speaking engagements? God was showing him that he was busy creating an idol, he was creating a god. Some preachers might say that is a noble god he has just created. There is nothing noble about it. Either you trust God or you don't.

So, he proceeded to virtually shut down his ministry and keep paying people the few staff members that he had. Pay salaries, pay rent, pay whatever he had to pay for the three months. And a couple of weeks into the three months he got a cheque from someone that just decided, just decided by the Holy Spirit they wanted to bless Him and so they sent him a cheque and that amount of that cheque took care of three months worth of living expenses. And God said, "See, see you need to make all your plans to live or can you trust Me to live?"

Uh, but Pastor John, that is a Pastor. That's easy for a Pastor to do. Okay, you think it's easy for you to shut down your source of income. I mean if you just look at it from a business, say I am not going to do any products, I am not going to do any sales, I am not going to do anything for three months I am just going to wait on God. How easy is that to do Empie? That's not going to be easy for a business like yours? Hey. No. I mean I am just trying to tell you, you think it is easy for a preacher to do that, it is not so easy. If you are a lawyer, a doctor, someone who sells on time, shut your business for three months and see how that works for you.

Well, how am I going to do that? Well, you know he was obeying the Holy Spirit. I am really trying to indicate to you what kind of god are you building and what kind of god are you serving. Is it the working god, the business god, the god that says I have got to provide for myself or you're ready to put your hands in the hand of God. Well, what is this all about? The one is I have got a lamp, I have got oil in it. I do not need more than that. I am ready and I am set to go when the Bridegroom comes. Really? Why don't you make time for God and give Him the extra that you've got so you are ready in your spirit to face what God has got coming? Amen. Praise the Lord.

You know, some people might say to be a virgin, waiting for a bridegroom is a privileged position. I would say it is. I certainly believe that the church of the Lord Jesus Christ is in a privileged position. We already have salvation, we already have the Holy Spirit, and we already have eternal salvation. We already have a measure of security in our lives because we know who the living God is. But, there is more to this than just being a born-again Christian. And, remember I go back to this thing that the biggest thing that is going to come back and bite us, is do not be deceived. Do not be deceived.

So, what is deception look like? Deception is that we can live like everybody else lives and we pat ourselves on the back because we live like everybody else, and we live, and we make decisions that live at the highest possible level that everybody else lives at. At the smallest percentile of people we are achievers. We are successful. We made it happen. We. We! Me. I. Me. We. Me! I. I made it happen. We

did it! We are so smart. We are so good at it. We are so careful in our planning. We were so diligent in what we did to make it happen. We executed it to perfection! We are so smart! Shame on those poor people that didn't quite get it right. We got it right. Weagh! (*Ps John gesture vomiting*)

God says, that kind of behaviour is lukewarm, because you pat yourself on the back for being a Christian, but you pat yourself on the back because you made it happen. So, who do you give glory to? God or me? Don't make me choose. They are equally important to me. Not to God. He says if you find yourself in that situation, I will spit you out of my mouth. Because you neither hot nor cold, you just carry on. Those kind of virgins get left behind. They don't make it.

Okay. I think I stood on enough toes today. It was really (*Pastor John letting air from his mouth*), Lord. You don't know what happens to me when I go home from here. I got to fight with the devil who comes to my mind, and he says "You overstepped your mark with people today, they not coming back next week because you stood on their toes so bad." And, then surprise, surprise I tell the devil to shut-up. Go away, I am called to do this, And then next week you all show up anyway! That tells me that you like it. Jah. When you sign-up for this church, you didn't sign-up for a wishy-washy Pastor. You sign-up for a Pastor that is going to speak the truth to you in love - in love. I am going to speak the truth in love and I won't quit. Hallelujah. Glory to Jesus. Praise the Lord. [*Pastor Sharon, shouting "Thank you Pastor John"*].

Thank you. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Glory to Jesus. Praise the Lord. Glory to Jesus. Praise the Lord. Ja, the truth will save us. It saves our souls, it saves all of us all the time and I thank God that we have the truth of God's Word that we can live by. Ja. Praise the Lord.

One of the reasons, one of the reasons God brought me to be with Brother Jerry, Brother Copeland and all these wonderful men of God that have followed God all their lives, is because I heard a sound of the truth of God's Word. I heard a sound that when I was desperate to have the God-difference in my life, I heard the same uncompromising truth that came through them to me. I was talking to someone here at church after last Sunday's meeting and they were just saying to me, "You know, sometimes when we listen to you we can hear Brother Jerry and Brother Copeland, the sound of them coming out of your mouth." I said, "Thank God for that! I would find it more difficult if you didn't hear anything of them coming out of my mouth," because then that means that everything they have been teaching for all these years hasn't really changed me. I hope you hear just about everything that comes out of their mouth coming out of my mouth. Ja. Hallelujah.

This is not a time in our lives to play games. Let me tell you, your life is at stake, your children's lives at stake, your grandchildren's lives are at stake, there is a lot at stake here because God has got us positioned here in this nation, in this time, connected the way that we are connected because we are the people that God has called to make a difference. And if we can't preach the truth, then who's going to preach the truth? And so, we have to do it.

Won't you stand with me, please? We have an hour left before there is Message Moments at 12:30 and then at 2 o'clock Chariots will be ready to ride. Hallelujah. Praise the Lord.

Won't you put your hand on your heart and make this declaration with me and say; I am a child of God. Jesus lives in my heart. I love Jesus because Jesus first loved me. I thank you, Lord, that I am going to Heaven. And I am ready, I will always be ready for the moment when You call me and whatever that time is, I will be ready, in Jesus' name. Until then, I live as a son of God in the Kingdom of God for the Kingdom of God on this earth, in Jesus' name. Amen. Hallelujah.

Well, a number of you have already gone on holiday and come back, but there is some that are leaving today and, I know even, and some leaving tomorrow and different times and I just want to pray, if you will agree with me that as you travel, the Word of God goes before you, He send His angels ahead of you to protect you, no weapon that is formed against you will prosper and that you will even be aware of something before it happens and you will be led by the Holy Spirit to prevent you from having any danger happening to you. Amen. You will be blessed going out of your home and you'll be blessed coming into your home and you will find nothing missing and nothing broken when you come back and everything that you do is blessed, in Jesus' name. Glory to God. You will be blessed in your rest, you will have peace, you will have joy and you will hear from God what He has for your future. Do you agree with this prayer? Everybody said? [*Congregation: Amen!*]

Christmas. I'll see you Christmas. *Kersfees. Kom gereed om geskenke te kry en geskenke te gee. Amen.*