

Matthew

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[0 : 00] As the Lord may be pleased to help me, I would ask your attention to Matthew chapter 15, and we will try and look at verses 24 and 25.

Matthew 15, verses 24 and 25, But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. Matthew 15, verses 24 and 25, What a wonderful word this is, friends.

It must be to poor, lost, ruined sinners. It must be to them. It's not to anybody else.

But, friends, these things have got to be experienced. We've got to be taught the Spirit of God. These things are not in us.

[1 : 47] We must be born again. We must be enlightened by the Spirit of God.

We must be shown our state and condition before him. There's many, friends, that will justify themselves.

There are many that will say, but I'm not as bad as others, and so on. But, friends, I believe grace, when it is put in our hearts, when we are born again, when we are searched by God, we shall become the chief of sinners.

We won't be saying we are better than this or that one. It will be God. Be merciful to me, a sinner.

A poor, lost, ruined sinner. Oh, friends, this is a painful path to walk in.

[3 : 06] And it is something that we have to, and are made continually aware of, if we are being taught of God.

I trust there are those of us here that have been in the way many years. The Lord has begun his work in our hearts.

We believe he has. We have those evidences that he has begun the work of God in our hearts. It wasn't always as it is today.

There were days before, we believe the Lord called us by grace, and we wasn't concerned, not one bit, about our state and condition.

No. And we wanted to follow the multitudes. We wanted to enter into their pleasures, and we tried, some of us.

[4 : 16] But we found, to our dismay, that it didn't work. Our way was hedged up. We were made uncomfortable.

And we were made to feel, eventually, the guilt of it. Friends, what an unspeakable mercy, if we've got any evidence in our hearts, that the Lord has begun his work in our hearts.

If he has called us by his grace, you might not be able to say or speak of the very first moment when the Lord began, but, friends, can we come in with the blind man who said, one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.

Now I see. And what do we see? We see something, some measure, of our solemn state and condition.

We see that we are condemned in our hearts by our sin. We have gone astray. We have rebelled.

[5 : 44] We are poor, lost, condemned sinners. And we need mercy. We need a saviour. Or else, we shall be cast into hell forever and ever.

Oh, friends, these are solemn things, solemn things to experience, to realise.

And we still have to experience it. It may be some of us have a humble hope that one day we shall be with God in heaven.

We shall be saved from this body of sin and death through the blood of Jesus.

And that is an unspeakable mercy if we have any evidences of this. But we still have to solemnly prove that we have this body of sin and death.

[6 : 59] We still have to prove that we are carnally minded. We still have to prove, like Martha did, that she was careful and troubled about many things.

And we cannot throw stones or point the finger at her. We find we're just the same. And I wonder sometimes how much it, Satan keeps you and I busy.

Piles it on, as it were. One thing after another. So that we can never seem to catch up. He doesn't want us to catch up and relax and seek the Lord.

Ah, friends, we need to beware of being taken up with these time things. Where is our heart? Isn't there something or a saying that says, where our treasure is, so will our heart be?

Something like that, I believe. And how easily we can be taken up with time things. And what do we prove?

[8 : 19] Don't we prove this, friends? What does it do to us? It brings on deadness. It plunges us into darkness. The Lord hides his face.

We can't find him. There isn't much wrestling, perhaps, because of these time things.

they have a deadening effect upon us. Friends, where would you and I be but for the grace of God, but for the quickening power of God?

Hasn't the Lord come many times and quickened us into life? Hasn't he revived us? Hasn't he resurrected us from the dead?

Ah, where would we have been but for those times? We would be like the world. We would have turned our backs upon him.

[9 : 26] We would have deserted him. But, friends, the Lord has dealt with us in his mercy.

He has given us a hungry and a thirsting after righteousness so that we have had to go to the house of God.

Ah, friends, what a mercy. The Lord knows how to deal with us. He knew how to deal with that prodigal son, didn't he?

What a remarkable case. But how we see in that prodigal the carnal heart, the determination of the flesh to go his own way.

He pleaded for that portion of goods that should be left to him that he might have it. And when he got it, he went off.

[10 : 39] He left his father's house. He wanted the pleasures of this world. He wanted to fulfill the lusts of his heart.

But what a mercy, friends. He came to that place where he began to be in want. You see, friends, what a merciful God we have.

He knows how to deal with his children. You and I might feel at times we are such hard characters.

We need special leading and teaching. Yes. And so we do. But, friends, what a mercy it is. There's no case that is too hard for our God. He knows how to bring us. He knows how to break us down.

[11 : 50] He knows how to humble us. He knows how to show us when we've gone the wrong way. Oh, how we need to be kept from going the wrong way.

We know, friends, solemnly, painfully, what a, how low the church of God is today.

Not only our own denomination, but all denominations, it would seem, they all have come low.

But, friends, what is the cause of these things? We read of one of the causes, I believe, and it was regarding the blind that lead the blind.

and there are many of those where we need to be delivered from that. How we need to be humbled.

[13 : 10] How we need to be concerned about the honor of God. friends, when we're rightly exercised, I believe that will be our chief desire that we might honor him, love him, and serve him, walk in his ways.

How we need to be delivered from all evil, from the flesh, from the devil. Friends, how many do we see that are being wrought upon by the Spirit of God?

How many do we see and witness that are born again? How many do we see and witness that have been delivered from bondage and darkness?

How many do we see that are constrained to come forward and tell what the Lord has done for their souls?

Friends, what a solemn withholding there is in these dark, evil days. And friends, let us not brush it aside and forget about it.

[14 : 46] It should be a solemn concern to each of us. Where is the Lord? Where is there?

Is there that travailing? When Israel travailed, she brought forth. is there no travailing?

Friends, this should be and is. It is a question to each of us.

It is to those of us that have walked in this way and put the Lord on in an open profession. Are we travailing for lambs to be born into the church?

Some might say, well, we've been praying for years for this one or that one. are we going to give up then?

[16 : 03] Turn back? Are we going to say, well, this is too hard a case? What about the man at Bethesda's pool?

He came 38 years, didn't he? He knew he couldn't put himself in the water. But he still went. And he didn't go in vain, did he?

We know he had to wait 38 years, but he never despaired, he never gave up, he still came, and eventually you see the Lord's time came, and he came right where he was, and he healed him.

He never got in the water. So friends, oh, that the Lord would grant to us that grace, that we might not despair, not give up.

Oh, friends, have you and I got loved ones, or partners in life, that we are concerned about, that we have to pray for, that we want to see brought?

[17 : 21] not, we might not have much hope regarding some, but we may have a glimmer of hope regarding some, or so.

Ah, friends, oh, that we might be enabled by the grace of God to travel, to pray, and pray.

Ah, friends, we don't know whether we shall live to see these things come to pass, but we have to leave the issue of things in the Lord's hands.

It's like that in the preaching of the word, friends. The word has to be preached. God will speak through men's mouths into the hearts of his children.

But his servants have to leave the issue in the Lord's hand. Sometimes they are committed to see the fruit that follows.

[18 : 58] But in many cases they don't see the fruit. In some cases they see it after many years. The Lord has made this quite clear bread cast upon the waters shall be seen after many days, many years.

And friends, oh, how wonderful it is when sometimes we're permitted to see a little fruit, perhaps after twenty years.

wives, didn't know that the word had been used or entered into the heart of somebody.

Friends, the Lord can never fail, but all are we exercised, are we concerned as to the will of God? Are we concerned about the welfare of Jerusalem, the welfare of Zion, the church of God?

There is much, friends, that we should be concerned about in the church of God. Even our own denomination, let alone others, friends, but what should concern us mostly, of course, is our own denomination, because we are part of it.

[20 : 41] And, friends, we know. We know we are in dark days. We know our denomination is in a very, very low state.

Now, does it concern us? Or do we look to the Lord? Do we say, well, I'm all right.

The fault's not in me. It's in others, friends. That isn't the way that we should look at these things. I believe we, and we certainly need grace, to come to the Lord and ask him to show us if there's anything in us that causes this darkness and withholding of God's power.

Is it something in us? Is it something in us? In our walk? In our conduct? Friends, oh, we need to look at self.

We need to be examined to see if there be anything in us. Remember, friends, our carnal hearts.

[22 : 08] Remember how hard, how blind we are, left to ourselves. And without the power of God to come and melting our hearts and humbling us, friends, friends, there's no repentance.

There was no repentance in David regarding that awful sin that he committed in fulfilling the lust of his heart.

He, friends, until the Lord came and opened his eyes and showed him that he had committed that sin, then he fell under it.

Yes. Oh, friends. Oh, has the Lord, is he humbling you and I? Does he bring you and I to repentance?

Do we have to plead with our God? Well, the Lord knows where we are.

[23 : 36] Friends, oh, but he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

This is a remarkable case. We have this dear woman that I believe had the grace of God in her heart.

She came to the Lord. She was in trouble. She sought the Lord. What did she find?

She didn't find much encouragement, did she? There were those, the disciples, that would have turned her away.

Very solemn, isn't it, when sometimes the people of God are stumbling blocks to the Lord's children.

[24 : 48] His own children are stumbling blocks. The disciples would have sent her away. Their hearts were hard.

There was no mercy. But, friends, she found also that the Lord Jesus Christ, shall we say, acted strangely.

But you see, friends, Jesus knew this woman. He knew who she was. He was drawing her.

Remember what he said to her that great is thy faith, be it unto thee, even as thou wilt.

But, friends, you know, we have to often prove this. We don't understand we don't understand the Lord's way. We don't understand the pathway that he leads us in.

[26 : 13] We don't understand why we have to pass through this and that. We don't understand why the Lord doesn't deliver us at times from various things.

things. But, friends, this is what you and I are going to prove. He knows the end from the beginning.

He knew what he was going to do with this dear woman. Yes. And she was blessed. But he answered and said, I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Friends, what a word. There are those of us here, maybe all of us, I don't know, but the Lord does.

But there are those of us here that feel and know that we are the lost sheep. The lost sheep.

[27 : 28] But remember what it says. It's the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And that's a wonderful thing.

It's the house of Israel. It's the church of God. It's the Lord's children. These are the ones that are going to feel their lost, ruined state.

The world at large, they don't feel it. They don't experience it. They don't acknowledge it. because they don't experience anything in their hearts regarding their sins, their lost state and condition.

But the children of Israel, the children of God, they do. The time comes, as we have said, when they are born again, when the work of grace begins in their hearts.

And they have to prove that it's a little here and a little there. They will prove that the Lord goes on to work and to lead them in his paths.

[28 : 58] They are brought to pass through many trying things and many painful things. But they are brought where the word of God says, by these things men live.

Friends, aren't there those of us here that are living witnesses to those things that we have passed through, some bitter things, some painful things, but by those things we have lived.

They have been the means in the hands of our God in quickening us into life. They have been the means of bringing us and making us submissive to the will of God.

By these things men live. Yes, friends, when you and I are brought to see and realize solemnly our state and condition before a holy God, then, friends, we have to acknowledge that our God is just whatever he lays upon us, whatever he may afflict us with.

But, oh, friends, when the Lord does afflict and lie upon his children burdens and troubles, friends, it is in love.

- [30 : 43] It is in love to his children. Oh, the wonders of these things. Oh, that we might have that grace in our hearts to bow before him and that we might be enabled to say again and again, not my will, but thine be done.
- Are you walking in a pathway that you don't want, you don't like, it's painful, it's troublesome?
- Ah, friends, what does the Lord say to his children? He says all things work together for good to them that love God.
- Is that not coupled with that other word I just recently spoke of, that all things, by these things, men live, by these things, these afflictions, these trials, these problems.
- Oh, friends, it seems we don't go long without some trials, some problems, some anxiety. it seems we get one after the other.
- [32 : 24] But, friends, where would we be without those things? Do we not see and realize that it is by these things we live?
- It has been by these things that we have been kept alive in our soul. We have been drawn again and again unto the Lord.
- We have been brought to cry for mercy. This dear woman, she came, she sought for help, she sought for help.
- Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But, friends, how wonderfully the Lord dealt with this dear woman.
- We know that she was tried, but she was, shall we say, in that, well, can we not say she was in that same spirit that Jacob was found in, when he wrestled with the angel of the Lord, and would not let him go, except the Lord blessed him, and he was blessed, and did not, is it not so with this woman, though she had various discouragements, yet she still pleaded for mercy and help.
- [34 : 21] we know she came with her daughter's case, but how wonderfully the Lord worked.
- He didn't deal with that first, did he? He dealt with something else, that she hadn't said anything about. And it was the burden of her own soul.
- It was regarding the realization of her lost, ruined state. Ah, she came.
- She came to the Lord, but he answered and said, I'm not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.
- Ah, friends, that wasn't unkind, you know. No. That brought out the blessed work of grace that had gone on in her heart, for she was a poor, lost, ruined sinner in her own heart.
- [35 : 54] She knew it. She knew it. Painfully. We have the evidence of it here, because when the Lord said this to her, that he was not come, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel, Israel, then came she and worshipped him.
- You see, friends, he touched the very center of our heart. Ah, friends, we may have and do have at times many things that we have to bring unto the Lord.
- Many things, but you know, the chiefest of all things is our own hearts. We've got to die.
- We shall each enter eternity. We must each give an account of the deeds done in the flesh. This is the most important thing, or should be and will be with everyone that is born again.
- We shall be brought to plead with our God, God, be merciful to me, a sinner, a sinner.
- [37 : 35] We may not be able to say anything else, but you know, the Lord sees everything.
- He knows all that's in our hearts. He knows what burdens us. He knows what troubles us.
- Then came she and worshipped him. But friends, how is it with you and I?

Have we been brought to that place where this dear woman was brought, to know in her heart that she was a poor lost sheep?

Are you and I satisfied with our religion? There's many that are. But friends, are we satisfied with it?

[38 : 48] Or have we been brought to that place where we have to cry out unto the Lord, give me Christ, or else I die.

In other words, I'm a poor, lost, ruined sinner. I have utterly failed, failed in my walk, in my profession.

Ah, friends, we may, some may have served the Lord all their life. They may have been, they may have been born again whilst young in years.

They may, the Lord may have begun the work in the early days, but friends, where are we today?

Are we, are we poor, lost, ruined sinners? friends, if I know anything of the pathway, we shall not get above that.

[40 : 04] Whilst we are in this body of sin and death, we shall always be poor, lost, ruined sinners. Because we cannot stop sinning against God.

We are unholy, we cannot keep his commandments. We may be kept to a great extent from outwardly sinning against God, a great mercy if we are kept and preserved.

But what about inward sins? Sins that no one sees. yet we know, and God knows.

And friends, there can be multitudes of sins within. We can be guilty of all sorts of sins that wouldn't bear, we could not speak of.

love. No wonder Paul uttered those words, who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death.

[41 : 33] Yes, he was a grace-taught man, he was taught of God. he was born again.

Oh, what a wonderful case that is of Saul being born again. And how the Lord humbled him and made him willing to serve him.

Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? That's the place, friends, that his children are brought to.

It's Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? We need to be delivered from this self. We have to prove over and over again that our wretched selves let us down.

We make wrong decisions, we go the wrong way. We worship the wrong things. Yes, many other things there are that take our hearts.

[42 : 49] Friends, our God is a jealous God. He will have all the heart, not a divided one. We are to serve him with all our soul, with all our strength.

Yes, do we? Ah, how often we go astray, we are lured away.

But he answered and said, I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Oh, friends, you know there is something remarkable in this, especially to these souls that feel to be lost sheep.

Lost sheep of the house of Israel. The house of Israel.

[44 : 01] You see, they are the people of God. They are and will be saved sinners, but they are lost.

They've got to come there. You've got to come there before you can be saved. There's no other way, friends. And this woman knew this pathway.

So, friends, do you and I know anything of this pathway? It's a painful pathway. But, friends, it is the pathway that leads unto eternal life.

well, may we be enabled to meditate a little upon these things. May the Lord bless a few things for his name's sake.

Amen.