



PRAYER & WORSHIP

Suggested Song: Great Are You Lord

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

Matthew 25:1-13 (ASK SOMEONE TO READ LOUD AND CLEAR)

- 1 Then **the kingdom of heaven** shall be **likened to ten virgins** who took **their lamps** and **went out to meet the bridegroom**.
- 2 Now **five of them were wise**, and **five were foolish**.
- 3 Those who were **foolish** took their **lamps** and **took no oil** with them,
- 4 but the **wise took oil** in their vessels with their lamps.
- 5 But while the **Bridegroom was delayed**, they **all slumbered and slept**.
- 6 "And at **midnight a cry** was heard: **'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!'**
- 7 Then all those **virgins arose** and **trimmed their lamps**.
- 8 And the **foolish said to the wise**, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'
- 9 But the **wise answered, saying**, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'
- 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.
- 11 "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!'
- 12 But he answered and said, '**Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.**'
- 13 "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

INTRODUCTION

- Have you ever experienced to be late at school, then your teacher didn't allow you to join the class?
- Can you think of a time when you felt "left behind" in any situation? Briefly share your experience.

The previous chapter (Matt.24) is a detailed prophecy Jesus gave about the world events leading to His second coming. This parable is a continuation of the prophecy, telling us what we must do in light of what He says about His return. So let's look at this parable to understand how we can **watch and wait** with godly patience for the coming of the Lord, known as **the Parable of the Ten Virgins**.

DISCUSSION (- GET ANSWERS -)

(Leader) You may explain again the purpose of a "Parable" which Jesus used as a part of His illustration to all of His disciples.

1. What was the parable about?

ANS.:

- Christian should always be ready.
- Christian should be watchful.

The parable of the Ten virgins gives us an illustrative lesson of how we would be able to take part of "the kingdom of Heaven" – In this lesson, Jesus is telling us to be ready for His return always.

Background: (Leader)

It was a Jewish custom and part of wedding ceremony for several virgins will light their lamps for the night wedding procession that usually starts from the bride's home to the home of her husband. Street lights are not common that time, so the light bearers would use lamps to light their way.

2. Who are the characters illustrated in this parable? Describe each. (Ask the group)

ANS.:

1. **Ten Virgins** – represents "ALL" believers who waits for Christ's return
 - **5 wise** (Christians who are waiting for the Lord and are ready)



- **5 foolish** ("professed" Christians but are not watchful and not make himself/herself ready for the Lord)

11. **Bridegroom**

- Jesus Christ

3. Can you describe the actions of the 5 foolish virgins? (Ask the group)

ANS.: verse 3

- who took their lamps and **no oil** with them.
- They are not prepared.

4. Can you describe the actions of 5 wise virgins? (Ask the group)

ANS.: verse 4

- who took oil in their vessels with their lamps.
- They had an extra supply of oil.

5. According to verse 5, the Bridegroom was delayed, what were the ten virgins doing while waiting? (Ask the group)

ANS.: verse 5

1. They slumbered and slept.
2. They were **all sleeping** – but half of them **possess oil**, ready to meet the bridegroom when he arrives.
3. The ten virgins have a role to do, they should be aware of what they **should have** and what they **should do**.

6. What does having or possessing the oil represent?

ANS.:

- possessing the oil is the believer's readiness or preparedness.
- lack of oil is the unpreparedness of a believer for Christ's return.

THE OIL ALSO SYMBOLIZES THE HOLY SPIRIT

- The oil in their lamps represents the Holy Spirit living in them.

Note: There are many who say they are Christians and are waiting for the Lord but in reality, the Holy Spirit is not in them. A true believer have the Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. **Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.**

7. In verse 5, it was told that at "midnight" a cry was heard and an "announcement" was made, what does it mean?

ANS.:

- The coming of the Bridegroom at midnight is not expected.
- The announcement "behold, the Bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him" could mean the signs of the Lord's imminent return,

8. What were the actions of the 10 virgins when they heard the announcement? (Ask the group)

ANS.:

- They all arose and trimmed their lamps.

9. How the wise and foolish virgins respond when the bridegroom arrived?

ANS.: verses 8-9

- Foolish virgins asked for oil (**not ready!**)
- Wise virgins was **prepared** and **put more oil** in their lamps from the jars, which they had brought.
- **They went with the Bridegroom to the wedding.**

10. What will happen if you're not ready and watchful, like the foolish virgins did?

ANS.: verses 11-13

- We could miss out the door of salvation.

11. You may say, "Why did not the wise share their oil? (Ask the group)

ANS.:

Jesus wants us to share but as the wise virgins, we should be wise in our relationship with God. We should be full and **filled** with Oil which is the Holy Spirit.

Eph. 5:18 "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; **but be filled with the Spirit;**"

"Parables of the Ten Virgins – A time of Urgency"

12. What does it mean when the bridegroom said "Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you."? (Ask the group)

ANS:

- "Don't know" means having no genuine "relationship" with God
- Of all the words Christ could say to anyone, "I do not know you" may be the most tragic. Yet this parable and other scriptures show us a moment of justice waits. Our life's work will be evaluated. God is patient and merciful, but He is also a God of judgment.

It reminded us the "Lukewarm church" in **Rev. 3:16**, the Lord will vomit you out of His mouth.

Even in **Mat. 7:23** "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"

13. Christ's concluding statement in this parable brings us back to what we have to do now:

Matt. 25:13 "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming".

THE QUESTION IS:

- **ARE WE WATCHING?**
- **ARE WE READY (DO I HAVE THE OIL)?**

REFLECTION

1. The five foolish virgins thought that the delay could also mean the Bridegroom will not come, so the foolish virgins did not take the matter seriously. **IN THE SAME WAY** are many "professed" believers are today. We should not become complacent like the foolish virgins. We should not say "Oh, he is not coming back today. I will serve Him tomorrow."
2. The Lord teaches that we should be ready all the time for His return, which means we should not sleep spiritually.
3. The Lord may not return during **our lifetime** here on earth, but **possessing the oil** we can

do while we are still alive. After this life is judgement, what we do now affects on what will happen to us in eternity. **Today is the day of salvation!**

2 Cor. 6:1-2 "As God's co-workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. For he says, "In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, **now is the day of salvation.**"

4. A key to Christian readiness is to be constantly being filled with the Holy Spirit.
5. We must make sure that we do not leave any unfinished tasks behind which God wants us to accomplish.

Eph. 2:10 "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

QUESTIONS

(Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

- Do you have a spouse, sons, and daughters, or relatives that are yet outside and still not worried about that day and what will happen? I can give no hope to those still outside of His knowledge.
- How about you, do you consider yourself as a wise and watching believer?

"A man cannot borrow a relationship with God. He must possess it for himself. A man cannot borrow a character; he must be clothed with it. The time to make sure you are ready is now. - William Barclay"

ASK THE GROUP, WHAT THEY HAVE LEARN ABOUT THE LESSON.