

11-8-20

Sermon- Give Me Oil For My Lamp

Scripture- Matthew 25:1-13, CTW Ps 78:1-7

Hymns- 90, 442, 276

Theme- Jesus told the parables in this section of the Bible to clarify what it means to be ready for His return and how to live until He comes. In this story, Jesus stresses that every Christian is responsible for their own readiness and spiritual condition. As we approach Advent, it is good for us to take stock.

I. JESUS IS COMING BACK AND WE NEED TO BE PREPARED

A. Since Jesus can come back at any time, We must be ready ALL THE TIME.

This week I discovered beprepared.com on the internet.

This website sells items you might need, in a disaster event, and I dare say we have learned a bit about preparation because of the Covid-19 epidemic.

This site is TARGETING survivalists, and those who desire to be prepared for anything.

Some things you can buy are:

A 30 day supply of food, that stays fresh for 30 years.

For \$7.95 you can buy a candle that will burn for 100 hours.

For \$40.00 you can get a 24 pack of canned emergency water.

They have a 3 day emergency back pack for \$89.99, but sorry they're sold out.

That website has many cool products but none of them will PREPARE you for the 2nd coming of the Lord.

And there will be Hell to pay for the unprepared.

B. Our passage from Matthew 25:1-13 is all about being prepared for eternity, for the Day of the Lord, for the return of Jesus and the Judgement.

Our text today uses the situation of preparing for the wedding banquet, which is something the people of that time would have been VERY familiar with.

The parable is meant to convince us to stay prepared. Not for any earthly banquet, but for the banquet in heaven.

Both sets of virgins fell asleep at night before the Groom arrived. They did nothing wrong in sleeping, sleeping wasn't the problem

Unpreparedness was the problem...it kept five foolish virgins from enjoying the WEDDING BANQUET. All ten knew they'd NEED oil, but only 5 ACTUALLY brought sufficient oil.

We usually talk about SINS of COMMISSION, wrong things we do. I remember years ago when I first encountered this passage, I thought it was pretty unchristian of the one group to not share their oil with the other group.

However, here we are talking about the SIN OF OMISSION, failing to do what we ought to do in preparation to join the kingdom of God.

James 4:17 says: "If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them."

C. Being a bridesmaid was a great honor: To be chosen was an honor to enjoy, but also came with responsibilities.

To not be prepared for the wedding could ruin the wedding day.

To ruin a wedding day would be a TRAVESTY and INSULT to the bride, the groom and the entire family. Jesus reminds us of the awesome responsibility we all have:

"At that time the **kingdom of heaven** will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom." Matthew 25:1

Weddings were held toward evening, and torches were used as part of the celebration, which focused on a procession leading the bride to the groom's house.

These torches were probably sticks wrapped with oil-soaked rags.

The wedding feast occurs at night after a day of dancing: the bridesmaids leave the bride, and go out and find the groom with torches.

They then bring him back to his bride, and they all go together to the groom's home. By now it's dark and they need their torches, so they can find the Grooms house.

Torches like these could maybe only burn fifteen minutes before the burnt rags would have to be removed and new oil-soaked rags would need to be wrapped on the sticks of which they were made.

Bridegrooms were often late, So the bridesmaids would need enough oil to make their lamps last until the Groom arrived.

But here, not everyone brought enough oil **Matthew 25:8** "The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.'"

Some came to the wedding, dressed to the nines, danced and enjoyed the day. But they weren't FULLY PREPARED, and Jesus is saying that this is a warning, that a brilliant start to our Christian faith is just as IMPORTANT AS A STRONG FINISH!

"No,' the others replied, 'there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.'" Matthew 25:9

Sharing is caring, RIGHT? Isn't that the "Christian Thing" to do?

D. Wrong...JESUS is telling us that we cannot sacrifice our own salvation for the sake of others who despite hearing the same message we did, choose to ignore it to pursue their own selfish desires. Think of it...a HARD lesson to learn.

This is the lesson of **Matthew 7:21-23** ²¹"Not everyone who says to me, 'LORD, LORD,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²²Many will say to me on that day, 'LORD, LORD, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' ²³Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

Are we really prepared to meet the LORD, RIGHT NOW, Here and today??? That that sink in. **Has Covid caused you to reconsider your true readiness?**

Matthew 25:10 "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."

The unwise were unprepared and there was a price to pay. The doors to the BRIDEGROOM'S house were bolted shut. The wise were inside the house. The unwise were not welcome in the house, they were locked out.

This is how it will be on the Day of the Lord: Some will go to Heaven, MANY will not.

Matthew 25:11-13 "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 hour."

The foolish bridesmaids missed the entire procession back to the grooms house. They missed the joyful singing and dancing. They also missed the critical element of the Jewish marriage.

They missed it all: They were unwise, unprepared. They insulted the host. They were locked out of the 7 day feast.

II. Many trade Heaven for Earth, but there is nothing on EARTH better than HEAVEN.

Mark 8:36 "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?"

A. This parable draws a contrast between the wise and the foolish, based on who is watching for the groom, and who is not.

Only a fool would think a person could accept the Lord and live like the devil and still get into heaven.

In reality, we prepare for the Lord's return, but staying PURE and DOING THE LORD'S WORK.

Since Jesus is coming soon, our time is short and we need to be **about our Father's business...Look at the words of Matthew 28: 18-20:**

"And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

The Father's business that we are to be about is that we have been given the JOB of making disciples:

B. Are we working now to show others the way to HEAVEN by using whatever means which are at our disposal, as provided for by God?

Have we done all we can do, have we prayed all we can pray, is there anything left within our reach that can be done to make disciples and win souls?

We must have the attitude that COME WHAT MAY we will be ALL ABOUT God's Kingdom.

I'm not saying it will be easy, but it is WORTH THE EFFORT.

Revelation 2:10b reminds us "Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life."

God's faithful need to **always** give Him their best:

Hebrews 12:1-2 tells us to LOOK TO JESUS:

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Don't love your life so much here on earth that you are not prepared to die! To play games with God is serious business and can hurt you eternally!

This parable drew a distinction between the wise and the fool:
And Jesus says that you get to pick if you will be wise or foolish
The foolish one will ignore the things of God and be surprised
when they are locked out of heaven.
Amen? LET US PRAY...