

The True Saints of the Most High.

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON PREACHED AT SUTTON
COLDFIELDS, AUGUST 5TH, 1903, BY MR. H. GRUBER,
OF MANCHESTER.

“But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.”—
MATTHEW XXV. 4, 5.

THE religion of the eternal God is a holy, a solemn, and an awe-inspiring reality; and all those people who are under God's special teaching will soon know it for themselves. But we are living in a day when men, for the most part, have become so accustomed to hearing the Word of God, that it has little or no effect upon them. I venture to say, God's own dear people require something extraordinary to move them, to affect and impress them. May the Lord in much mercy be in our midst to-day, and help me to open this part of His Word. It is a very profound subject, and one that concerns us. It is of infinite importance to us because in all probability every one in this little assembly is hoping that when we die we may find ourselves in heaven. O, my friends! be you well assured of the foundation of your religion. If the foundation is wrong, everything is wrong. May the Lord search us and try us. “Examine yourselves,” says the apostle, “prove all things.”

“True religion's more than notion,
Something must be known and felt.

Also, you must remember, there is a wonderful

distinction in the professing Church between professors and possessors of the grace of God.

Here, in this parable which the Son of God spoke, He compares the kingdom of heaven to ten virgins. The kingdom here means the professors of the Gospel of the Church here on earth. These ten virgins, to all outward appearance, went forth to meet the Bridegroom, who is the Son of God, the Lord of life and glory. He says to his dear Church, "Thy Maker is thine husband." Now, take notice of the very solemn difference there is in the professors of the Gospel Church. Five of them—half of them—were wise; and the others were foolish.

Now I come to the text: "But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept." My friends, I solemnly believe that is the exact period we are now passing through. It is many years since there was a noteworthy revival in the Church of God. "The Bridegroom," the Lord Himself, seems to have withdrawn, and the consequence is that all His professed people are slumbering and sleeping. Is it not so? What indifference there is, what coldness and lukewarmness there is? How many can you find that are really fervent, lively, spiritual and heavenly-minded? Very few. You may find one here and one there; but, for the most part, God's own dear people are slumbering and sleeping. And, you know, when people sleep, they lose consciousness of everything. No matter how surrounded by danger; if the house is on fire, they do not know unless awakened. And people sleeping a long time do not need much food whilst

in that frame, it destroys the appetite. As naturally, so spiritually.

How long this slumbering and sleeping is to continue we cannot tell: but it says, "At midnight there was a cry made; Behold, the bridegroom cometh." The Church of God is going down into greater darkness, but there is one consolation, the greatest darkness precedes the dawn. There will be a glorious time coming for the Church, but whether we shall live to see it is another question. Time with us is so different to what it is with our God; hundreds of years to us are but as a few minutes to Him.

But what we want to know is, *Do we* belong to the wise or the foolish virgins? This is a matter of very great importance, because the wise only will be admitted into the immediate presence of the Lord; and the foolish will be shut out. Therefore, it behoves us to be very careful, yea, to be zealous and anxious to know how matters stand with us.

Now, I would like to show you how it can be proved that people belong to the wise virgins, and not to the foolish. It is the testimony within, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." First of all, you must observe in this parable that the foolish virgins, like the wise, took lamps. Now, what is the lamp? It is the lamp of profession. They profess they are believers in the Son of God, in His Gospel, and in His doctrines. But we find the wise virgins had two things which the foolish virgins lacked; they had vessels, and they had oil in their vessels, and that made all the difference. By the vessel I understand "the new heart," and by the oil,

"the right spirit." "A new heart will I give unto them, and a right spirit will I put within them." When God gives this new heart and right spirit, then, of course, they are under the holy anointing, and that very anointing is teaching them all things, and is making them wise unto salvation; no matter how foolish or illiterate they may be in everything else. How often we have seen it, that God takes the foolish and makes them wise, in the best sense of the word. How often He passes by the most learned men, and makes fools of them. "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

"But the wise took oil in their vessels." Now, I want to describe to you the holy anointing oil, and whilst doing so, I ask of you all your attention, because it is a very important and solemn matter. I have read before you a few verses out of Exodus xxx., wherein we have got that wonderful recipe which the Most High God Himself gave to Moses upon the mountain in the thick darkness. He told Moses how this holy anointing oil was to be compounded, and gave him a very strict charge that no one was to make any like it, it was not to be imitated. "Whosoever compoundeth any like it, or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut off from His people." In the composition of this holy compound, we find God directed Moses to use the most rare and most costly spices of the East: Pure myrrh, sweet cinnamon, sweet calamus, cassia, etc. All these spices were to be compounded and mixed with pure olive oil, and the tabernacle, and all the vessels, and all the priests that were to minister before God, were to

be anointed with that holy anointing oil. And it is said, "Whatsoever toucheth it shall be holy." In this ceremonial worship of the tabernacle every vessel had to be anointed with the holy oil, and the priests, and all vessels had to be sprinkled with blood and with the anointing oil, and the former had to be washed with pure water in a laver of brass. In all these things we see types and shadows of better things to come. They set forth God's own eternally-loved and blood-washed Church, of which Jesus, the great High Priest of our profession, is the head. The Church is God's tabernacle, God's dwelling-place, God's temple. God is in them, and they will be in Him. All the vessels of the sanctuary and of the tabernacle, and all the priests, and all that pertained to the house of God, had to be anointed with that oil, that holy anointing oil. If ever so little a drop fell on any vessel, it was anointed. In the tiniest drop of the anointing oil there were all the ingredients. Aaron was anointed first, with a large measure. For what we know, gallons of it might have been poured over him, for we read in a Psalm of it running down his head and beard and garments, till he was literally saturated with it. Also, all the vessels were sprinkled with it. No matter how small the quantity, they were anointed and consecrated for the service of the Most High God.

Jesus, the great High Priest of our profession, our heavenly Aaron, was anointed. The Holy Ghost came upon Him without measure. By the mouth of Isaiah He says, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek," etc. The Holy Ghost came upon

Him without measure in an overflowing fulness; but to all His people, to all the vessels of the sanctuary, that are to stand in God's glorious temple, will the holy anointing be dropped upon in a small measure.

By the olive oil, which formed the principal part in the holy anointing oil, we understand to indicate "the Spirit of Life;" and where God puts His Spirit, the spirit of life and truth, the spirit of love and power, the spirit of wisdom and revelation, all other ingredients that are in the anointing oil will begin to diffuse their sweet savour.

What are we to understand by the ingredients? As I have just said, the olive oil is the life, spiritual life, and the other ingredients are "the graces" of the Spirit. There is the grace of faith, by which the sinner is enabled to believe in the true and living God and His Word. Another ingredient is "the holy fear of God." Another ingredient is the "grace of prayer and supplication," and mighty will it be in its actions; in many cases it takes the kingdom of heaven by force, and prevails with God. Another ingredient is humility and lowliness of heart; and how soon that also will begin to move. Another ingredient is repentance and godly sorrow for sin. We may well call that myrrh. There was a large quantity of myrrh. It is very bitter, but when mixed with the other spices it is a bitter sweet. And when a sinner's heart is broken and melted with a feeling sense of God's goodness, repentance and godly sorrow is seen in its finest form. It is a bitter sweet. It puts the sinner to shame; it humbles him in the dust; he confesses his guilt, he abhors himself; and yet in that repentance there is something indescribably

sweet. It is a repentance that needeth not to be repented of.

Another ingredient is the spirit of love. That is another active principle in the soul, love towards the Lord Jesus Christ, and His ways and His ordinances. It is a wonderful thing when our love is swallowed up in the love of God, and our will in His will. We may take the sweet cinnamon or frankincense to be love. How beautiful it must be before God and the holy angels and saints, when the heaven-born soul is drawn forth into activity. When faith and fear, prayer and supplication, repentance and love, and every other grace is moving and working their way upward to God and His throne like incense, through the infinite merits and matchless name of Jesus.

Where that eternal life is once kindled it can never more be finally extinguished. I have heard of people falling from grace, but I do not believe there can be such a thing. I know of people, professing the name of Christ, and then presently turned away from it, and apostalized, and went back into the world. The Apostle John says of such, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us." Such have not fallen from grace, for the simple reason because they never had grace. How plain the apostle is. Then he says, "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him."

"But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps." Now examine yourselves, whether you have got that oil in the vessel with the lamp. If you go to the house of God Sunday after Sunday, as a professed worshipper of the Most High God, then you have already got the lamp of profession, for it does not always mean that you must be a member of a Gospel Church. The very going under the sound of the Gospel and mingling with God's professed people shows you have the lamp; but it is the oil in it that will make all the difference. "A new heart also will I give you, and a right spirit will I put within you." "I will give them an heart to know Me. They shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest." When they are initiated into the knowledge of the true God and Jesus Christ, depend upon it, the work of grace is begun. The holy anointing is there, the ingredient of faith will soon exert itself and diffuse its sweet savour; it rises up as sweet incense before God.

Another ingredient in the holy anointing oil is the fear of God. How that will act and work in the sinner: It is a constraining and a restraining power. It will not suffer them to sin against God with a high hand, but if they should fall into sin they will have to learn what an evil and bitter thing it is to sin against God. The Almighty will chastise them for it. "If His children forsake My law, and walk not in My judgments, if they break My statutes and keep not My commandments, then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless My loving-kindness"—God's everlasting love in Christ Jesus—"will I not utterly take from

him, nor suffer My faithfulness to fail." God's everlasting love will overwhelm all their sin and guilt, and sweep it out of the way. Nothing can be a barrier against the God of salvation; and yet the Lord will not allow His people to sin cheaply.

There is also the ingredient of prayer and supplication. "Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness, like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?" When they are confessing themselves before Him and imploring His forgiveness, pleading the matchless name and sin-atoning blood of the glorious Redeemer, the God-Man Mediator, it is as sweet perfume ascending up to God like pillars of smoke.

There is the ingredient of humility. That is a garment most be-fitting such sinners as we are. What have we to be proud about? If God has given us grace, grace humbles, and we shall know what that verse means, "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" A humble gracious person will say to the Lord, "I have deserved Thy wrath and indignation as much as others; and why hast Thou looked upon me, and plucked me as a brand from the burning?" When the Lord Jesus spake to the woman of Samaria, He said, "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." There is so much sin in us. "That which is born of flesh is flesh." How often sin and the world fill us to overflowing, and well nigh stifle everything of a godly nature, yet they cannot finally stifle it. Everything may be dormant for a time, but the time will come when it will rise up again, and no power can prevent it.

"But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps." And yet they slumbered and slept. What a mixture the child of God is! But, in spite of all their wanderings and backslidings, God keeps them, and stands by them, and leads them on, and will never leave them nor forsake them. The everlasting Gospel is so free, so full, so finished, it is so unconditional in every sense of the word. The Lord says, "They that endure to the end shall be saved." But that is simply a test. Those who do hold out to the end, in them it is proved that they have the new heart and the right spirit.

May what you have heard abide with you, and lead you to examine yourselves; and if you are afraid that you have not the oil of grace, pray to God for it, ask Him, "seek Him while He may be found." We are told He is not very far from every one of us.

The Lord bless these remarks, for His name's sake Amen.