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MATTHEW

SAFE OR FAITHFULL
MATTHEW 25

I. THE QUESTION BEHIND THE QUESTIONS

A. The Olivette Discourse – A response to the disciples' questions

1. When? What will be the signs?
2. What were the disciples really asking for? What was the question behind the questions? What did they really want?
   a) They wanted the Kingdom of God here now. Luke 19:11 – Jesus spoke another parable because they thought the Kingdom of God would appear immediately
   b) Why? Because that would mean safety and security – it would bring certainty and stability to their future
   c) That is why they want a timeline – that is why the asked the questions

B. In Acts 1 opens with Jesus teaching the disciples for 40 days about "things pertaining to the kingdom of God."

1. Acts 1:4 And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; 5 for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." 6 Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"

2. That question is still on their minds! When?

C. Look at Jesus's response

1. Acts 1:7 And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. 8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

2. The disciples wanted security and stability, Jesus gave them a mission
3. They wanted a government, but Jesus gave them the Spirit of God to be witnesses to Him in Jerusalem, Judea, and to the ends of the earth

4. They wanted certainty, they wanted to know what the future held, but Jesus wanted faithfulness
    a) That is what this discourse is all about

II. REVIEW

A. The disciples ask when?... and instead of answering them

1. There will be false christs, don't believe them
2. There will be wars and rumors of wars, don't be troubled
3. There will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes – and that's just the beginning
    a) There will be violent opposition, and hatred, the love of many will grow cold
4. Again, they want safety and security and Jesus doesn't give that to them - instead Jesus prepares them for their mission

Mat 24:36 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. 37 But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 38 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, 39 and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 40 Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. 41 Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. 42 Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. 43 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. 44 Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

B. No One Knows

1. Interesting we take Jesus's words about not knowing the day or hour of His return and we try use this chapter to figure out they day or hour of His return
    a) His instructions - Watch therefore – for you do not know what hour
    b) Be ready
2. In the days of Noah – they were eating and drinking and marrying and giving in marriage up until the moment Noah entered the Ark – ordinary things – just living life but with no thought of what was to come
    a) The thief doesn't send an announcement card – or the master would have been ready
3. Don't get trapped into the routine of life and lose sight of Christ's return
4. Be watchful and be ready

45 "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? 46 Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. 47 Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. 48 But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is

delaying his coming,' 49 and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, 50 the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, 51 and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

C. Faithfulness

1. "Will find so doing" not defined
2. Wicked servant – no urgency, uses the time to serve himself – reveals the heart issue
3. Chapter 25 Jesus explains the doing
4. One thing He makes clear to the disciples
   a) ***Mat 25:5 But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.***
   b) ***Mat 25:19 After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.***
   c) ***Mat 25: 31 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.***
5. The end is not yet – so what do we do while we wait - what it means to be watchful and ready – how do we prepared for Christ's return?
   a) Relationship with Jesus, Relationship with truth, Relationship with one another

Mat 25:1 "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3 Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, 4 but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5 But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. 6 "And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' 7 Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. 8 And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' 9 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.' 10 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. 11 "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' 12 But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.' 13 "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

III. THE TEN VIRGINS

A. Custom

1. The bridal party waits for the groom at the bride's house – and when he arrives, he leads the procession back to his house for the wedding and the wedding feast

2. The bridesmaids would soak rags in oil and tie them around sticks – the rags would often burn out so they would have to dip them in oil again
    a) Explain the need for more oil
3. Wise prepared for the delay, the foolish did not
    a) Same words for the two builders in Mat 7
    b) Also used in 24:45 – faithful and wise servant
    c) Wisdom isn't intelligence, it is readiness

B. Personal readiness cannot be outsourced

1. We live in a time where we outsource everything – even our thinking – even our relationship with Jesus – we want to hear people tells us about their experience with Jesus and pretend like that is our own experience
2. It is only a personal, living, relationship with Jesus that stirs up in us an urgency knowing that our King is on the way
3. Examine our hearts – has the reality of Christ's return transformed us, changed our perspective, impacted how we spend our time or are we living like they did in the days of Noah giving very little thought to His return
    a) Tozer warns against maintaining the outward signs of faith while neglecting the inner spiritual life – allowing the oil to run dry
    b) His delay should never result in a lack of urgency – and we avoid that failure in thinking when we are in constant communication with Him
4. Those who were ready went with the Bride, when the others finally arrived the door was shut and they were turned away – the Bride said "I do not know you"

C. Watch therefore…

1. The foolish wanted to attend the wedding but they were not prepared just like the man who was underdressed for the wedding feast

Mat 25:14 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. 15 And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. 16 Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. 17 And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. 18 But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. 19 After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. 20 "So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' 21 His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' 22 He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' 23 His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' 24 "Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. 25 And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in

the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.' 26 "But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. 27 So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. 28 So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. 29 'For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. 30 And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

IV. THE TALENTS

A. Very similar to the parable that Jesus shares after Luke 19:11

1. He is teaching the same principle – a principle that runs through the gospels
2. In Luke - A master called his servants and gave them a fairly large amount of money, and he instructed them to do business until he returned
3. When he returned, he called the servants and took account – the first two servants had used his money wisely and grew what he had given them
4. The last servant hid his in a handkerchief because he was afraid (I knew you were a harsh man)
    a) You should have at least put it in the bank!
    b) Take it and it give it to they one who has ten – "To everyone that has, more will be given, and to those who do not have, even that will be taken away from them"

B. We hear talent and we think this is a performance review

1. That is not the case – a talent was 75 pounds of precious metal – 20 years of wages – 400k – 1mil in modern currency
    a) What Jesus is talking about ties back to Mat 13 – when He was dealing with closed eyes, closed ears, and hard hearts – parable of the seed and the sower, the wheat and the tares, the mustard seed, and the leaven, the pearl of great price, the treasure
    b) The disciples asked – ***Mat 13:11 He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. 12 For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.***

(1) ***Luke 8: 16 "No one, when he has lit a lamp, covers it with a vessel or puts it under a bed, but sets it on a lampstand, that those who enter may see the light. 17 For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to light. 18 Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him more will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him."***

(2) ***1 Cor 4: 1 Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.***

2. The master entrusted His goods to the servants. What are we doing with the truth that God has revealed to us
   a) ***Mat 5:14 "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.***
   b) ***Mat 10: 27 "Whatever I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops.***

C. Third Servant out of fear did nothing, hid it

1. I knew you to be a hard man, so I chose security – safety – comfort
2. He did not know His master at all
3. Just like the sons of thunder when they were rejected in the Samaritan village - "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?" - He "turned and rebuked them, and said, 'You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them.'
   a) Withholding the truth is often a heart issue and stems from not knowing our Master's heart

Mat 25:31 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. 32 All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. 33 And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; 36 I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' 37 "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? 38 When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? 39 Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' 40 And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.' 41 "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil

and his angels: 42 for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; 43 I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.' 44 "Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?' 45 Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' 46 And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

V. WORD AND DEED

A. True security - ***'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world***

1. The righteous were caught off guard – when did we? Those who truly understand grace become generous to the needy – Right relationship with Jesus and His truth leads to this…
2. Debate over who the needy are – witnesses, those sharing the gospel or the social outcasts the forgotten in our society
   a) ***Gal 6: 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.***
3. The unprepared bridesmaids, the wicked servant, the unrighteous – the did nothing, they weren't prepared, they weren't ready

B. Mount of Olives

1. The ascension takes place right where Jesus taught these things

2. Acts 1:9 Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. 10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, 11 who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."

3. We are looking for security when we have already found it. Wait we really need is faithfulness
   a) Oil – Personal ongoing relationship with Jesus
   b) Talents – hunger for His Word – wanting to grow in our understanding of His grace
   c) Mercy – Showing the tangible love of Christ whenever we have an opportunity