

Matthew 25 (Part 1) :1-31

Olivet Parables

Pastor Paul LeBoutillier · April 18, 2026

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

Matthew 25 is the second half of what we call the Olivet Discourse because it is chapters 24 and 25 that deal with the discussion, the discourse that Jesus gave on the Mount of Olives after his disciples asked him to explain some timing issues. Let me just kind of just refresh you a little bit here on what we've been doing. Chapter 24, you'll remember, we came into some kind of tense time because Jesus had just been dealing with the religious leaders and the intensity of that interchange. And as they were walking away from the temple, the disciples, and I imagine they were probably doing this to maybe bring a little levity into the situation, but they were just calling attention to the grandeur and the beauty of the temple, and they were going, you know, just wow, I mean, that's a piece of, you know, work, you know, there. And Jesus said, you see all these things?

I tell you that not one stone will be upon another. It's all going to be thrown down. It's going to be completely destroyed. It must have been very, very hard for the disciples to hear because this is the center of worship in Israel. And so they waited, you know, and I imagine they probably walked for a while.

That walk, you know, from Jerusalem up to the Mount of Olives, they waited until they got there, and when they finally got Jesus alone, they said, when's that going to happen? Tell us what the sign of your coming is going to be, and for that matter, the sign of the end of the age. We want to know more about this. So Jesus began to speak to them, and he began to speak about the signs of the last days. And you guys know, because I've been sharing with you quite a bit, that we are in the last days right now.

The last days began at the beginning of the book of Acts when the church was inaugurated, and we are in it to this day. So as he began to speak of the character of the last days, it's kind of where you and I live. It's the stuff that you and I deal with on a regular basis. It's life, you know, that just around us. You turn on the news, and this is the stuff Jesus talked about.

He said, there's going to be this, there's going to be that, it's going to be going on, it's going to be all kinds of, you know, just difficulty. He basically told us that the last days was going to be a really

challenging, difficult time to live. And it is, is it not? I mean, life can be very challenging, very, very, very, very difficult. And then he went on in verses 15 in the last chapter and following to talk about the time of the great tribulation.

That's that seven-year period of time that the Bible refers to as the time of Jacob's trouble in the Old Testament. It's not a time of the church's trouble. The church is not going to be here for the tribulation. I believe that with all my heart. In fact, I believe the church has to be taken out of the way in order for the tribulation period to come.

God is working through the church to, we are that light of the world. We are the thing that holds back the decay, you know, the salt of the earth. That's us as the church. We may not do a wonderful job of it all the time, but we do it. And when we are taken out of the world, when Jesus comes for the church to, and that's what we call the rapture, and the church is taken away, taken up, caught up, if you will, which is where we get our word, rapture, then the world is going to be left without that salt and light that Jesus put there as a force to restrain evil and so forth.

And it's just going to be all bets are off. It's going to be a very, very, very seriously horrible time. And the first half of the tribulation period is going to seem like it's all going pretty well at least for the nation of Israel. They will think that they have found their Messiah, their Savior in the person of the Antichrist who will make a covenant with Israel for the first half of the tribulation period. But then at the midway point in the tribulation, he will do what Daniel prophesied ahead of time.

He will set up what Daniel called the abomination that causes desolation. What that is, is he will set up an image of himself in the temple, which will be rebuilt, and he will declare himself to be God, and he will demand the worship of every human being, particularly the Jews, obviously, and he will demand their worship. And when the Jews reject him as God, he will turn and persecute them terribly. It'll be that last half of the tribulation will be a horrible, horrible time for the nation of Israel. And then Jesus says that the Son of Man will return following that time period called the Great Tribulation.

At the end of that seven-year period of time, Jesus will return for Israel. And he will stand upon the Mount of Olives, and he will fight for Israel in a great battle that the Bible refers to as the Battle of Armageddon. And the enemies of Israel will be put away during that time. And then chapter 24, you'll remember, ends with a parable reminding us to remain diligent. Chapter 25 continues this same thing through a series of two parables and that sort of thing.

And that's what we're going to be looking at today. The first parable that we'll be looking at here is the Parable of the Ten Virgins. And before we read that, I'd like to ask you to pray with me. Heavenly Father, we ask that you would incline our ear, spiritual ear, to hear your voice. We ask you, Lord God, to fill our hearts with wisdom and direction and understanding.

Guide us, Lord, in all that we hear today. We ask it in Jesus' name, amen. Chapter 25, beginning at verse 1, it says, Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them.

And that means extra oil. But the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps, or alongside their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a cry, Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!

And then all the virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out. But the wise answered, saying, Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves. And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came. And those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut.

Afterward, the other virgins came also, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered, Truly I say to you, I do not know you. Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour. Now stop there for just a moment, we'll move on in just a little bit. But Jesus told this parable to a people at that time who were very, very familiar with the details of what he was, or the story and the picture of what he was talking about, because he was talking about marriage tradition, the way marriages kind of, you know, worked in Israel.

You and I, we can still pick up the theme of what's going on, but there are some gaps for us because we don't do marriages the way the Jews did marriages. I mean, I rather like the way that Israel did marriages, and the way people got engaged, and they called it being betrothed, and I rather like the way they did it. It was a pretty cool deal. But it's something that has gone on to the present day. That's the crazy thing about Israel.

Just absolutely crazy. They have all these traditions that date back to the time of the Bible, and then they got scattered to the point where they were no nation at all, and then they came back. In 1947, the

nation of Israel was gathered together again, and these traditions continued. It's just crazy. I mean, who does that?

Who loses their national identity but maintains their traditions? That is just the weirdest, wildest, wackiest thing you've ever heard. But it still goes on. I was reading one of my commentaries in preparation for this study, and I like to read William Barclay. He's with the Lord now.

He's an old Scottish commentator and kind of liberal, but I like to read his stuff for the historical context, because he was really good at that, you know, giving some good historical stuff. He tells a story that actually is quoting another person about going to Israel and seeing some of these things go on. Let me just read this for you. I'll just read it right out of his thing. He says, Dr.

J. Alexander Findley tells of what he himself saw in Israel. When we were approaching the gates of a Galilean town, he writes, I caught sight of ten maidens happily clad. Isn't that nice? It's just how you say that.

They were happily clad and playing some kind of musical instrument as they danced along the road in front of our car. When I asked what they were doing our guide told me that they were going to keep the bride company till her bridegroom arrived. I asked him if there was any chance of seeing the wedding but he shook his head saying in effect well it might be tonight or it might be tomorrow night or in a fortnight's time if you don't know English speak that's 14 days in other words it could be two weeks nobody ever knows for certain then he went on to explain that one of the great things to do if you could at a middle-class wedding in Israel was to catch the bridal party napping so the bridegroom comes unexpectedly and sometimes in the middle of the night it is true that he is required by public opinion to send a man along the street to shout behold the bridegroom is coming but that may happen at any time so the bridal party has to be ready to go out into the street at any time to meet him whenever he chooses to come and one other important point is that no one is allowed on the streets after dark without a lighted lamp and also that when the bridegroom does finally arrive anyone who is a latecomer is not admitted in. Interesting kind of facts and figures that correspond to what we're reading here in Matthew 25 as it relates to the parable that Jesus is telling and the Jewish traditions of marriage and again according to Jewish tradition a man and a woman would first become betrothed and that was usually about a year give or take before they would actually get married which seems strange and betrothed is probably the closest thing in our culture is becoming engaged but it was more than that for a Jew because when you were betrothed you were considered husband and wife but you didn't live together and you in fact you may have not even ever talked.

How's that for weird? Can you imagine some of you young guys, this is one of those things about Jewish tradition I kinda wish that we could do again and that's you know arranged marriages I think that'd be fun. I wouldn't have enjoyed it as a teenager if I wouldn't want my marriage arranged thank you very much but I'd like to arrange my kids marriages that'd be of course three of them are already married and that's a done deal and Tim just rolls his eyes at me whenever I mention it but wouldn't that be kind of fun you know sometimes kids were picked when they were children and and they were intended for one another and then they and they never met each other possibly and then they come together when they're of age and they're betrothed which means it's kind of an elaborate engagement sort of a ceremony but even the betrothal required a divorce to break and they hadn't even ever come together and you see that's what Joseph was going to do when he found out Mary was with child they were betrothed but they were not yet married and he found out she was with child and so he was going to divorce her quietly so as not to cause problems with her reputation but that's when the Lord you know appeared to Joseph in a dream and said it's all good go ahead and marry her this is part of my plan so forth but once the betrothal took place the man would then go away he would go to his father's house and he would begin to literally add on to his father's house where he and his wife were going to live and so he would say to his bride to be I go to prepare a place for you and he didn't know even when he was going to come back because it was up to the father to inspect the work of the son to approve it and then give him the go ahead to go and get his bride but it was up to the father no man knew the day or the hour not even the son but only the father knew when he would be released to come and get his bride and so when the father had fully inspected this this new these new digs you know he'd say alright son if it's approved you go and get your bride he could he could come at any time he could just you know and he would send first his friend and this would be kind of similar to the best man in our weddings and the friend of the groom would come and he would announce the coming of the groom and he would say the groom is here the bridegroom has arrived you remember who the friend of the groom is in Jesus' situation you remember remember John the Baptist his disciples came to him at one point they said you know that guy that was baptizing over the other side of the Jordan everybody's going over to him John said you know the bride belongs to the bridegroom I am the friend of the bridegroom and I am delighted that his bride is going to him and he basically said my job was to announce the coming of the bridegroom and I have done that and now he must increase and I must decrease John knew his place but that was the role that he played in this understanding of the traditional Jewish wedding so after the bridegroom would come he would literally snatch his bride away go to her father's house and grab her because she's his you know and he would they would immediately go into a seven day marriage feast can you imagine they would they would feast and have joyous celebration for seven days and they would literally be treated like royalty during that time it was a wonderful wonderful

time and then at the end of the seven days they would consummate the marriage and then it's a done deal you know there you go so that was basically how traditional Jewish wedding or marriage would essentially happen and that helps to give you and I a little bit of understanding a little bit more clarity as it relates to this parable that Jesus is giving us here about these these 10 virgin virgins I keep saying that they're not versions they're virgins you got that thank you if I do it again just blow past it one of the things that we have to be careful of doing whenever we read or are looking at parables in the Bible sue would you start the fan going please is trying to figure out too much of the detail in the parable in other words there's something about us that just simply wants to to to try to figure out what everything means for example you know who are these virgins and why are there 10 of them why not 9 why not 20 you know we want to figure all that out why were half of them smart and half of them dumb you know what are their lamps signify what about the oil what's that mean and we want to dig in you know further and get into all the specifics of what's going on there you know they all fell asleep that has to have some kinda spiritual significance and and we just get deeper and I really think that it's just kind of pride on our part that just kinda wants to dig in and figure out all these things you know is anything about parables is there often given to us to just make a very simple point it's usually very simple and the point of this particular parable is identified very clearly for us in verse 13 look with me again in verse 13 it says right here watch therefore for you know neither the day nor the hour that's that's what this is about guys don't get don't do yourself a disservice by trying to dig so deep that we forget the point of the parable altogether the parable is Jesus said I want you to be ready I want you to be ready I want you to be ready for my coming I'm coming I want you to be ready you know he says it over and over again in the Word of God I want you to be ready listen whenever God repeat something it's because you and I need to hear it it's because it's a important and second of all he repeats it because there is a strong propensity for you and I to lose sight of watchfulness okay how do we lose sight of watchful as well as by getting fixated on the things of the world my job my relationship my this my that you know money and pleasure and all the other things that that that we get fixated on in this life and they become the reason for living we as born-again Christians can go for days or weeks or months or even longer never even thinking about the fact that Jesus is coming back and then we hear something in either in a message on Sunday or we read it in the word or maybe it says it in a song or something like that or oh yeah Jesus is coming back yeah You should probably be ready. Anyway, let me just kind of go on and do our thing. Are you ready?

You know, I got to thinking about that. As I was preparing for this, I thought, what does readiness look like? I mean, you can go around telling people all day long, be ready, be ready, be ready, be ready, be ready, be ready, be ready. What does that mean? What does that mean?

You mean sleep in your clothes? You know, am I supposed to have my Bible open on my desk all the time? Is that what it means to be ready? What does it mean? What is readiness for Jesus to return?

Got to thinking about that. So I decided I was going to advance for you this morning three things that I believe constitute being ready. And I think this is just kind of a real practical sort of a thing. And I'm going to put these up on the screen here for you so you can see them. I think that might help for those of you who are visual and maybe who are taking notes.

And so we're going to put this first one up and we're going to call this one watchfulness. And there's a scripture that goes along with it, frankly, from the previous chapter, Matthew chapter 24, which in the ESV says, then two men will be in the field. One will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding at the mill. One will be taken and one left.

Therefore, he says, and this is important here, stay awake. For you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. And this idea of being awake or staying awake means to be alert. Jesus isn't literally saying, don't ever, you know, go to sleep. We can't do that.

He's saying, be watchful, be waiting. Keep it uppermost in your mind. You know what's interesting? You read through the New Testament. Read through the letters, the epistles, we call them, the letters that are written by Paul and Peter and James and, you know, there's the letter to the Hebrews and so forth.

Do yourself a favor as you read through those, make a mental note or maybe a note in your Bible how many times they refer to the coming of the Lord. You'll be blown away. It was constantly on their mind. It was uppermost in their mind. He's coming back.

He's coming back. He's coming back. He's coming back. It's called the imminent return of Jesus and his return has been imminent and is still imminent from the very beginning of the church age or what we would call the last days. I don't know.

I don't know exactly when he's going to come back, neither do you. He says that he's coming back at a time when we don't know, so therefore, stay awake. You know, I have a sense in my heart that there's a number of people that need to come. You know, I mean, God knows. I mean, when the last person who is designated for salvation, you know, set apart for salvation, comes to the Lord, I think we'll hear the trumpet and the church will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air and we will enter into that time.

Not we, but the world will enter into that time known as the tribulation period. But you know, who knows? Maybe it's... Let me tell you something. If I ever come to find out that it was somebody from Calvary Chapel, Ontario, I'm going to be mad.

If you guys were holding out on us here, and then we find out that we have a service and somebody gets saved, and all of a sudden we hear the trumpet going, I'm going to be mad. I'm telling you right here and now. I just want you to know that. It's like, yeah, it was over in Ontario. They were holding up the train, those guys over there.

It's just one person, stubborn person. No. But meanwhile, you and I are to stay awake, be alert, be watchful. He's coming back. How often do you think of it in a given day, week, month, that Jesus is coming back?

The next thing that I was thinking about as it relates to this whole thing of being ready, what a readiness looks like. Maybe watchfulness is a big key, but the next one that we'll put up on the screen here is prayerfulness. And this is a challenging one for a lot of us because instead of prayerfulness, many of us struggle with prayerlessness. But from Luke chapter 21, I want to show you this passage. He starts by repeating what we just read, but stay awake at all times.

And then he says this, and I've put it in caps, praying. Notice he says, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are going to take place and to stand before the Son of Man. He says prayer is a key element to standing. Pray that you're able to stand. Pray.

Remember when Jesus is praying in the Garden of Gethsemane just before his arrest? He takes Peter, James, and John, and he takes them out with him. And he says, guys, we're going to have some time of prayer here. And then he himself withdrew from them even a little bit further, and he began to pray. And you'll remember that's when he wrestled in prayer, and it was frankly a terrible night of prayer, a very, very difficult night of prayer.

But on a couple of occasions, he got up from his own prayer, and he came over to Peter, James, and John, who he asked to come and pray with him and support him in prayer. And he found them sleeping. They were asleep. And he said, guys, get up. Pray that you don't fall into temptation.

Pray that you'll be strong to wait. And waiting is hard, isn't it? Don't you hate to wait? I hate waiting for anything. I mean, I'm not a tremendously patient person in that respect.

But, you know, we are told here that we are to be praying while we are waiting. We're not just sitting around twiddling our thumbs. We're praying, God, give me the strength to be able to stand in this. And then finally, the third thing that we'll put up on the screen here in terms of what readiness looks like is faithfulness. In other words, we're being watchful, we're being prayerful, but we're also doing what we've been called to do.

And to cover that, we really have to deal with the very next parable that is given to us here in Matthew 25. So look with me, grab your Bible again. Look with me now, beginning in verse 14, Jesus goes on and he says, for it will be like a man going on a journey who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. To one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one. To each according to his ability, and then he went away.

And he who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. So also he who had the two talents made two talents more, but he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. Now after a long time, notice that Jesus even puts that in there, it was a long time. The master of those servants came and settled accounts with them, and he who had received the five talents came forward bringing five talents more, saying, Master, you delivered to me five talents, here I have made five talents more. His master said to him, well done, good and faithful servant.

You have been faithful over a little, and I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master. Did you notice Jesus didn't say that the man said, well done, good and talented servant, or good and attractive servant. What is he calling attention here to? Faithfulness.

Faithfulness. Okay? It's all about faithfulness. Verse 22, and he also who had the two talents came forward saying, Master, you delivered to me two talents, here I have made two talents more. His master said to him, well done, good and faithful servant.

You've been faithful over a little, I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master. He also who had received the one talent came forward saying, Master, I knew you to be a hard man reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was afraid. I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.

But his master answered, you wicked and slothful, which means lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed, huh? Well then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So

take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. Interesting exchange going on here, isn't it? First of all, this servant begins, he comes to his master at this time of reckoning and he says, I know you to be kind of a jerk.

So I buried the stuff you gave me in the ground and here it is. There you go. And there is absolutely nothing in this story that would bear out this statement to be true. This is a man who was very generous, very giving, gave stewardship of his own personal property to these three different men graciously, openly, and said, hey, I'll be back. Do with it what you can to make it better, use what I've given you and I'll be back.

And what is the first thing this... easy servant does he tries to shift the blame well I knew that you are a hard guy so you know and that didn't make sense the master comes back he says really that's your excuse you you you you're giving me this talent of money with dirt all over it because you are afraid if you are afraid you probably would have done something at least to have something to show for the money I gave you when I came back so this story doesn't even make sense you know I knew you to be a hard man so I decided not to do anything with your money what that's ridiculous that's a dumbest thing anybody's ever said so he says you know take this this this from this man and give it to him who has the 10 talents then he gives a spiritual rule that goes along with that a spiritual principle verse 29 for to everyone who has will more be given and he will have an abundance but from the one who has not even what he has will be taken away alright so we looked at the parable of the 10 virgins and we said that that's a reminder to be watchful and ready now we look at this second parable of the talents and we see that Jesus is speaking to us about being busy and faithful in his absence so that when he returns we have something to show for it somebody might hear this and say yeah but doing what I don't even know what my gift is I don't even know what my talents if you are if you will I don't know what they are so what am I supposed to do well you know there's a passage in the book of Colossians that I like to go over in my own heart and mind when I think about this I want to show to you on the screen here it's from Colossians chapter 4 verse 5 I'm going to read it out of the NIV here it says be wise in the way you act toward outsiders and then I like this part make the most of every opportunity you know what's really crazy about our God is that he basically says listen I will reward you for what you do for me and then he gives us opportunities more than even opportunities Paul says in Ephesians they are good works prepared in advance he prepared the stage laid it out just said hey do it but we don't always do we don't always make the most of every opportunity I I was so convicted even as I shared as I wrote down this verse to share it with you because just in this last week I I had to confess to the Lord that I didn't make the most of every opportunity God gave me an opportunity and I didn't take it for whatever reason you know busyness or or whatever and you can always come up with

excuses but I had to come to the Lord just this last week and say father forgive me I didn't make the most of that opportunity but I want to rededicate myself to do that you know I wanna God gives us all kinds of incredible opportunities to to serve him if we'll just keep our eyes open and be looking you know at what's in front of us the opportunities that are there to do things for God you know it might be something as simple as smiling at somebody and making them feel welcome or or encouraging or comforting someone or praying with someone or or you know whatever whatever is in front of you but just doing it and taking those opportunities and and serving the Lord with them you know so you can see that readiness when we talk about being ready for the Lord to come back and when something when I ask you now are you ready for the Lord to come back it's it's kinda this is what we're talking about we're talking about being watchful are you are you being watchful are you is it in in your view you know is it on your radar Jesus is coming back are you being prayerful are you staying close to the Lord saying God I need to stay close to you give me the strength to serve you so that I can stand when you come and then finally are you being faithful with what you've been given we've all been given something so many times we overlook what we've been given and we just think well if I was given more I was given this and and you know that's that's this parable tells us that different people are given different amounts different things and you and I I can't look at the guy with five talents and go man if I just was given what he has then I could really do something for the Lord I can't do that you can't do that either we you know maybe you've got one talent maybe you got a half a talent maybe you got 50 I don't know the the point is you and I have to be faithful with what we have and we can't be you know worrying about what we don't have are we being faithful Jesus said when the Son of Man returns will he find faith on the earth will he find people walking in faithfulness you see I don't believe that it's an automatic that every single Christian is going to hear well done good and faithful servant be nice if it was but I don't believe it is in fact Jesus actually talks about that a little bit when he refers or I I should say that Paul actually talks about it when he makes reference to someone who has faith they just haven't they haven't really walked in it this is important for you to hear I was set this up just a little bit so that you really hear it this is hard for us to hear but you know because we're kind of condition to believe because James tells us that when you have faith you will have works you guys remember that you know that in James's epistle he says if you've got real faith you'll have real works that will follow that's the proof but here's the point and that's true that's absolutely true but that doesn't mean that you and I can still choose not to walk in those works even though there is a true genuineness to our faith and here's how we know that because Jesus excuse me I keep saying that Paul wrote to the Corinthian church and he said this now listen he said for no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid which is Jesus Christ if any man builds on this foundation using gold silver costly stones wood hay or straw his work will be shown for what it is because the day meaning the coming of the Lord will bring it to light it

will be revealed with fire and the fire will test the quality of each man's work you guys know that there is a judgment for you and I it's not a judgment of sin do you understand that you and I will not be judged for our sin if we're in Christ why because Jesus has already been judged for us remember so if Jesus has been judged for you there's nothing more to judge didn't he say on the cross it is finished does that say it in your Bible says it in mine so obviously it's a done deal isn't it our sin has been judged in Christ so when we stand before the Lord for before his glorious presence and by the way his glorious presence is a consuming fire our God is a consuming fire all that we have done in building upon the foundation of Christ will be tested by the fire of his glorious presence and what we have done of significance and eternal value will stand the test of that fire but what we have done of temporal value selfishly perhaps those things that are would hay and straw or stubble those will be burned up in an instant now I want you to notice what Paul goes on to say here about the person because he talks about an individual who is saved but has really nothing to show for his his work for the Lord he goes on and he says if what he has built survives he will receive his reward if it is burned up he will suffer loss he himself will be saved but only as one escaping through the flames this is a important thing for you and I to hear it is possible Paul tells us here for an individual to be saved with genuine faith but have nothing to show for that faith they have not taken what God gave them and used it for his glory now at the same time There will be others who have nothing to show, and it's because they had no faith. The very last verse of this parable, essentially, is in verse 30, and granted, it's a hard verse to read. It says, "...and cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." That doesn't sound like somebody who's saved, even though they escaped through the flames, does it?

That sounds like somebody who's lost. So you see, these are two truths that we must hold in tension. And by in tension, I mean we've got to hold both sides of them equally, you know, to the point where we understand the full truth of this. It is possible for someone to say, I have faith in God, but to not really have any faith, and there will be no works, and that will be the proof that they had no faith. But there will also be, according to Paul, in 1 Corinthians, and by the way, if you want to write that down and look at it later, it's 1 Corinthians chapter 3.

Paul says there will be those who will be genuinely saved with faith, believing that what Jesus did on the cross was for them, but they will have nothing to show for their faith. In other words, no reward on the day of the Lord. They themselves will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames. What's that tell you and I? God's given us the choice.

He's made it so easy for you and I to enjoy the rewards that he offers. In fact, even laid them out in front of us. But we can still choose to live our own lives selfishly, to live my life for what I want to do or

what I want to get out of it. You know, go where I want to go, do what I want to do, live the way I want to live. But that's really not readiness, is it?

That's not part of readiness, because part of readiness is living faithfully to the Lord, being faithful. Are you being faithful to your life on this earth? You don't know how long that life is. None of us do. We're only given so much time.

Are you using it for God or using it for self? Are you living to pad your own life and to make it fun and easy and pleasurable? Are you living your life for the Lord? Are you giving your time, your effort, your energy, your heart to him? That's part of being ready.

If you're not living that way, you're not really truly ready for the Lord to come again. And these are things that he's telling us ahead of time so that you and I can choose to get ready. I want to be watchful. I want to be prayerful. I want to be faithful.

I want to be faithful. I want to be prayerful.