

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

NOV 21ST-NOV 22ND, 2020 // BOOK OF MATTHEW

THE TEN VIRGINS (MATT. 25:1-13)

This parable continues Jesus' encouragement of watchfulness and expectancy based on his delayed return.

- It was a great honor to be apart of a wedding ceremony, even more so than today. (vs. 1)
- The idea of not being prepared for the celebration would have been a great insult to the bridegroom. (vs. 2-3)

All the bridesmaids thought that they were apart of the ending. They thought they knew the bridegroom, but the love they had for him was shown by their preparedness.

- Notice how all of them slept; both the wise and the unwise. (vs. 5)
- The wise, through being prepared, could afford to rest. The foolish, instead of sleeping, should have been looking for oil, but they chose not to.

The groom was delayed in his coming. (vs. 5) This mirrors Jesus' slow return. It has been slow with mercy.

- The foolish bridesmaids thought they would be able to borrow from the wise when it came time. (vs. 8)
- Our oil can't be shared with others. Neither can we take others' oil. We must go and purchase our own oil to be prepared for the feast. (vs. 9-10)

In the closing of the parable Jesus shows how He won't change his mind once the time comes. (vs. 12-13)

- We must be prepared for his coming. It won't be enough to think of ourselves as having done enough to win his grace.
- We must go and sell everything we have to purchase the oil of life.
- **Are we prepared?**

TALENTS (MATT. 25:14-18)

This parable gives us some practical application in what it looks like to be ready for his return.

- Not only should we be anticipating his return, but we should also be good stewards of what he has given us.
- Wealthy landowners often entrusted property and affairs to trustworthy servants when they would go away for business or personal reasons.

The landowner in this parable is very wealthy and has enough expendable, liquid assets of at least 8 talents. (vs. 15)

- A talent was a unit of weight measurement. A silver talent was about 75 pounds, valued at 6,000 denarii.
- A denarii was worth one day's wages, so a talent was 20 years wages.
- This is approximately \$350,000 per talent or a total of \$3,000,000.

The Master gives each some measure of responsibility from His property. (vs. 14) It is not ours that we have somehow managed to put together. We are not self made. It is all his!

- Though some will have greater responsibility than others, the importance of each is still the same. (vs.15-17). We cannot compare ourselves to others. Our focus is to be on what we have been called to steward.

In this parable there is no backstory given on what has happened to them in their lives.

- **What is your back story?**
- There is an inherent risk that comes with investing. But there is also a risk in not doing anything.
- God expects us to do something with what he has given us to steward.
- 1 Peter 4:10-11

TALENTS (MATT. 25:19-30)

The Master calls the first two servants "good". They were good because they were "faithful". (vs. 20-22)

- Through their faithfulness they were rewarded with: **1. More Responsibility:** They were given little but have now been entrusted with much. **2. Entering the Lord's Joy:** The greatest reward a loyal servant can receive is their Lord's joy.

Are we being faithful with what he has given us?

Where are we struggling to be faithful?

Areas of weakness are an **opportunity to grow**, and we will never stop growing until we meet the Lord face to face.

We can't just acknowledge an area of weakness, but we have to **plan to change it**.

The one who wasn't faithful with what he was given did so because he didn't have a full understanding of his Master. (vs. 24)

- He served Him out of fear instead of love. (vs. 25)
- A fear of the Lord that works through love is different than a fear of the lord that is afraid of our sin being exposed.

He was called lazy, not because he didn't do any work but because he didn't do the work that was expected of him. He chose his own way instead of the Masters. (vs. 26)

- We can't let our misconceptions of God dictate what we do for God. If so, we could be working for the wrong reasons: For ourselves and not for Him.
- If we do this, we risk not receiving his reward and being separated from him for eternity. (vs. 29-30)

Are we living in Loving Obedience ready for his coming?

- We can't rely on other's walk with Christ to supplement our walk. God will judge each of us individually. We must be prepared by having a personal relationship with him.
- Some of us who thought we were a part of the Church will be in for a big surprise because we had a false assurance of our security through hanging out with the "right people" and doing the "right things".

How do we see God?

- Do we see Him as a loving Father who has given us everything that we have? All of our talents, our wealth, the breath in our lungs.
- Or do we see him as an angry God who wants to take everything that we have? If so, we will live out of fear hiding all that he has given us not using any of it to advance his kingdom.
- This "safe" behavior is a smoke screen for a self serving and disobedient heart.

Are we being good stewards?

- Are we investing everything we have for Jesus and His Kingdom?
- Or are we just passing the time?
- The problem with the Western Church is that **we are waiting for someone else to take care of our problems for us.**
- He doesn't want us to waste our lives. **He wants us to risk it all for him!!!**