

THE THIEF IS STILL AT WORK

Brother Jason Bright
Phoenix Assembly Church
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Edited by Sister Nicole Wentzell

Last Sunday we were in the book of Luke and I'd like to read that again.

Luke 12:39

And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

As we see this person, *the goodman of the house*, this would be like the head of a household. We see that he is in a place of leadership. He has a ministry but what we see is that there is a thief. We know that the thief is, of course, the enemy that would want to take away what we have been given.

We know that in the bigger picture there are people who have not been watching and waiting during the second and third watch for the coming of their Lord. They have not known that their Lord has had something fresh to give them.

Here it also speaks of a thief. We know a thief would take away what we have already been given. If what we have received is truly a revelation from the Lord, it's not going to be taken away. But the thing is: not everybody *receives* the Word the same way.

There are people who sat under Brother Branham's ministry who may have a better memory of what he said than you and I. In the natural they have an understanding, but that understanding is absolutely limited.

If it's not by the Holy Ghost that we receive the Word, it is *in vain*. We may be able to understand from a natural point, but we will never be able to take that and grow spiritually with it because we have not yet learned how to receive something revelatory.

On Sunday I mentioned a certain number of things that have already been taken from men.

Now why would the enemy even be concerned if they are not moving on? Why would he come in and try to take away that which they already have?

Well if they are at least able to hold on to what was already given, one day if they truly have an experience with the Lord, then they could continue on with Him. They could take that which is in their mind, it could be received in their heart and the Lord could lead them.

Here Luke 12:39 is speaking of a ministry. If the enemy can get the ministry confused, what is that going to do to the people who are sitting at the feet of that ministry? They are also not going to know where they are.

This week I received a call and also an email concerning a minister who had ministered earlier this month. Little did I know of this when I spoke on Sunday. This minister touched a lot of things but what specifically caught my attention was his explanation on white robes and fine linen.

Between this ministry and basically those that were following Brother Jackson, there had already been a parting of fellowship when Brother Jackson was alive.

There was a time I esteemed this minister. I got his tapes: I got everyone of them for a few years. But I remember one day we were talking on the phone and he began mentioning about white robes, on which Brother Jackson had just started ministering.

When I heard Brother Jackson minister on white robes, it thrilled my soul. I had read about fine linen and I had read about white robes, but the Lord had not shown it to me or anybody else for that matter, as far as I know. But the Lord began to deal with Brother Jackson.

I will say tonight: Brother Jackson had, if I can say it like this: a Paulean-type ministry. Yes he was an apostle but he was not an apostle like Matthew or Andrew or Thomas. Remember: Paul was called to be *the* Apostle to the Gentiles, right? [Ephesians 3:1] Amen.

For whatever reason, God did not call seven apostles to be Apostles to the Gentiles. Nor did He call twelve. I said seven first because I was going to say twelve but you might have said: well that's because they were Jews: twelve tribes. But he did not call seven either. He called Paul, right?

Paul had an understanding that was so deep and so beautiful. In our day, it was the same with Brother Jackson. It was very clear when I listened to this particular minister: he does not feel that way, and he has said it. He really doesn't have the respect for the ministry of Brother Jackson that even what I would call the Jackson movement has. That's not my point tonight, but this is something we can see from what is being taught.

Basically the expression was given: we like to say we are in the bride, then down below us are the white robes and that makes us feel like we are something more important. I have to say: to the true believer that is not the case at all.

You may find somebody out there who has that attitude if they are being led by a carnal feeling. But the true Bride of Christ does not have that attitude. It's not just enjoying some kind of a feeling that we are part of this group and they are part of a lower group.

That's how it was portrayed: as though we are wrong to even say that there is a bride who is robed in fine linen and the foolish virgins who only have white robes. And not just the foolish virgins but any other group who only has white robes.

It really was portrayed: how can we say that we are the bride but others are not? And the response was: what we really mean is those who are a part of our group. I have to say that is the most carnal false teaching and explanation about this that there can be.

It's not that we think we are some special group but each one of us individually, those who are truly part of the church, we each have our own testimony of how one day we realized we wanted *truth*. And the truth was not with us, but we knew it was out there somewhere and so we wanted to find *truth*.

Yes my personal testimony: I was fortunate to have been raised in Brother Jackson's church. But still, when I was in my early twenties I came to a decision: I'm not going to believe this because Brother Jackson said it. I'm not even going to believe it because so far everything I have studied has made perfect sense.

I began to pray: Lord if there is any error with this, if there is a contradiction somewhere, show it to me now! Because I don't want to live my life standing on something that's a house of cards. That one day a little wind of doctrine can come along and the whole thing can come crashing down, and because of pride I'm going to have to keep saying that I still believe this. I wanted to *know* what was right.

Now that's *my* testimony. I began to read *Contenders* and pray like never before about the truth, even though I had been studying the *Contenders* for years. I believed what I had read and it was beautiful. But I absolutely needed to know that it was not by coincidence that I was sitting under the ministry of a man who had a lot of good ideas and who could put things together in a nice way. I needed to know that wasn't the case.

The more I read and the more I studied, it was just like watching concrete dry. It just got stronger and stronger and more solid. I could see it didn't matter whether I was reading a *Contender* from 1970 or a *Contender* from 1995. As far as there being a contradiction in teaching: there was none.

While I was following Brother Jackson and part of the Faith Assembly group, it was *absolutely not* my feeling that we were a special group or that we were above others.

When Brother Jackson spoke on fine linen I never thought: oh would you look at that, we're up here and they're down there. I have to say it was actually something that rejoiced the heart. We could see that God had a place for salvation: not everybody being a bride saint, there was still a place for some who would still have salvation. Praise the Lord. That's beautiful. It's not racism, it's not: oh I'm up here and you're down there.

The way this was explained, it was almost like what we hear from the liberal-minded people today: oh everybody gets a trophy. Oh we are all basically bride.

It was said: when people were martyred, like at the Roman Coliseum, how can we say that they are not bride? This minister said: how can we say, but really he's talking first about Brother Jackson because he was the one who taught it. He was the one who used that example.

It's sad that much of the Jackson movement that wanted to at least hold on to things Brother Jackson brought, now because they have expanded their circles so big, they have accepted ministers who are against some of his teachings.

I will counter with this: how can you say that they *are* bride? Did we not learn anything for twenty, thirty, forty years?

The Bride of Christ is absolutely the highest spiritual level. [Philippians 3:14] She has had *time*. Not just because somebody said it, but let's actually read.

Let's go to the book of Matthew. I'm sure we've all read this many times. We know the seed that was sown was *the Word*. It says here:

Matthew 13:23

But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the Word, and understandeth it;

There was also a question, if really the evidence of being a true believer is that we believe the Word for our day. It was basically expressed as though maybe we don't have to. Where do we see that in the Bible?

Those who followed Jesus *had to believe Jesus' Word*. [John 8:31] Amen. When Peter spoke on the day of Pentecost, *they had to believe that Word*. [Acts 2:41] Praise the Lord.

Paul dealt with those who *didn't believe the Word*. He said there's Alexander the coppersmith [2Timothy 4:14] and there's Hymenaeus, and there are others. [2Timothy 2:17] He *named* them, right? He did not leave any room as though you could believe this or you could believe that. He said that was *heresy*. [Titus 3:10]

In the later years of John's life: Paul was gone, Peter was gone, and Jesus had gone to heaven. John said *the spirit of antichrist is already working*. [1John 4:3] On the other hand he said *I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth*. [3John 1:4] Praise the Lord.

It was not a little *John club* but there is a truth that is *God's Truth*. It's not John's truth, it's not Brother Branham's truth, nor is it Brother Jackson's truth. But God has used certain men to bring *the truth*, and Brother Jackson was one of them.

If we have truly received the gift of the Holy Ghost, we are going to be drawn to that truth. Amen. That is absolutely right. It is the *Spirit of Truth*. The Holy Ghost *is* the Spirit of truth. [John 15:26]

To say things like: I don't believe this, or are we really going to believe that? And to give the impression that Brother Jackson really didn't think this through well enough. I'm going to say: I remember when that very minister called me on the phone. This was about twenty three years ago. He said: Brother Jackson is talking about unity but with what he's preaching on white robes and the questions it's causing people to have, you have to ask yourself, are we really in unity?

He was saying that Brother Jackson was *not* seeing unity as important or as the objective. Back then I didn't hear others have trouble with the white robes and the fine linen. But there was something that bothered this minister, and it still does today. For him to say that Brother Jackson didn't think about the apostles being martyred. I have to say, please: that was not something that Brother Jackson would overlook.

Let's keep reading.

Matthew 13:23

is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit,

Right?

Matthew 13:23

beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

Here Jesus is using a natural example. We know if we put a seed in the ground, maybe it's an apple seed or maybe it's an orange seed, if that seed is received into good ground, eventually it can produce. And one day we'll be able to pick an orange from that tree, if it was an orange seed we planted, right?

Everybody knows: we don't get the fruit the next day, but there is a *process*. If a person came to the Lord tonight, even if they were to give their life, tonight they would *not* be a bride saint. *Potentially* yes they could be, like if we put the seed in the ground, *potentially* we're going to get an orange tree. But if there's a fire or a flood that kills that seed, there will never be an orange tree.

The Bride of Christ is a people who have had the opportunity to become *mature* Christians. We have gone through tests and trials. We have heard sermons, sometimes sermons that have shined light on an area of our life where we were in error, and it hasn't felt really good. But we have been willing to crucify this flesh and to suffer a little bit, right? So we could get ourselves in the place where the Lord wants us.

There is *growth*, not just in our conduct which is a great part of it, but also in *wisdom* and *knowledge*.

How many times do we read in the New Testament where Peter, James, John, and Paul spoke of *growing*? Even though Jesus doesn't use that word in this parable, we know the only way to get from a seed to a mature tree is by *growing*. Amen.

He says here:

Matthew 13:23
he that heareth the word, and understandeth it;

I want to be clear on this: the thirtyfold, the sixtyfold and the hundredfold, all of these are your *bride saints*. It's *not*: the thirtyfold is the great multitude, the sixtyfold are the foolish virgins, and the hundredfold is the bride. This is *all* your bride saints.

We don't all have the same potential but we all have the potential to fully reach what God has invested in us. If you were called to produce sixty fruit and you produce sixty fruit, then you have produced a hundred percent of what you've been called to do. That's what the Lord wants. Can we see that?

Some of us are called to be thirtyfold Christians, some sixtyfold, and some a hundredfold. That should not matter to us.

The only thing is: if we ever get to a point where someone else seems to be able to go further than us, we shouldn't get discouraged. God has a calling for each one. Praise the Lord. We should not get discouraged and we also should not try to be like them. Let's grow individually in what God has given us.

Notice it says that this one didn't just hear the word but he *understood it*. [Matthew 13:23] Here when Jesus says *understand*, he's not speaking of a mental understanding, he's speaking of a *spiritual understanding*. That is no different than *revelation*.

He could just as well have said *he hears the Word and it is revealed to him*. You may say: Brother Bright, he didn't say *it's revealed*. No but he said *he understands it* and that is the *same* thing. Praise the Lord.

Let's go to the book of Mark and see what it says. This is Mark's account. Some believe that Peter basically spoke this to Mark but however it be, this is the account of the same thing. This is what stands out that Mark wrote:

Mark 4:8

And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased;

In Spanish it says: it yielded fruit *because it sprang up and increased*. That's what we still need to be doing today is *increasing*.

Mark 4:8

and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.

Let's jump further down.

Mark 4:20

And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it,

If there was any doubt such as: we just need to understand it but we really don't have to receive it, here it says *they receive it*.

How can they read this and turn around and say: the evidence that someone is a true believer is *not* that they are walking in the light of our day? Right here it says *they hear the Word and they receive it*. I don't see any way out of that.

We need to *receive* the Word of God. And we need to receive the Word that He is giving *today*. If we go around looking for an ark because God told Noah to get in the ark, that's not going to benefit us. We need to see what He's giving *today*.

Now I haven't had time to go into all of my notes, but I want to show a little slide for clarity because certain things were spoken that were so mixed up. In another place it was even said that Gentiles could be saved in the tribulation period.

First of all: we can't accept something just because somebody has a nice way of talking.

When there is a criticism: some are saying there are *wise* and there are *foolish*. Let's remember: it wasn't Brother Branham who started that terminology, nor was it Brother Jackson, it was the *Lord Jesus Christ*.

He said *then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, five will be wise, and five foolish*. [Matthew 25:1-2] It was the Lord Jesus who explained through a parabolic passage how we would see the effect on the two groups. If he didn't want us to be able to understand that so we could see how it applies to our day, why did *he* say it?

He's also the one who explained that there would be tares. That's the truth.

The Bride of Christ is not going to be ignorant as to what makes a bride saint, what makes a white robe saint, and what makes a tare. She's not going around saying: this one's a foolish virgin, that one's a tare, and that one's in the great multitude. But she's not ignorant either as to what causes people to end up in one of those categories.

Now I'm going to show this slide and we might come back to this later.



On the left side we have the Old Testament saints. They lived and they died. They did not die with white robes but they went to Abraham's bosom [Luke 16:22] where they waited for *the one* who could give them a white robe. [Psalm 16:10] Praise the Lord. That was the Lord Jesus Christ.

We're not going to go into that now, but Jesus himself went down to Abraham's bosom [Ephesians 4:9] and he preached to them. [1Peter 3:19] They were able to believe on him and they received eternal life as they put their faith in him. [Matthew 27:52]

To the right of the cross, after the crucifixion, white robes are administered to all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Now that's not all who *say* they believe. God is the One who knows the heart. It's to all who *believe*.

The Old Testament saints who are now in heaven, they have those white robes.

The Bride saints have white robes too. They have also received eternal life. The difference is in Revelation nineteen. As it says that the *wedding is come*, [Revelation 19:7] it says: *to her*, the wife, it was *granted* that she should be *arrayed*. This is more than just an initial clothing, but *she should be arrayed in fine linen*. [Revelation 19:8] Praise the Lord. That goes *on top* of the white robe.

Here on the chart we have the Seven Church ages. This was not my point but we know for the first twenty years of the Grace age, Jews were also brought into the Bride.

Then we have the Seven Church ages to the Gentiles. In the *seventh* church age, we see *foolish virgins* come into the picture. [Matthew 25:2] We see their manifestation more toward the end of this age, starting with the ministry of Brother Branham.

Meanwhile the *great multitude* of Revelation 7 has lived throughout this Gentile age. [Revelation 7:9] They have lived and died. They have received Jesus Christ *during* the church ages and they have *white robes*. [Revelation 7:14]

On this chart I haven't identified the Jews during the Gentile age. They are similar to the Old Testament saints that lived and died. They lived and died during this Gentile age and they are the *souls under the altar*. That's your *fifth seal*. [Revelation 6:9] They will receive their *white robes* at the beginning of the 70th week of Daniel [Revelation 6:11] at the same time that the *living Jews* will be listening to the *two prophets*. [Revelation 11:3] Those living Jews will also be receiving eternal life.

Now to a last question, and I will close with this.

Can a Gentile be saved in the 70th week of Daniel? First of all: if God wants to save someone, I mean: He would love to save the whole world, but if someone has a sincere heart, they have that opportunity *now* in the Gentile age.

You may say: what if they are young? What if they haven't yet reached the age of accountability, but later in the Week of Daniel they will? That's where the *Everlasting Gospel* comes in. [Revelation 14:6-7]

The *Everlasting Gospel* is going to be preached in the second half of the 70th Week of Daniel. Everyone who will be of age of accountability, who *hasn't* already had their chance during the Gentile age, will have that opportunity to hear the *Everlasting Gospel* if they have a sincere heart. And God knows that before they are born.

I kind of condensed this subject and I've already gone over time. Maybe I'll slow down a little bit on Sunday. Some of our other Brothers are probably also going to look at these things. For now I'm going to close.