**Watching and Waiting…. August 10th, 2020**

There are 144 Bible results for the word ‘**WATCH**” from the NKJV.

There are 9 for the word ‘**Watchman**’.

Let’s take a look at the popular parable, **The Parable of the Ten Virgins** found in Matthew 25:1-13.

 \*\*\*\*\* Read parable \*\*\*\*\*

 There has been much debate as to the meaning of these words of our Savior. At least one aspect of this parable can be known with absolute certainty. The bridegroom is Jesus Christ, and the parable describes HIS return. In the OT, God pictures Himself as the ‘husband’ of Israel, and in the NT, Christ is pictured as the bridegroom of the Church. The Church is described in Scripture as the bride of Christ (Eph:5:25-32)

Of interpretive significance is which return of Christ is this? Is it His return for the rapture of the Church, or is it His return to set up the Millennial Kingdom at the end of the Tribulation? Regardless of which return it is, the lessons to be learned are relevant to both.

The overall thrust of the parable is that His people must **be ready**. **Being ready** means preparing for whatever contingency arises in our lives and keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus at all times while we eagerly await His coming. As seen in the fact that all the virgins were sleeping when the call came indicates that it doesn’t matter what we are doing when Christ returns. We may be working, eating, sleeping, or pursuing leisure activities. Whatever it is, we must be doing it in such a way that we don’t have to ‘make things right’ (get more oil) when He comes. This would apply to either the coming of Christ for His Church or for the Tribulation saints as they await His second coming.

**Being ready** for Christ’s return ultimately involves one major thing which manifests itself in several areas of our lives. If we would **be ready** for Christ’s return, we must be born again through saving faith in Christ Jesus…His death, burial and literal resurrection from the dead. (John 3:16, 14:6, Romans 10:9 and 10; I Corinthians 15:1-4; Eph: 2:1-10) Saving faith in Jesus Christ will manifest itself in every aspect of our lives. The fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22) will begin to show. A desire for greater holiness and less sin will be apparent. And a consistent looking for HIS coming will mark our lives. One of the best passages articulating what saving grace and faith look like in a believer’s life is Titus 2:11-14, “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to men. It teaches us to say ‘NO’ to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we **wait** for the blessed hope – the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for Himself a people that are His very own, eager to do what is good.”

The five virgins who have the extra oil represent the truly born again who are looking with eagerness to the coming of Christ. They have saving faith and have determined that, whatever occurs, be it lengthy time or adverse circumstances, when Jesus returns, they will **be looking** with eagerness. The five virgins without the oil represent false believers who enjoy the benefits of the Christian community without true love for Christ. They are more concerned about the party than about longing to see the bridegroom. Their hope is that their association with true believers (give us some of your oil v8) will bring them into the kingdom at the end. This of course is never the case. One person’s faith in Jesus cannot save another. The ‘Lord, Lord’ and ‘I do not know you’ of verses 11&12 fit very well with Jesus’ condemnation of the false believers of Matthew 7:21-23, “Not everyone who says to Me, “Lord, Lord” will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?” And then I will declare to them, “I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.”

May we not be found “going away to make the purchase (v10) when Christ returns. Take the time now to fill your lamp with oil . **Keep waiting and watching with joy and anticipation.**

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**Are you a watchman?** The Hebrew word translated ‘watchman’ means ‘one who looks out’, ‘one who spies,’ or ‘one who **watches**.’ There are many references to **watchmen** who kept an eye out for physical threats in the Bible. The Bible also refers to **watchmen** in a spiritual sense. God appointed prophets as spiritual **watchmen** over the souls of His people. “Son of man, I have made you a **watchman** for the people of Israel; so hear the word I speak and give them warning from me.” Ezekiel 33:7 and also Hosea 9:8

The role of spiritual **watchman** continues in the NT in the form of church leaders. Hebrews 13:17 says, “Obey your spiritual leaders, and do what they say. Their works is to watch over your souls, and they are accountable to God. Give them reason to do this with joy and not with sorrow. That would certainly not be for your benefit.”

In another sense, God calls not just leaders, but all Christians to be **watchmen**. Jesus told His disciples to “**watch** and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Mark 14:38). We should all be ready and **waiting** for the Lord’s return; “Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, like servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them **watching** when he comes. Truly I tell you, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the middle of the night or toward daybreak. But understand this; If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour you do not expect him.” (Luke 12:35-40)

To close, I’d like to pray with you a prayer that Henry Blackaby penned.

“Father, we hear You say, “I have made you a **watchman** unto your people.” Father, help us to identify Your activity in our life. Help us to feel the weight of giving a warning when the enemy seems to be so active. When Your people are under the strain and the stress, they need to know what it is that has come against them. Lord, You may have given us unusual insight or You are about to because You are about to set us on the walls of our family afresh or our church or our city or our country and You are stirring in our heart. Father, help us to know it is You and to remember that You have done that in other days, and You will not let this generation go by without many **watchmen**. You will not let this generation go without warnings so that we can adjust our lives.

Father, even now You are putting Your hand on many who will make a decision about their life as spiritual **watchmen** on the walls of Your people or their homes. May You do a great work in our heart, and don’t let us ever be afraid to blow the trumpet. So Father, along with others, I **wait** for and **watch** for and expect Your anointing on my life to fulfill such an assignment.

And You have made me aware of what could happen if they never hear the warning. Enable us in these moments together to respond to Your invitation which is so critical for the lives of Your people and our families in the days and months that lie before us. We ask it in the Name of Jesus our Lord.”

**RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:**

1. JD FARAG … prophecy update from August 9th.. **You’ll Get Through This** <https://youtu.be/v1hc2W2tSUw> (**Pre-Tribulation Proof**)

2. Jimmy Evans book… The Tipping Point, The End is Here

This past weekend, Pastor Jimmy Evans began a new series called Tipping Point with a message titled, “When Did the End Begin?” In it, he discusses what the Bible says about end times and <https://youtu.be/rXuJpRwDfQY> why it's so important for us today.

3. The conversation that Jesus had with His disciples on top of the Mount of Olives has been followed by many misleading conclusions over the last 2,000 years. When will these things happen? What is the sign of His coming? How will we know when it’s the end of the age?

 Amir Tsarfati… (Behold Israel).. a teaching on **The Olivet Discourse** (Matthew 24)

https://youtu.be/Vkk5CaviuEU