

Message Four

**Making Ourselves Ready for the Lord's Coming
by Being a Faithful and Prudent Slave**

Scripture Reading: Matt. 24:45-51

- I. "Who then is the faithful and prudent slave, whom the master has set over his household to give them food at the proper time? Blessed is that slave whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. Truly I say to you that he will set him over all his possessions"—Matt. 24:45-47:**
- A. God's economy in faith is His "household" economy, His household administration, which is to dispense Himself in Christ into His chosen people that He may have a house to express Himself, which house is the church, the Body of Christ—1 Tim. 1:4; 3:15; Eph. 2:19.
 - B. The faithful and prudent slave is a steward in God's house, a household administrator, dispensing Christ as "food" to His believers—1 Cor. 9:17; Eph. 3:2; 1 Cor. 4:1; 1 Pet. 4:10:
 - 1. Faithfulness is shown toward the Lord (1 Cor. 4:2; 7:25), whereas prudence is exercised toward the believers (cf. Col. 1:28; 2 Chron. 1:10; Phil. 4:5).
 - 2. In the manifestation of the kingdom of the heavens, the Lord will set the faithful slave over all His possessions; this will be a reward to His slave—Matt. 25:21, 23.
 - C. *Give them food* refers to ministering the word of God and Christ as the life supply to the believers in the church; Christ as the life-giving Spirit is our food, embodied and realized in the word of life—24:45; John 6:57, 63, 68:
 - 1. In order to enjoy the Lord as our spiritual food so that we can feed others, we need to receive His word by means of all prayer and by musing on His word, speaking His word aloud with much reconsideration—Eph. 6:17-18; Psa. 119:15 (see footnote), 48, 148; Josh. 1:8; Lev. 11:2-3; Ezek. 3:1-4; Col. 3:16.
 - 2. We need to continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word—Acts 6:4; cf. Heb. 7:25; 8:2.
 - 3. We need to prophesy to build up the church—speaking what we see with the living words of this life under the instant and fresh inspiration, anointing, and enlightenment of the Holy Spirit through the exercise of our spirit—1 Cor. 14:4b; Acts 5:20; 4:20; 22:15.
 - 4. We need to pray ourselves into God to receive the life-giving Spirit as our supply, our spiritual food, to feed ourselves and those under our care—Luke 11:1-13.
 - 5. We need to be life-giving "askers," channels of the life-giving Spirit who can give life to others—1 John 5:16.
 - 6. We need to be "sons of fresh oil," those who are continually being filled with the fresh, present, and consummated Spirit as the oil of gladness, to flow out the Spirit into the lampstand for its shining testimony, the testimony of Jesus—Zech. 4:6, 12-14; Phil. 1:25; Rev. 3:18; Matt. 25:9:
 - a. Day by day we need to pay the price to gain more of God as the golden oil in His divine nature so that we can become a pure golden lampstand for the building of the golden New Jerusalem—2 Pet. 1:4; Rev. 3:18; 1:20; 21:18; Matt. 25:8-9.
 - b. As we apply this matter to our experience today, we see that the Spirit who flows out of us is God, and God is gold; thus, when we minister Christ to others, supplying them with oil, we are actually supplying them with God; God is flowing out from us into them—Zech. 4:12-14; John 7:37-39; 2 Cor. 3:3, 6, 8; Luke 10:34.
- II. "But if that evil slave says in his heart, My master delays, and begins to beat his fellow slaves and eats and drinks with the drunken, the master of that slave will**

come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour which he does not know, and will cut him asunder and appoint his portion with the hypocrites. In that place there will be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth”—Matt. 24:48-51:

- A. To say in our heart that our Master delays is to love the present evil age and not to love the Lord’s appearing—2 Tim. 4:8, 10:
1. The Greek word for *coming* is *parousia*, which means “presence”; to love the Lord’s appearing, His coming, we must love His appearing, His presence, today—Matt. 24:3, 37; Acts 26:16; 2 Cor. 2:10; *Hymns*, #389.
 2. As long as we have today, we should love the Lord and His appearing, awaiting His coming and taking His coming as a warning, an encouragement, and an incentive—2 Tim. 4:8; Phil. 3:20; Rev. 22:12.
 3. We need to watch and be ready for His coming—Matt. 25:13; 24:44; Rev. 19:7.
 4. We need to beware of covetousness, not storing up treasure for ourselves but being rich toward God—Luke 12:16-20; 2 Cor. 6:10; Eph. 3:8.
 5. We need to remember Lot’s wife, not loving and treasuring the evil world that God is going to judge and utterly destroy—Luke 17:28-32.
 6. We need to be watchful and beseeching so that the day of the Lord’s coming would not come upon us suddenly as a snare—21:34-36; cf. Matt. 2:3.
 7. “Come, Lord Jesus!”—this should be the longing, cry, and constant prayer of those who love the Lord and His appearing—Rev. 22:20; Titus 2:12-13.
- B. To beat our fellow slaves is to mistreat fellow believers—cf. Acts 9:4:
1. We should not judge and condemn our fellow believers but be kind to them, tender-hearted, forgiving them even as God in Christ forgave us—Luke 6:37; Eph. 4:31-32.
 2. We should not revile or criticize our brothers but consider them more excellent than ourselves—1 Cor. 6:10-11; Phil. 2:3, 29.
 3. We should not lord it over our fellow believers (such as making decisions for them) but serve them as a slave to feed them with the resurrected Christ as the life-giving Spirit—1 Pet. 5:3; Matt. 20:25-28; cf. Num. 17:8.
- C. To eat and drink with the drunken is to keep company with worldly people, who are drunk with worldly things:
1. Because of their divine nature and holy standing, the believers should not be yoked together with the unbelievers; this should be applied to all intimate relationships between believers and unbelievers, not only to marriage and business—2 Cor. 6:14; 1 Cor. 15:33; cf. Prov. 13:20.
 2. We need to flee youthful lusts and pursue the all-inclusive Christ with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart—2 Tim. 2:22.
- D. The faithful and prudent slave will be rewarded with the authority to rule in the manifestation of the kingdom, whereas the evil slave will be cut off from the glorious Christ, from the glory of His kingdom, and from His glorious presence in His kingdom—Matt. 24:47, 51:
1. To be cut off from the manifestation of the kingdom is to be cast into the outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth:
 - a. The outer darkness is the darkness outside the bright glory in the manifestation of the kingdom—16:28; 25:30.
 - b. Weeping indicates regret, and gnashing of teeth indicates self blame.
 2. To reign with Christ over the nations in the millennial kingdom will be a prize to His faithful and prudent slaves—Rev. 2:26; Luke 19:17-19.