

I. We Worship Who We Know.

- a) Jesus told the woman at the well, "You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews" (John 4:22).
- b) This could also be translated, "You worship *who* you do not know; we worship *who* we know."

II. #6: True Worship Flows Out of Our Secret Place Relationship with Jesus.

- a) True worship is related to the depth of our intimate knowledge of God.
- b) If we don't know the Lord intimately, we are just singing songs and not worshipping.
- c) True worship flows out of our secret place relationship with Jesus. We worship who we know.
- d) Note: The term "secret place" comes from Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. He said, "But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the *secret place*; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly" (Matt. 6:6, NKJV).
- e) The "secret place" is the place where you pursue an intimate relationship with the Lord, away from every distraction. This could be a place in your house, out on a walk, in your car, mowing the grass, painting, etc.

III. Mary Worshiped from the Overflow of Her Intimate Relationship with Jesus.

- a) The best example of this is Mary of Bethany. Mary loved Jesus so much that her greatest desire was to sit at Jesus' feet and listen to His words (Luke 10:39).
- b) Jesus said, "*One thing is necessary*, for Mary has *chosen* the good part, which shall not be taken away from her" (Luke 10:42).
- c) In this life, only *one thing is necessary*. Sitting at the Lord's feet and listening to His words. Knowing the Lord and listening to His voice in a secret place relationship is the "good part," the "one thing" that "is necessary." Mary chose this. Every single one of us can have this type of relationship with Jesus *if we want it*. It's our choice.
- d) Have you chosen the good part? What choice have you made concerning intimacy with the Lord Jesus Christ in the secret place?
- e) True worship flows of knowing the Lord Jesus Christ in the secret place Monday through Saturday. Not just coming to church without seeking Him throughout the week and singing the songs on the screen.
- f) Mary knew the Lord Jesus better than most of the apostles. Mary knew that the Lord was about to be crucified and depart to heaven. Most of the apostles were still hoping for Jesus to conquer the Roman Empire and setup the Davidic Kingdom.
- g) In John 12, we see Mary worshiping the Lord by anointing Him for burial. This sacrificial worship flowed out her of secret place relationship with Him. Her intimate knowledge of Jesus that came from spending time with Him fueled her ministry to Him.
- h) John wrote, "Mary then took a pound of very costly perfume of pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume" (John 12:3). This perfume was estimated to be 11 months' wages (John 12:5). If the average American salary is \$45,000, then Mary "wasted" \$41,250 upon Jesus. To keep it simple, let's say that Mary "wasted" \$40,000 upon Jesus.

- i) Mary takes her inheritance, an alabaster vial of costly perfume worth at least \$40,000 today, and she anoints Jesus for burial. This represents Mary's life. It represents her.
- j) When Mary breaks open that vial of perfume, she is breaking open herself and anointing Jesus for burial. Because she has spent time at His feet, she knows that is He about to go to the cross and die. Her ministry to Him is timely and from the heart. She ministered to Him with her entire life, not holding anything back from Him.
- k) Mary's sacrificial worship flows out of her secret place relationship with Jesus. Her worship stems from her intimate knowledge of Jesus Christ. Intimacy with Christ fuels her worship.

IV. The Worshipers in Revelation 14:1-5 Know the Lord Intimately.

- a) Going back to Revelation 14:1-5, this worshiping company is the first-fruits of the bride who has made herself ready. This is three-and-a-half years before Jesus returns. Many more will be added to this prepared bride during the last three-and-a-half years leading to the second coming. When Jesus comes back, He will have a fully prepared bride (Rev. 19:7). For more information about Revelation 14:1-5, please see my teaching *Who Are the 144,000?*¹
- b) In Revelation 14:1-5, the worshiping remnant are:
 - The bride who has made herself ready;
 - The overcomers;
 - The adopted sons who will share in Christ's inheritance.
- c) This worshiping remnant are those who have a secret place relationship with Jesus. They know the Lord intimately. They are the wise virgins who purchased oil during their life upon the earth.
- d) See Matthew 25:1-13. As dad says, "This could be called the parable of the 10 Christians."
- e) I'll never forget the time in 1996, while reading this passage of Scripture at my parent's old house, when I realized that the parable of the 10 virgins was not talking about saved versus unsaved but wise Christians versus foolish Christians.
- f) Here's several reasons why I believe the ten virgins are Christians:
 - *All 10 were virgins.*
Their all of the same kind. All ten are virgins. To distinguish between saved and unsaved, Jesus always used different kinds, such as wheat and tares and sheep and goats. Justification has made every believer like a pure virgin eligible for marriage.
 - *All 10 were seeking the Bridegroom.*
I work with a lot of unbelievers, and believe me, none of them are seeking the Bridegroom.
 - *The all had an initial supply of oil.*
The oil is symbolic of intimacy with the Holy Spirit. This is what fuels our fire and keeps our light shining brightly. The wise virgins paid the price to pursue intimacy with the Lord through the Holy Spirit in the secret place. The foolish allowed the cares of this age to keep them from an intimate relationship with Christ.
 - *If the foolish were unbelievers, Jesus would have told them to get saved.*
Instead, Jesus told them to watch (Matt. 25:13). Watching doesn't save us. Watching keeps us awake and enables us to purchase the oil of intimacy with the Holy Spirit that keeps our first love shining brightly.

According to *Vine's Dictionary*, the word "watch" or "be on the alert" is "is not used in the metaphorical sense of 'to be alive;' here it is set in contrast with 'to sleep,' which is never used by the Apostle with the meaning 'to be dead'...Accordingly the meaning here is that of vigilance and expectancy as contrasted with laxity and indifference."

Here's the point. Unbelievers are dead. They don't need to wake up from sleep. They need to be resurrected to newness of life. Believers, on the other hand, have already experienced a resurrection from the dead. However, we can all fall asleep and need to be constantly reminded to wake up.

- g) The wise virgins who purchased oil by paying the price to know the Lord in the secret place "were ready" and these "went in with Him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut" (Matt. 25:10). It's only the wise virgins—those who made themselves ready—who will participate in the marriage supper of the Lamb and be the Lord's wife for all eternity. The foolish virgins are still saved and will go to heaven. They just didn't pay the price to purchase oil, to know the Lord in the secret place, and make themselves ready to be the wife of the Lamb.
- h) The worshipers on Mount Zion are the wise virgins. They are the ones who paid the price to purchase oil in the secret place.
- i) Jesus said to the foolish virgins, "Truly I say to you, I do not know you" (Matt. 25:12). An omniscient God, who knows everything about everyone who has ever lived or will ever live, obviously doesn't mean that He doesn't know who they are. Rather, Jesus is saying, "I didn't know you intimately because you didn't know Me intimately. You neglected your secret place relationship with Me."
- j) Conversely, this means that Jesus knew the wise virgins intimately. The wise virgins paid the price to pursue an intimate first-love relationship with Jesus in the secret place. And their worship flowed out of their relationship with Him.

V. The Lord Is Calling Us to Know Him.

- a) In 1996, I had the following dream:

Jesus appeared to me as an ordinary looking man. It struck me how ordinary He looked. He was not the Italian supermodel that usually plays Jesus in the movies. He didn't look anything like Jim Caviezel. Like Isaiah said, there was nothing about Him that was attractive. But yet there was something so beautiful about Him. He so was humble, meek, and gentle. Yet He was also serious and deeply grieved. He looked at me with meekness and seriousness and said, "Bryan, My people do not know Me." That was all He said, but these words impacted me deeply. This is the great burden of Jesus' heart.

- b) The Lord is calling us to know Him intimately.
- c) The majority of God's people do not know the Lord intimately. This grieves Jesus' heart. It breaks His heart. More than anything, Jesus has called us into an intimate relationship with Him.

VI. The Parable of the Dinner

- a) Read Luke 14:16-24.
- b) The people who refused the Lord's invitation were good people. They weren't evil. They just allowed their home, their family, and their work to keep them from a dining relationship with the Lord. They gave the Lord excuses of why they could not dine with Him.
- c) Jesus said that they "all alike began to make excuses" (Luke 14:18). They told the Lord, "Please consider me excused" (Luke 14:18).

- d) *The Home Excuse:* "I have bought a piece of land and I need to go out and look at it." Do we allow our house, and the things we have to do around our house, from pursuing an intimate relationship with the Lord?
- e) *The Work Excuse:* "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out." Do we allow our work to keep us from pursuing an intimate relationship with the Lord?
- f) *The Family Excuse:* "I have married a wife, and for that reason I cannot come." Do we allow our family to keep us from pursuing an intimate relationship with the Lord?
- g) If we don't dine with Jesus now, in an intimate relationship with Him in the secret place, then we will not dine with Him in the holy of holies for all eternity. Though saved and going to heaven, we will not feast upon Him for the eternal ages in close, intimate communion.
- h) We think Jesus will accept our excuses. But He will not.
- i) If we neglect dining with Him now because we place our house, work, or family above an intimate relationship with Him in the secret place, there will not be a justifiable excuse when we stand before Him on that day.
- j) Will you pay the price to pursue a secret place relationship with Jesus? Will you sacrifice your time, money, friendships, opportunities, fun, sleep, etc. to break away and seek the Lord?
- k) Many are on the trajectory of being a foolish virgin for all eternity because we are allowing our house, work, or family to keep us from pursuing an intimate relationship with Jesus.
- l) We have bought the lie that we don't have time to seek the Lord in the secret place and know Him intimately. That's a lie. You make time for what you really want. It's a matter of what you have prioritized and what you think is important.
- m) I don't know of anyone who allows their physical hunger and thirst to go unsatisfied. You make time to eat. You make time to drink. If we are spiritually hungry and thirsty for an intimate relationship with Christ, we will make the time to feast upon Him and to drink from His eternally satisfying water of life.

VII. Open the Door to Dining with Jesus.

- a) The great hindrance to intimacy with the Lord is not our busy schedule. It's our lack of hunger and thirst. It's lukewarmness, indifference, apathy, and self-satisfaction. We will make time to seek the Lord if we are hungry and thirsty for Him.
- b) The greatest obstacle we face in our pursuit of knowing the Lord intimately is not the devil. It's ourselves. We have to overcome lukewarmness, apathy, indifference, and self-satisfaction now if we want to dine with Jesus in intimate communion with Him, both in this life and for all eternity.
- c) Jesus said, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me" (Rev. 3:20). To have a dining relationship with the Lord of face-to-face communion and intimacy, we must first repent of lukewarmness and open the door of our heart to Him.
- d) The Lord told Neville Johnson, "If you open your garden (your heart) to Me, I will open My garden (heaven) to you." If we open the door of our heart to Jesus, He will open heaven to us and let us come into His throne room.

¹ <http://lifeschoollibrary.org/teachings/who-are-the-144000/>