

The Kingdom: Living Within: Part 16

We are going to pick up in the ongoing dialogue Jesus has been having with His disciples about the Kingdom. It started in **Matthew 24** with an overview of the last days where He discussed the signs which shout of His soon coming return. Those signs indicate that He is right at the door and they serve as a warning for all of us to be ready, alert; for, although we don't know when He is coming, we should know He is near. It has been over 2,000 years and no one expected it to take that long; as a result, people are tired of waiting and have become less impacted by the signs regardless of how loud they have become. Christians, world over, have become (using the imagery of the parable of ten virgins) spiritually dull, drowsy, some have even fallen asleep. They have in effect chosen to live for themselves and merely survive this life versus living for the Kingdom of God. Of course, they do this while they wrap all they do in the name of Jesus so that it allows them to live in the delusion that they are ready for His return, when the reality is they are not.

Next, Jesus told His disciples of the great apostasy, this "falling" away from the faith, which is a forerunner to the great and coming Day of the Lord (which is a phrase that captures the entirety of what we call the end time's events). You can read about this apostasy in **2 Thessalonians 2:1-4; 1 Timothy 4:1**. Personally, I think this apostasy is not what most people think. It seems people are looking for a mass exodus from Christianity to the system of the beast (the antichrist). That's going to happen for sure, but the process from here-to-there is likely to be very subtle as there begins to be more and more of a division between those who truly **believe in His Name** and those who think they do. After all, Jesus said in **John 16:2** that those

who will deliver you to tribulation and kill you will be fully convinced they are doing God a great service. Persecution will originate from within our religious institutions; for in their minds, they are the true faithful believers (**Matthew 24:9**).

In our study of the Kingdom, we have learned what it means to “believe in His Name.” We now know such belief is vital for entering the Kingdom of God. In fact, the Kingdom of God is given not to those who follow the religious system of Christianity, have said the sinner’s prayer, been busy for the Lord, and so on. Rather, the Kingdom of God is given to those: 1) who do the will of the Father (which is to **behold** the Son for who He is (the Lord God Almighty) and to **believe** on His Name); 2) who live by faith by practically betting all that they are on all that He is (which is what it means to believe); 3) who are poor in spirit knowing they are not good and can never be good; and 4) who are converted by God and choose, as a matter of lifestyle, to become like a little child—100% needy for God in every part of their life. You can tell those who have made this choice, they are those who have entered through the narrow gate and now travel down the road filled with tribulation, affliction, and crushing. This is the road of death to the *flesh* which leads to life—the road which so few find (**Matthew 7:13-14**).

The great apostasy is in actuality a mass exodus from this Biblical understanding of what is actually required to gain entry into the Kingdom in exchange for some syncretistic watered down version of salvation. The parable of the ten virgins explained for us the separation that will take place between true Sons of the Kingdom (the wise virgins) and those who think they belong but actually don’t (the foolish virgins). This parable raised the question of what it means to actually be saved. From the imagery of that story, the take away is that a person can say the

sinner's prayer, have an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in their lives (the imagery of the oil in the lamps), can be a full-on committed, faithful Christian who has never given themselves to any other so called "god" (the imagery of the virgin), can be found waiting on the Lord for His return, and still not enter the Kingdom of God. Such externals do not make a true Son of the Kingdom. As we know from the parable, there will be those whom we would otherwise call "Christians" (imaged by the five foolish virgins) who will not have a continual supply of oil, and when the Lord returns will not be permitted to enter into the Lord's Kingdom. In other words, the impartation of the grace of God in their lives through the Holy Spirit has been used up, so when Jesus returns they are not ready and miss their opportunity.

The parable of the wheat and the tares, the parable of the trees that produce good fruit and those that don't, the parable of the dragnet with both the good fish and the bad fish, all reveal this same truth. That is why we cannot take comfort in great proclamations of faith, what we do for God, nor any other Christian construct of goodness; for only those who do the will of the Father; live by faith; are poor in spirit; and are converted by God and choose to become like a little child will be permitted to enter the Kingdom of God. The rest will be tossed out into the darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

In **Matthew 24:13** Jesus said, "He who endures until the end will be saved." Another way to phrase this is, he who has a continual supply of oil at the end will be saved. So for many, having prayed the sinner's prayer is not enough. For some it may be, but the sinner's prayer is no automatic guarantee of salvation. Such teaching is based on an errant understanding of what it means to truly believe and to truly have faith. If you have no oil when He returns, it does not matter how badly

you want to get into the Kingdom or how badly you think you deserve to enter, the door will be shut; and he will tell you, “Truly (Amen) I say to you, I never knew you” (**Matthew 25:12**). This is the same shocking reply Jesus will give to those who come to Him on that day and say, “Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your Name, and in Your Name cast out demons, and in Your Name perform many miracles? And He likewise declared to them, “I never knew you, depart from me you who practice lawlessness” (**Matthew 7:21-23**). These are people who call Him Lord in apparent belief; they are virgins. They did great things, supernatural things even, in His Name, but still He will say He never knew them. This is shocking to our modern Christian mindset where all you have to do is pray a prayer and you will be saved.

So how do you know if you are saved? How do you know if you are a true Son of the Kingdom versus a foolish virgin? Your lamp may be burning at the moment, but you have to ask yourself, have you brought a flask of extra oil? Will your lamp be burning bright when He comes?

This question actually catapults us into the next parable which is a continuation of this same dialogue. As soon as He finished the last line of the parable of the ten virgins in **Matthew 25:13**, “Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour,” He began with His next parable regarding the servants. Accordingly, He wants you to be fully aware that the hour is late, the Bridegroom has delayed not wishing that any should perish (**2 Peter 3:8-9**); therefore, it is imperative that you be alert and not let your oil burn out, for He is talking to, and about, those who have been dragged in by the dragnet of the Kingdom—to those who are virgins and say, “Lord, Lord.” The point being, He is talking to those in the realms of Christendom and He is explaining the separation that will occur from within. We

are not talking about heathens versus Christians.

Matthew 25:14-30

For it [*the Kingdom*] is just like a man about to go on a journey, who called his own slaves and entrusted his possessions to them. To one he gave five talents, to another, two, and to another, one, each according to his own ability; and he went on his journey. Immediately the one who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and gained five more talents. In the same manner the one who had received the two talents gained two more. But he who received the one talent went away, and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

Now after a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. The one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, "Master, you entrusted five talents to me. See, I have gained five more talents." His master said to him, "Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." Also the one who had received the two talents came up and said, "Master, you entrusted two talents to me. See, I have gained two more talents." His master said to him, "Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master."

And the one also who had received the one talent came up and said, "Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you scattered no seed. And I was afraid, and went away and hid your talent in

the ground. See, you have what is yours.” But his master answered and said to him, “You wicked, lazy slave, you knew that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I scattered no seed. Then you ought to have put my money in the bank, and on my arrival I would have received my money back with interest.

Therefore take away the talent from him, and give it to the one who has the ten talents.” For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. Throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Remember, Jesus has been talking about the Kingdom of God not the kingdom of man nor the kingdom of the enemy. The topic is, and has been, the Kingdom of God. Jesus compares the Kingdom to a man who is about to go on a journey and entrusts His own slaves with what he now and continually is possessing. I say that because “possessions” oddly enough is a verb in the *present active participle* and it is not a noun, as we would otherwise expect from the translation. This difference gives us a feel for the dynamic nature of the Kingdom. What God is possessing is not a thing, but something living and active. Hence, we get the feel that these “talents” are a symbolic representation (like the oil in the lamps) of the outpouring of the grace of God—or a manifestation of the Spirit—which He has given to each and every one of His servants (whether good or bad) that has been dragged in by the dragnet of the Kingdom. So when you consider the talents, you have to think living and active, not a thing.

To help you understand this, think of the passage in **1 Corinthians 12:4-11** where

we are told that to each one is given a manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. The one and the same Spirit works all these things distributing to each individually as He wills. In effect, like the oil in the lamps that both the wise and the foolish virgin possessed, and like the talents given to each servant (the faithful and the wicked, lazy), we are dealing with a manifestation of the Spirit of God—a specific outpouring of His grace in their lives. This is the confusing part. We have been told that if you are given a manifestation of the Spirit, and outpouring of His grace, that you are saved. But these parables say something completely different. You may be saved, but then again you may be the foolish virgin or the wicked slave that gets cast out. After all, the Master called together his own slaves, not someone else's slaves. This gives us the context, similar to the parable of the dragnet; we are dealing within the reams of Christianity and this is not a comparison between his slaves and the slaves of his enemy.

This man is about to go away on a journey. The implication is that he will be away for quite some time; but there will be a day of his return and he will require an accounting of all that he is possessing. The story itself is pretty straight forward. Do you remember the teaching (Faith, Hope & Love part 15) where we discovered that God loves both diversity and inequality? We discussed that by God's very design He made things diverse and unequal, and He did it for a reason; such diversity and inequality creates a beautiful balance of mutual dependency across all of creation. Here we see that displayed. The master gave to his servants each according to his own ability. Clearly, not all his servants had the same ability, so he gave one five talents, to another two, and to another, one. This was neither unfair nor unjust; rather, it was based on reality. The master knew his servants, better than they knew

themselves, and dealt with them accordingly. The balance is found in this reality: each of his servants had a full complement of what they could handle; therefore, each had the opportunity to be fully satisfied with their own results.

The servant who had five talents and the one who had two immediately got busy and traded with them until they each doubled their master's money. But he who received the one talent went away, dug a hole in the ground, and hid his master's money. As we will find out, he lived a life of **fear** and was not willing to take the risk of doing things wrong and losing his master's money, for **fear** that he might lose his life or his position (which, ironically, is what happened). We are going to first focus on this man and then we will circle back around to the other servants.

The master returned after who knows how long and called his servants in for an accounting. The man who received one talent said, "Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you scattered no seed. And I was afraid—or literally, I became and remained afraid (it is in the *aorist passive participle*)—and went away and hid your talent in the ground. See, you have what is yours."

Isn't it odd that the other servants did not have this same fearful reaction? The problem with this man is that he had judged the master's character based on his perception of what was going on, all the things that he did not like or understand. This man was consumed by fear and he made a horrible decision because, unlike the other two servants, he simply did not trust his master. Follow me on their conversation. I am going to render it utilizing the Greek tense of each verb. This will give us a better feel for what this man was communicating. "I knew you to now be a hard man, my mind is fully convinced, because I see you now reaping where you

did not sow and now gathering where you scattered no seed. Thus, I was alarmed by what you do and was *made* to be fearful, and so I went away and hid your talent in the ground.” In essence, this man believed his master was unfair, unjust, and an opportunistic man who would take advantage of any situation just to benefit himself. He believed his master had no respect for others and would take what he wants when he wants it from whoever he wants. He says, I have seen it, you did not sow there, those are not your crops, yet you will go and reap regardless. You can hear the resentment and distrust dripping off this man’s tongue.

Not only does this man judge his master, he also acts like a victim. He talks as if fear just overtook him—I was made to be fearful (the *aorist passive participle* was used). Yet, this is all just a result of what he believes to be true about his master. In his reply, he took no responsibility and had no remorse. Even after seeing the way the master blessed the other two servants, he was not willing to alter his view of his master being a hard man who is simply unfair, unjust, and not trustworthy.

When it comes to the knowledge of God, wrong belief will kill you—literally. How many of the Lord’s servants do what they do because when it all comes down to it they are afraid of God. They don’t like what He does, they don’t understand what He does, and deep inside they think much of what He does is unfair, unjust, and way too harsh. Thus, they have a deep seeded and unspoken distrust for their God to whom they publically say they trust with their lives. They are unable, however, to reconcile what they think they see and understand in this world with the love of God. In addition, they believe so much of what He says is downright confusing, like with all these parables, and so they judge Him for it. But since He is the “Big-Man” with all the power and strength, they know they must serve Him or they will get in

serious trouble and will not be “blessed.” Furthermore, they have seen the way God handles people, especially those who are willing to bet it all on His Name, and they cannot understand why He hurts them and more often than not destroys their lives. But the one thing they know is they want no part of it. Accordingly, all their wrong belief plays out in how they deal with what He has given them—their own personal manifestation of the Spirit via the grace of God.

And this is why religion has found such a soft, comfy place in the hearts of the Lord’s servants. It provides an alternate avenue to “serve” God without ever truly having to face what they actually believe about God. People opt for religion with its bluster of activity because it is far easier than actually dealing with their wrong belief about why God does what He does. Religion basically tucks those fears away and says, “Just stick it right down in there, deep inside, and don’t let it come up ever again. Here just get busy, serve the Lord, give some money, be a good Christian, and all things will be ok.

This is the very reason why our study of the Kingdom of God first centered on the **Name** of God and second on the building blocks of the Kingdom of God: faith, hope, and love. God wanted us to learn who He is and how His Kingdom operates in order that we might correct all the wrong belief that distorts our image of God and impacts what we do with what He has given us. Prior to our learning these things, like this servant, so many of us did things out of fear, guilt, duty, in an attempt to get a blessing, and so on. We were not motivated by relationship, love, trust, responsibility, and the challenge that comes with faith. Personally, I absolutely thought God was a hard man; I did not understand what He did and why He did it, and I most definitely did not like it. But now that I know He has been in

control of every single detail of my life (every wound, every pain, every moment), and have now been fully convinced that it all flows from His character of love and was for the purpose of my being like Him. I have relented of my deep-seeded, but largely unspoken, judgment, anger, and bitterness. I have since dug my talent out of the dirt and have now been using it as it was intended.

The Master's response is chilling. In effect he said to him, you are not a victim. You are not just reacting to what you don't understand, you wicked, lazy, slave you have always been convinced of who I am. I say that because the verb "knew" is in the *pluperfect active indicative*. The use of the *pluperfect* is like the *perfect* tense (which means a decision was made or completed in the past and is still true today), but the *pluperfect* takes it a step further back into time. In other word, he said this man's heart was never actually for the Master, ever, but it was always for himself. Hence, the statement that he is wicked. This man merely used what he didn't understand about God as a weapon to justify and confirm what he has always believed anyways. But the master saw right through that manipulative reasoning. He also calls him lazy because he said that if that was his actual belief, then he should have been truly afraid and at least put the money in the bank and earned interest. His point is that this man's complaint against his master was not real, it was just a way to deflect from his own wickedness and the reality that he was lazy.

It's as if God says to His very own people who don't fear Him, but are very afraid of Him, that they ought to at least do good with what He has given them instead of living so selfishly. But they are wicked and lazy and only care for themselves where the motivation for their duties is out of self-interest. In reality, they are wicked, self-seeking through and through. Thus, they hide what He has given them in the

dirt. But if in the deepest part of their souls they really believe He is that scary, shouldn't they at least try to do good?

“Therefore take away the talent from him, and give it to the one who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away.” For those of you who have always been convinced that the Lord cannot really be trusted and is someone of whom you must be afraid, this story (and that of the virgins, the trees, and the fish) serves only to reinforce your fear. You might be thinking: “See, I knew that would happen. He is so mean. He does not even understand this man or even tries to meet him in this place of fear; He just takes from Him and unfairly gives it to the popular one who already has more than he needs.” That is the thinking of a wicked, lazy slave.

Let's think about the Lord's character. We have learned that there are those who always have belonged to the evil one and whose names were never written in the Lamb's book of life (***Revelation 13:8; Romans 9:1-24***). We dealt with this reality in Faith, Hope, and Love part 7. Then there are those whose names can be erased from the Lambs book of life (***Revelation 3:5***), but have the opportunity to never have their names erased. Those are the “called” and are pictured in the ten virgins or the fish that the dragnet pulled in. To each of the “called” the Lord gives a manifestation of the Spirit for the common good, each according to their own ability. So it seems to us, from the outside, that all of the called are true “Christians;” at least based on this manifestation of the Spirit. Yet, some (the “chosen”) choose to actually use what they have been given for the common good—for the purpose for which it was given thereby sealing their salvation. In

other words, they reciprocate in their relationship with God and by faith choose Him in return. They seal the deal on the relationship. This interaction with God was never intended to be a one-way-street, but it always required us to choose Him in return. Hence, He says, "Come to me" (**Matthew 3:14; John 7:37**).

Nevertheless, many are called, but few can be described as "chosen" or as those who have chosen Him in return (**Matthew 22:14**). For those who choose in return, the Lord will give more and more and more until they are filled to an abundance. But those who don't use the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good and instead bury their gift of grace in the ground, even what they have will be taken away from them. Is this unfair? Is this unjust? Is this untrustworthy? Each have been given this gift, each is asked to care for what they have been given and use it for its designated purposes, and then it is up to the servant what he or she will do with it. God has done his part; each of His servants have the same opportunity. How is this unfair or unjust? The Lord does not even expect each person to accomplish the same result; for instance, in this story the master would have been content simply with interest. He never even compared the slaves to one another; but dealt with each one individually based on what he gave them.

Please understand, it is our baseline belief about our Master's character and nature that will determine what we do with what we have been given. In fear, there are those who will turn to religion to appease their soul and thereby bury their manifestation of the Spirit in the dirt, all the while thinking the Master should be pleased to get back what He had given. Even what they have will be taken from them. Then there will be those few who, by faith, take what the Spirit has given them and put it to its intended purpose. They will yield not just a return, but be

given more than they had ever hoped or dreamed. That is our God's character and nature. He is just; He is fair; He is trustworthy; and He is a rewarder of those who seek Him (***Hebrews 11:6; Zechariah 9:9; Zephaniah 3:5; Psalm 11:7; John 5:30***).

Let's look at the final statement in this parable. "Throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." There are a few things we need to be aware of. First, the outer darkness is a place without light—without Jesus who is the light. You surely don't want to be found there. Second, "weeping" and "gnashing" are strangely both nouns, they are not verbs. In other words, this does not describe what they will do when they are tossed into the outer darkness, or even what describes them (that would have utilized an adjective), but in effect what they are. They are so overcome with "weeping" and "gnashing" that it identifies their eternal existence.

Why those words: "weeping" and "gnashing" of teeth? Each and every time these words are used, it describes the fate of the "called" who never choose God in return. It is not used to describe the eternity of those whose names were never written in the Lamb's book of life. And, not surprisingly, it is used seven-times. Seven is the Biblical number of completion. In other words, they are given the full and complete opportunity to choose, but they completely decide to not choose Him in return. This is their doing and they are held accountable for their choice.

Matthew 8:11-12: "I say to you that many will come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; but the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Matthew 13:36-42. The tares looked like the wheat and they are found wherever

the wheat is found; they grow in the same field. They are referred to as stumbling blocks and those who commit lawlessness (just like those who cried “Lord, Lord” and claimed to do such great things for God). God said He will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 13:47-50. The dragnet of the Kingdom pulled in all manner of fish, but there will be a separation between the good fish and the bad fish. The good will be gathered into containers and the bad fish will be thrown into the fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 22:1-14. The king has an invite list of those he wants to come to his son’s wedding celebration. Most have no interest in coming, so he invited all the people in the area, good and bad, until the hall was filled with guests. But one guest did not have on the proper wedding clothes. The king said: “Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen.” He came to the celebration of the Son, but He was not clothed in wedding attire.

Matthew 24:45-51. This passage begins with the question about who is the faithful servant. The one who is found doing what the Master assigned him to do (to give his household food at the proper time) is faithful and will be blessed. But the wicked servant who did not expect the Master to return and is derelict of his duties, the Master “will cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Matthew 25:14-30. This is the story we studied tonight. Again, “to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. Throw out the

worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Luke 13:24-28: "Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door, saying, "Lord, open up to us!" then He will answer and say to you, "I do not know where you are from." Then you will begin to say, "We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets;" and He will say, "I tell you, I do not know where you are from; DEPART FROM ME, ALL YOU EVILDOERS. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but yourselves being thrown out."

Seven times. This is harrowing. Think about it. Have you figured it out yet why "weeping" and "gnashing" of teeth are nouns in each of these passages and not verbs? You see, those who are thrown out believed, with all their heart, they should have been in. These are those who were otherwise fully convinced that they were "Christians," that they followed the rules, that they did it right, that they earned their place, and that God owes them entry to His Kingdom. They are those who were "committed" to God, called Him "Lord," and, in their minds, "faithfully" served Him. They are going to be so disillusioned, so upset, and so much a victim, that they will just writhe for all eternity weeping and gnashing their teeth. They will believe it is all so unfair, unjust, and that God is so untrustworthy. Just like they believed in life they will believe in death, and it will consume their very being.

I cannot tell you enough; let go of your deep-seeded anger, bitterness, and distrust of God. Honestly, you may not even be fully aware of it (which is the nature

of all those who have convinced themselves that their religious ways are enough for God—which is why they will be so disillusioned). But some of you are very, very aware of this deep-seeded belief you have about God. You live in constant fear and it is all based on what you think about what He has made (and allowed) you or others to go through and endure in this life. Despite your knowledge of His love and your knowledge that He has always just been living up to His promise to circumcise you from this world and to purify you so you can be like Him, you still resent Him and do not entirely trust Him. Honestly, I am very afraid for you.

We have studied His Name, we have learned about His Kingdom; now it is time—I beg you—to surrender your wisdom in exchange for His. No longer hide behind religion. No longer hide behind your personal goodness. No longer hide behind your worldly success and belief that God has blessed you, so you and He are good. No longer hide behind all that you have done for the Lord. No longer hide behind your view of right and wrong, good and bad, just and evil. No longer hide behind this church and those in this church. Lay it all down and choose the Lord in return and reciprocate in this relationship.

Behold the Son for who He is and **believe** on His Name. This means you will choose to live **by faith** and not by what you think, feel, or see. In other words, you will bet your life on the fact that He is the Lord God Almighty; therefore, you will choose to only do what He tells you to do, only go where He tells you to go, and only say the words He gives you to say. To do this, however, you will have to believe that only God is good and you are not, and never will be. You must be poor in spirit or you will not make it and you will still run to religion to validate your own goodness and acceptance. But if you believe this to be true about you and about

God, then you can let Him convert you and choose to become a little child. Live your life totally dependent upon Him, in the same way a little child lives with his or her parents. You must depend upon God for all things, all the time, and choose to take nothing into your own hands. And I am not just talking about spiritual matters, but practical matters. Remember, the Lord said to seek first His Kingdom and all else—the practical things of life—will be added to you (**Matthew 6:33**). This is the pathway to eternal life. This is what it means to be saved. To those who live this way the Kingdom of God will be provided in abundance.

If you think about it, all God is asking of us is to choose live in reality about who He is and who we are and to destroy our delusion of self. And if He is the Lord God Almighty, then He is good and He is worthy of our choosing Him in return. But that choice is a decision of total dependence. That is what it means to believe in His Name. Don't fool yourself any longer, don't walk out of here thinking there is time and you can deal with this later, Jesus is right at the door. And if you don't have the oil, if you have buried what He has given you in the dirt, He will say to you, "Truly (Amen) I say to you, I never ever knew you." Wouldn't you rather hear: "Well done, good and faithful servant. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master" (**Matthew 25:23**). And you can be sure that in His presence is the fullness of joy (**Psalms 16:11**). After all, this is the nature and character of our Master.

Let's pray