

Justification to Sanctification for Glorification: Analysis of Matthew 25:1-13 with Implications on African Church Lifestyle

Bitrus Nuhu

Department of Christian Religious Studies
Adeleke University, Ede, Osun State
gentleh2h@gmail.com

Abstract

The judgment setting of Matthew 24:1-13, being a small unit of the larger unit of Matthew 24:1-25:46 story and the parable, is unique in nature. The glaring lacuna necessitating this work is the easily accepted, perhaps crippling assertion of once-saved-always-saved Christian mentality. This constitutes a barrier in the harmony of justification, sanctification and glorification as connected to salvation. The purpose of the study is to establish the continual working plan of justification, sanctification and glorification as essential to Christian lifestyle always being a prerequisite for salvation in Christ. The research adopted the “theological interpretive method of analogia scriptura” (analogy of the scripture) and employed the historical-grammatical method to establish a harmonious relationship with other parables within the confinement of prophetic timeline. Jesus presented volumes of truth with absolute certainty, being the bridegroom in Matthew 25:1-13 parable, where He clearly describes His return. The uniqueness of Matthew 24:1-13, by findings, shows that all the ten virgins possessed all it takes for justification (qualification) to glorification from inception to a considerable time, even at the saving circle (wedding hall). It suffices to hold that the delay time by the bridegroom perhaps is the sanctification period. This indeed depicts the waiting time which, practically, is the most important moment of the occasion. Hence, the end of the time, which became the final assessing test, was where virtually all of them fell asleep. However, God’s grace period revived the five wise virgins to salvation, while the five unwise misused God’s grace to damnation.

Key Words: Justification, Sanctification, Glorification, Virgin, Oil, Lamp, Marriage, Lifestyle and African Church.

Introduction

The biblical orientations of justification, sanctification and glorification are inseparable; they are as old as the Bible itself. This is at the center of the existence of man since the entrance of sin and was addressed in the order of progressive revelation of the Scriptures. In the post-Eden experience, man’s spiritual connection to His maker deteriorated. This leads to the desire for justification, sanctification and glorification to restore man to the image of His maker by offering

salvation. This means of saving man needs a continual and sustainable state of purity that is pleasing to God for ultimate restoration to take place.

In Jesus' eschatological discourse (Matthew 24:1-25:46), the parable of the bridesmaids follows Jesus' warnings about the end when many will fall away from the faith and the faithful will be hated by the world (Matthew 24:9-13). Hence, in the Old Testament (Isaiah 54:4-6; 62:4-5; Hosea 2:19), God pictures Himself as the "husband" of Israel, and in the New Testament (John 3:27-30; Matthew 9:15; Mark 2:19-20), Christ is pictured as the bridegroom of the Church. The Church is described in Scripture as the bride of Christ (Ephesians 5:25-32).

The Gospel of Matthew

Jesus' story of Matthew 25:31-46 cannot be clearly and succinctly appraised without the orientation of the authorship, theme and the peculiarity of the book of Matthew. Hence, Matthew 25:31-46 shall be analyzed in its context. Wallace holds that early Christian tradition, first attested to by Papias of Hierapolis (attestation dated c. 125 AD), attributes the gospel to the apostle Matthew.¹ He was probably a male Jew, standing on the margin between traditional and non-traditional Jewish values, and familiar with technical legal aspects of Scripture being debated in his time.² Writing in a polished Semitic "synagogue Greek", Matthew drew on the Gospel of Mark as a source, plus the hypothetical collection of sayings known as the Q source (material shared with Luke but not with Mark) and the material unique to his own community, called the M source or "Special Matthew".³

The Concept Justification

Justification, in Christian theology, is the act by which God moves a willing person from the state of sin (injustice) to the state of grace (justice).⁴ The term is a translation of the Greek *dikaiōsis* (Latin: *justificatio*), originally a technical legal term derived from the verb "to make [someone] righteous."⁵

Through all the ages, the great truth of justification by faith has stood as a mighty beacon to guide repentant sinners into the way of life. It was this light that scattered the darkness which enveloped Luther's mind and revealed to him the power of the blood of Christ to cleanse from sin. The same light has guided thousands of sin-burdened souls to the true Source of pardon and peace. For the epistle to the church at Rome, every Christian has reason to thank God.

¹ Via, Dan O. *The Parables: Their Literary and Existential Dimension*. (Wipf and Stock, 2007), 67

² Alfred Plummer, *An Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Matthew*, (London: Robert Scott Roxburghe House Paternoster Row, 1909), 343.

2. Nolland, John. *The Gospel of Matthew*. (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2005), 45-46

⁴ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/justification-Christianity>

⁵ Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1954; Revised 1972), 51.

The Concept Sanctification

Sanctification “is primarily another way of describing what it means to be converted or brought to God in Christ and kept in that relationship.”⁶ This definition captures the two aspects of sanctification that we have seen above. First, that sanctification is a status entered into at conversion, and second, that sanctification is a status that must be preserved. MacArthur is also correct to argue that (on the level of terminology) “instead of speaking in terms of progressive sanctification, the NT more regularly employs the language of renewal, transformation and growth, to describe what God is doing with us here and now.”⁷ Sanctification denotes transformation. On the surface, this would seem to be a decisive argument against using the language of “progressive sanctification.”

The Concept Glorification

Glorification refers to the nature of believers after death and judgment, “the final step in the application of redemption.”⁸ Biblical verses commonly cited as evidence for this doctrine include Psalm 49:15, Daniel 12:2, John 11:23-24, Romans 8:30 and 1 Corinthians 15:20. The theological doctrine of glorification goes on to describe how believers will be resurrected after death and given new bodies that have a degree of continuity with their mortal selves.

Matthew 25:1-13 Greek Text and Translation

Greek Version

1 Τότε ὁμοιωθήσεται ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν δέκα παρθένοις, αἵτινες λαβοῦσαι τὰς λαμπάδας ἑαυτῶν ἐξῆλθον εἰς ὑπάντησιν τοῦ νυμφίου. 2 πέντε δὲ ἐξ αὐτῶν ἦσαν μωραὶ καὶ πέντε φρόνιμοι. 3 αἱ γὰρ μωραὶ λαβοῦσαι τὰς λαμπάδας οὐκ ἔλαβον μεθ’ ἑαυτῶν ἔλαιον· 4 αἱ δὲ φρόνιμοι ἔλαβον ἔλαιον ἐν τοῖς ἀγγείοις μετὰ τῶν λαμπάδων ἑαυτῶν. 5 χρονίζοντος δὲ τοῦ νυμφίου ἐνύσταξαν πᾶσαι καὶ ἐκάθευδον. 6 μέσης δὲ νυκτὸς κραυγὴ γέγονεν Ἴδοὺ ὁ νυμφίος, ἐξέρχεσθε εἰς ἀπάντησιν. 7 τότε ἠγέρθησαν πᾶσαι αἱ παρθένοι ἐκεῖναι καὶ ἐκόσμησαν τὰς λαμπάδας ἑαυτῶν. 8 αἱ δὲ μωραὶ ταῖς φρονίμοις εἶπαν Δότε ἡμῖν ἐκ τοῦ ἐλαίου ὑμῶν, ὅτι αἱ λαμπάδες ἡμῶν σβέννυνται. 9 ἀπεκρίθησαν δὲ αἱ φρόνιμοι λέγουσαι Μὴ ποτε οὐ μὴ ἀρκέσῃ ἡμῖν καὶ ὑμῖν· μίφορεύεσθε μᾶλλον πρὸς τοὺς πωλοῦντας καὶ ἀγοράσατε ἑαυταῖς. 10 ἀπερχομένων δὲ αὐτῶν ἀγοράσαι ἦλθεν ὁ νυμφίος, καὶ αἱ ἔτοιμοι εἰσῆλθον μετ’ αὐτοῦ εἰς τοὺς γάμους, καὶ ἐκλείσθη ἡ θύρα. 11 ὕστερον δὲ ἔρχονται καὶ αἱ λοιπαὶ παρθένοι λέγουσαι Κύριε κύριε, ἄνοιξον ἡμῖν. 12 ὁ δὲ

⁶ Peterson, David, *Possessed by God: A New Testament Theology of Sanctification and Holiness*, NSBT 1 (Downers Grove, IL: InerVarsity Press, 1995), 13.

⁷ John MacArthur, *Matthew 24-28, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1989), 84.

⁸ Wayne, Grudem, *Systematic Theology*. (Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press 1994), 828–839.

ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, οὐκ οἶδα ὑμᾶς. 13 Γρηγορεῖτε οὖν, ὅτι οὐκ οἴδατε τὴν ἡμέραν οὐδὲ τὴν ὥραν⁹.

English Translation (New International Version)

1 “At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 Five of them were foolish and five were wise. 3 The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. 4 The wise ones, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. 5 The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep. 6 “At midnight the cry rang out: ‘Here’s the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!’ 7 “Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. 8 The foolish ones said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.’ 9 “‘No,’ they replied, ‘there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.’ 10 “But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut. 11 “Later the others also came. ‘Lord, Lord,’ they said, ‘open the door for us!’ 12 “But he replied, ‘truly I tell you, I don’t know you.’ 13 “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour¹⁰.

The Setting of Matthew 25:1-13

Jesus accomplishes His goal as He continues presenting parabolic lessons and teachings about judgment upon His return. In a sense, Matthew 24:50-51 raises the question: “On what basis will Israel be judged?”¹¹ The answer in Matthew 25:1-13 is preparedness. The parable of the ten virgins provides a picture of living Israel brought back to the land at the end of days for a judgment to see who is prepared and who is unprepared for the second coming of the Messiah. The focus is on Israel in the last days (i.e., the tribulation period just described in Matthew 24:4-42.). Those who are prepared enter the millennial kingdom, while the unprepared are excluded.¹²

Exegetically, Matthew 25:1–13 emerges from the Christian movement centered in Jerusalem, and finalized in a Jewish setting such as Antioch (around 90 CE). Matthew's presentation of the fivefold teachings of Jesus matches the fivefold Law of Moses.¹³ Chapters 5-7 emphasize fulfilling the law by getting at its radical center; chapter 10 outlines Jesus' instructions to His disciples as He sends them out on their traveling ministries; chapter 13 features parables of the kingdom regarding the reception and rejection of the gospel; chapter 18 calls for accountability and graciousness in managing community affairs; and chapters 24-25 call

⁹ <http://lectionarygreek.blogspot.com/2008/11/matthew-251-13.html>

¹⁰ <https://bibleportal.com/verse-topic?v=Matt.25.1-Matt.25.13&version=NIV&gclid>

¹¹ Craig L. Blomberg, *Preaching the Parables: From Responsible Interpretation to Powerful Proclamation*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 197.

¹² Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology: A Popular Systematic Guide To Understanding Biblical Truth* (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986), 480.

¹³ T Ayegboyin, *The Synoptics, Introductory notes on the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark and Luke*, (Ibadan: Baptist, 2004), 57.

for followers of Jesus to be ready, faithful and responsive as they await the return of the Son of Man.¹⁴

As the first of three parables in Matthew 25, verses 1-13 present us with the parable of the ten bridesmaids, emphasizing the importance of being ready for the bridegroom, as the hour of his appearing remains unknown. In contrast to the five foolish bridesmaids, who allow the oil in their lamps to run low, the wise bridesmaids keep their lamps full, so as to be prepared for the unannounced appearing of the bridegroom. In Galilean culture, upon the bridegroom's appearance, the bridesmaids would accompany the wedding party with lamps and torches from the bride's house to that of the groom, where the celebration would then begin. This parable follows Jesus' apocalyptic teachings in the previous chapter (24:3-8) on the signs of the end of the age, which will include persecutions (24:9-14), the desolating sacrilege in the temple, and false messiahs (24:15-28), before the appearance (*parousia*, 24:3, 27, 37, 39) of the Son of Man (24:29-31).

Therefore, believers should be watchful, taking lessons from the budding fig tree, as one keeps guard against a thief in the night (24:32-44). As a labourer seeks to be found productively at work when his master shows up, the faithful and wise servant seeks to be diligent-serving his master well whenever he should return (24:45- 51). In contrast to these fear-producing warnings, anticipating the celebration of a wedding is far more joyous in its motivating thrust (vv. 1-13). As the high privilege of the bridesmaids is to welcome the groom (some mss. add "and the bride;" v. 1) and launch the celebration, they want to be ready for the groom's part of the wedding party, whenever it should arrive.

Therefore, keeping their lamps filled and lit would have provided a joyous welcome and procession, whenever the unscheduled event should happen. The foolish bridesmaids, however, have not prepared themselves for the wait. Perhaps, they thought the bridegroom would come sooner, or perhaps they imagined being able to borrow oil from others. Their foolish lack of preparation, however, forces them to leave the scene to procure more oil, resulting in their missing out on the great joy of the wedding. As a result, the door is shut, and despite their excuses, the master of the feast declares he never knew them (vv. 11-12). The final point is made bluntly: "Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour" (v. 13).

The Elemental Analysis of Matthew 25:1-13

The parable opens with a familiar phrase, "The kingdom of heaven will be like this."¹⁵ The kingdom is like the whole scene portrayed by this parable where some bridesmaids are prepared for the groom and enjoy the banquet and others are excluded by their own lack of preparation. The parable of the virgins is not necessarily arbitrary, but it is challenging. It calls Jesus' disciples to a state of constant alertness, of perpetual openness to God's dramatic future. In what follows, the author analyzes the meaning and theological significance of vital symbols used in the parable.

¹⁴ ibn

¹⁵ Arland J. Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000, paperback 2003), 176.

1. **Number 10** - 10 is a “perfect number” that represents wholeness, law, discipline, and integration. It has been mentioned a total of 242 times in the Bible, making it one of the most used numbers in the Scriptures.¹⁶ In the parable, all the ten virgins went out to meet the bridegroom.
2. **Virgin** - A virgin is someone who chooses to abstain from sexual activity. Mary, Jesus’ mother, is known as the Virgin Mary because she became pregnant by a miracle from God without having had intercourse. Virginity is also a physical manifestation of our transformation into new creations in Christ.¹⁷ When we accept Jesus Christ as our Saviour, He forgives us of our sins and begins the process of molding us into being more like Him (Ephesians 4:24; 1 Thessalonians 4:3–7). We begin to exhibit Christ-like characteristics such as self-control as a new creation. Virginity is a symbol of devotion to God - all who have trusted the Lord and received salvation by grace through faith collectively are His bride.
3. **Lamp** - God's Word is a lamp (Psalms 119:105), a light that illuminates the darkness.¹⁸ Mathew 25:1-4 shows that all the virgins have the same beliefs, represented by the lamps they carry with them. The lamps represent the Word, the laws, and the statutes of God.
4. **Oil** - The “oil” is the symbol of preparedness, of spiritual vigilance. In Scripture, oil often represents the Holy Spirit (Exodus 30:22–33; Zechariah 4:2, 12, etc). The Holy Spirit is often depicted as oil as we read in the Parable of the Ten Virgins in Matthew 25.¹⁹ “Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him,” many are unready. The foolish virgins had oil in their lamps, too, but did not have extra. Without oil, the lamp would not give light. In verse 8, we can deduce that the oil inside their lamps had finished by the time the bridegroom came. Biblically, oil symbolizes the Holy Spirit. It, therefore, means that initially, the foolish virgins had the Holy Spirit, but not enough to the point of the groom’s arrival. They have no oil in their vessels at critical moment of need. They are destitute of the Holy Spirit.
5. **Wedding** – The marriage feast, which is indeed the wedding, is a characteristic feature of the wedding of the lamb projected in Revelation 21 and 22 where all the prepared children of God will receive Him in glory, having been justified and lived a sustained sanctified life by the power of the Holy Spirit. Hence, the grace of God kept on upholding them in Christ.²⁰
6. **Bridegroom** – The word *bridegroom* is used often in the Bible as a metaphor for God, specifically for Jesus Christ. The Church is likened to a bride, with Christ as her bridegroom.

¹⁶ <https://numerologynation.com/numerology/biblical/number-10/>

¹⁷ <https://www.bibleversesnow.com/what-does-virgin-mean-in-the-bible/>

¹⁸ <https://www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Topical.show/RTD/cgg/ID/4604/Lamps-as-Metaphors.htm>

¹⁹ John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew – A Commentary on the Greek Text*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 1002.

²⁰ Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew, The Pillar New Testament Commentary*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 621

7. **Night** – This is a period of darkness by the cares of this world, when trial, temptation, and troubles of life seem insurmountable. Hence, midnight in the parable represents a lack of faith in God. The earliest readers of this gospel have already entered the dark days after the crucifixion and resurrection and have begun waiting for Christ's return. This parable challenges them to be vigilant and live in anticipation of the Lord's coming.²¹
8. **Cry** –This means to make a loud call or cry; to call or exclaim vehemently or earnestly; to shout; to vociferate; to proclaim; to pray; to implore. Clearly, the Church is expected to be in active proclamation of the gospel of the soon return of the Messiah, to make people ready, as there will be no opportunity again after probation.²²

Implications of Matthew 25:1-13 on African Church Life Style

The African Church is characterized by seemingly fanciful teachings showcasing physical readiness for the coming of the Lord at face value. Hence, the parable in Matthew 25:1-13 is a strong teaching to redress the “once-saved-always-saved” deceptive notion, bringing to mind that justification begins sanctification to finally usher in glorification.²³

Once-saved-always-saved connotes an eternal security on the belief that from the moment anyone becomes a Christian, they will be saved from hell, and will not lose salvation. Hence, according to this teaching, when people come to know Christ as their Saviour, they are brought into a relationship with God that guarantees their salvation as eternally secure.

To be clear, Matthew 25:1-13 nullifies “once saved always saved”, indicating that salvation is more than saying a prayer or “making a decision” for Christ; salvation is a sovereign act of God, whereby an unregenerate sinner is washed, renewed, and born again by the Holy Spirit (John 3:3; Titus 3:5).²⁴ This indeed makes the repentant sinner justified to live a sanctified life unto glorification by the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. Hence, the African Church should bear in mind that no one that is deficient of any elemental composition of Matthew 25:1-13 parable is ready for glorification at the second coming of Jesus. Therefore, the prolonged sanctification from the time of justification is not to be pretentious yielding little moment of unsanctified lifestyle. This can definitely lead to destruction, as seen in the five foolish virgins.

²¹ Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 597.

²² Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Sacra Pagina Series, vol. 1, (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1991), 347.

²³ S. O. Y. Baba, *History and Practices of Biblical Hermeneutics*, (Ilorin: Amazing Grace, 2016), 45.

²⁴ J. A. Cress, *Seventh-day Adventist Believe- A Biblical Exposition of Fundamental Doctrines*, (Boise: Pacific, 2005), 77.

Practical Lessons from Matthew 25:1-13

- a. Justification begins a journey of salvation at the point of decision to follow Jesus as characterized by the ten virgins which is a metaphor for Church members. Analogously, not all admitted university students in the same course must graduate the same time. There is need for great work to be done throughout the period of stay in school, which equates to sanctification and graduation at the appointed time, signifying glorification. The unqualified university students at the point of glorification (graduation) may be given additional time to make up for mistakes. This is not possible in salvation experience because all corrections of erroneous lifestyle are done before glorification.
- b. The presence of oil, implying spiritual preparation, ensures spiritual stability at all times. The oil in the wise virgins' lamps represents their righteous living fueled by the Holy Spirit in obedience to God. We each fill our own lamp, which represents our own life, with our obedience and righteousness. The Father's blessings to us for our righteous actions cannot be given to the disobedient.
- c. "Almost saved" is the most painful experience in an individual's life. They all had been justified at the point of entry but sieved in sanctification. They had waited with lamps lit, for a while, but they did not plan for the long dark time of waiting.
- d. The banquet itself is a symbolic imagery of the eschatological messianic banquet (marriage is the Second Coming of Jesus). The importance of a typical wedding banquet, however, would not have been lost on the first-century recipients of the parable. Wedding festivities typically lasted seven days, and the processions of the bride and groom marked the beginning of the joyous event.
- e. The bridegroom (Jesus Christ) is delayed. In reality, a groom's delay was not altogether uncommon. For instance, there could be last minute negotiations between the groom and the bride's relatives over the gifts exchanged. The text does not bother to explain the delay. They should have anticipated that a delay might occur. In its literary setting, the delay echoes the previous parable of the two servants (Matthew 24:48), anticipates the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:19), and illustrates Jesus' warning in Matthew 24:14: "Therefore, you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour."

Conclusion

Although these bridesmaids were chosen to accompany the bride and groom, just like the way the Church is filled today with worshippers, their role as bridesmaids, even though justified, did not guaranteed them a place at the banquet. They had initially played the part of wedding attendants. They had waited with lamps lit, for a while,

but they did not plan for the long dark time of waiting. Practically, some have become caught up in trying to determine the day and the hour, while others have let their lamps run out. To live in vigilance means for the disciples to do the tasks that they have been appointed to do in preparation for the Master's coming. In Matthew's gospel, those tasks include bearing witness to God's kingdom by welcoming the stranger, feeding the hungry, visiting the sick and the imprisoned (25:31-46), and making disciples in all the world (28:19-20).

Bibliography

Ayegboyin T., *The Synoptics, Introductory notes on the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark and Luke*, (Ibadan:Baptist, 2004).

Blomberg Craig L., *Preaching the Parables: From Responsible Interpretation to Powerful Proclamation*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004).

Baba S. O. Y, *History and Practices of Biblical Hermeneutics*, (Ilorin: Amazing Grace, 2016).

Craig L. Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables*, (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1990).

Cress J A., *Seventh-day Adventist Believe- A Biblical Exposition of Fundamental Doctrines*, (Boise: Pacific, 2005)

Dan O Via, *The Parables: Their Literary and Existential Dimension*. (Wipf and Stock, 2007).

David Peterson, *Possessed by God: A New Testament Theology of Sanctification and Holiness, NSBT 1* (Downers Grove, IL:InerVarsity Press, 1995).

Dodd C. H., *The Parables of the Kingdom* , (Chicago: Moody Press, 1989).

Ellen Gold White, *Manuscript Releases* volume eleven “The Judgement setting in Matthew 25” No 930, 1990.

Ellen Gold White, “*Redemption: on the teaching of Christ, the anointed one*” a Pamphlet written in 1877.

Grudem Wayne, *Systematic Theology*. (Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press 1994).

Hultgren Arland J., *The Parables of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000, paperback 2003), 176

Harrington Daniel J., *The Gospel of Matthew*, Sacra Pagina Series, vol. 1, (Collegeville, MN:The Liturgical Press, 1991).

<https://numerologynation.com/numerology/biblical/number-10/>

<http://lectionarygreek.blogspot.com/2008/11/matthew-251-13.html>

<https://www.bibleversesnow.com/what-does-virgin-mean-in-the-bible/>

<https://www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Topical.show/RTD/cgg/ID/4604/Lamps-as-Metaphors.htm>

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/justification-Christianity>

<https://bibleportal.com/verse-topic?v=Matt.25.1-Matt.25.13&version=NIV&gclid>

John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*. (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2005).

Jeremias Joachim, *The Parables of Jesus*, (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1954; Revised 1972).

Keener Craig S. *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009).

Lang G. H., *Pictures and Parables: Studies in the Parabolic Teaching of Holy Scripture*, (London: Paternoster Press, 1955).

Morris Leon, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992).

Nolland John, *The Gospel of Matthew – A Commentary on the Greek Text*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005).

Plummer Alfred, *An Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Matthew*, (London: Robert Scott Roxburghe House Paternoster Row, 1909).

Ryrie Charles C., *Basic Theology: A Popular Systematic Guide To Understanding Biblical Truth* (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986).