

The Great Controversy Series

Sermon 37 Open Door Shut Door

In the summer of 1844, the call, "Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!" caused thousands of people to expect the Lord's coming to this world. When the time came, Jesus did not come to this world but entered the Most Holy Place in the heavenly sanctuary before the Lord to receive a kingdom. In the Bible, this reception of the kingdom is compared to a wedding.

"Those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut" Matthew (25:10). The followers of Christ are not physically present at the wedding because the wedding takes place in heaven while they are still on the earth. Jesus' followers wait for Him to return from the wedding:

Luke 12:36 "and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately."

By faith, they follow Jesus as He comes before the Lord. In this way they join in the wedding.

Actually this truth was openly taught in the tabernacle system on earth. Only the priests could enter the Tent of Meeting. In appearance the Tent was black. This was because the Tent represented things in heaven. Those who offered offerings in the court followed the priest as he offered the blood or the flesh in the Holy Place, not by sight but by faith.

In the parable, those who had oil in their lamps could enter into the wedding. The oil represents the Holy Spirit. The faith of the true believers could withstand delay and disappointment. But those who joined only from fear or excitement failed the test. They could not enter the wedding. The Bridegroom said to them:

Matthew 25:12 "But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'"

We who accept the same truths join the wedding by faith.

In Matthew 22, Jesus used the wedding in another parable. In this parable we see the judgment concept again.

Matthew 22:1-14 Matthew 22:1 And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: ² "The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, ³ "and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. ⁴ "Again, he sent out other servants, saying,

'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding." ' 5 "But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. 6 "And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. 7 "But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. 8 "Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. 9 'Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.' 10 "So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. 11 "But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. 12 "So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. 13 "Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' 14 "For many are called, but few are chosen."

The king came to see the guests. There was a man who had not put on the wedding garment. That is the king made an inspection. This inspection symbolizes the judgment. O.K., what is the wedding garment?

Revelation 7:13-14 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?" 14 And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Revelation 19:7-9 "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." 8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. 9 Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'" And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."

The judgment day separates true believers from false ones. True believers put on Christ's righteousness. Many people accept the concept of the truth but do not appropriate it to themselves. They are baptized but they do not receive the Holy Spirit and their lives do not change. They commit the same sins. They trample God's law.

True believers have good works. Their lives are different. Loving Jesus, they share the good news they have received with others. They keep God's commandments.

1 John 3:24 Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

Many people say to me, “David, the Bible says that the believers will not be judged. What is this judgment day? The judgment day does not concern believers.”

First of all, the Bible clearly shows that this is wrong.

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

When Paul wrote this to the Corinthians, he used the plural form. That is, the believers will be judged.

1 Peter 4:17 For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?

Those who say that the believers will not be judged appeal to this verse:

John 5:24 " Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.

The Greek word krisis translated as “judgment” here can mean judgment or condemnation. It would be better if the word were translated as condemnation. He who believes will not come into condemnation. This is true. In the day of judgment, if you truly put on Christ’s righteousness you will not be condemned because His righteousness is sufficient. The judgment separates true believers from false believers. We will be judged.

We refer to the judgment that is made before Jesus comes that determines who is worthy to receive the benefits that Jesus earned the investigative judgment. Jesus’ investigative judgment in heaven is the last work in the heavenly sanctuary. When Jesus finishes this the door of mercy will be closed. There will be no other opportunity for salvation.

Matthew 25:10 "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.

The door was shut. Now is the time to enter the wedding friends. Don’t be like the believers who have no oil in their lamps. Enter while the door is open!

Revelation 3:7 " And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, ' These things says He who is holy, He who is true, "He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one

shuts, and shuts and no one opens":⁸ "I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.

By the Lord's instructions the Jews, for 1500 years brought their animal sacrifices to the tabernacle and offered them there. This was correct. For them it was an open door for salvation. The animal sacrifices which by faith pointed to Jesus' sacrifice which would come were accepted by the Lord. But when the true sacrifice of Jesus came the animal sacrifices were not accepted as true faith. That door was closed. The Jews who rejected Jesus as Lord and Savior could not find salvation in Jesus. A new door was open: by faith, salvation in Jesus.

After His resurrection for about 1800 years, Jesus mediated in the first apartment of the tabernacle in the Holy Place. For believers this was an open door and they found mercy in this way. But in 1844 Jesus entered the final stage of the plan of salvation. He began the ministry in the Most Holy Place in heaven. The Bible says:

Leviticus 16:17 "There shall be no man in the tabernacle of meeting when he goes in to make atonement in the Holy Place, until he comes out, that he may make atonement for himself, for his household, and for all the assembly of Israel.

No one would be in the tabernacle of meeting. For salvation, that door was closed.

In the same way Jesus, when He finished His work in the Holy Place, He began a new work. Those who reject this truth reject Jesus' mediation because that old door is closed.

Those who knowingly remain ignorant of Jesus' work in the Most Holy Place cannot enter the wedding because they are rejecting a present truth and a present duty. The door of salvation is shut for them. They do not have oil in their lamps.

When the Lord sends a warning, it cannot be safely rejected. When in Noah's time God sent a warning, the rejecters of the message perished in the flood. He sent a warning to Sodom and Gomorrah. Those who rejected the message were destroyed by fire. Those who rejected Jesus were not accepted.

Matthew 23:38 "See! Your house is left to you desolate;

In our day, together with warnings the Lord sends also duties. These are present truths. But so called believers reject them:

2 Thessalonians 2:9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,¹⁰ and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

As people reject the truths in God's word, The Lord leaves them to the their own lies that they love.

After 1844, the Lord revealed to the believers a great truth and duty. Next time we will focus on these. This truth and duty interests you.