

What Does Jesus Expect From Us?

Matthew 25:2: (KJV) *And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.*

Jesus did a lot of teaching in parables. He chose this method primarily for the purpose of hiding his real meaning from the public in fulfillment of a prophecy in Isaiah. Occasionally he spoke a parable meant for his disciples and the story of the Wise and Foolish Virgins is such a case. We know it is about some of the virgins being prepared and other virgins who were not, so is that the point? It turns out this just scratches the surface. This parable was a story to prepare them for the coming centuries. More than that, it was a story Jesus used to illustrate the attributes of faithfulness towards him. This parable not only describes the character of the faithful, but it is also a major prophecy that has reached its fulfillment in our day.



The most important question to begin with: Why did Jesus speak this parable when he spoke it?

The Parable of The Wise and Foolish Virgins directly follows the Lord's Great Prophecy of Matthew 24. In the original manuscripts, there were no chapters and verses. Matthew 24 and 25 are all part of the same dialogue.

In that prophecy Jesus answers three questions posed to him by his disciples. This parable is an outgrowth of his answers:

Matthew 24:1-3: (NASB) ¹Jesus came out from the temple and was going away when his disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to him. ²And he said to them, Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down. ³As he was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be the sign of your coming, and of the end of the age?

The disciples asked Jesus three questions:



1. *When will these things happen?* Jesus told them the temple would be destroyed. (It was destroyed in AD 70.)
2. *What will be the sign of your coming (the Greek word means "presence")?*
3. *What will be the sign...of the end of the age?*

Jesus was preparing them for his return at the end of the age.

Through prophecy, Jesus knew it would be a long time before the final two questions would be fulfilled:

Habakkuk 2:1-3: (NASB) ¹I will stand on my guard post and station myself on the rampart; And I will keep watch to see what He will speak to me, and how I may reply when I am reproved. ²Then the LORD answered me and said, Record the vision and inscribe it on tablets, that the one who reads it may run. ³For the vision is yet for the appointed time; It hastens toward the goal and it will not fail. Though it tarries, wait for it; for it will certainly come, it will not delay.

The vision was to be written down so those who read and understand it can be energized to always





stay focused. Even though it seems to tarry, it comes exactly on time - God's time.

As Jesus began to wrap up his prophecy in Matthew 24, he inserted cautions about maintaining awareness through the passage of time.

He knows his followers will need to stay the course when all looks hopeless:

Matthew 24:42-44: (NASB) ⁴²Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. ⁴³But be sure of this, that if the head of the house (Satan) had known at what time of the night the thief (Jesus) was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. ⁴⁴For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think he will.

The purpose of the return of Jesus is to take the world back from Satan. The Scriptures tell us he would come in a time and a way that is not expected - like a thief. We are now at the time of Jesus' return.

Jesus begins this parable as he began so many others:

Matthew 25:1: (NASB) *Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to...*

When we examine this phrase, *the kingdom of heaven or the kingdom of God* we can see Jesus used it to describe the context of the development of his true followers throughout the age in which the gospel is preached - from 2,000 years ago up to today.

For more on this topic, please see the Bonus Material.



Parable Preparation: Jesus was intent on warning and protecting his followers with this parable. This would be a prophetic lesson and it would also contain many practical lessons as well.

It is impressive to see what Jesus knew and how he taught, but it is breathtaking to see how much he cared.

**With the reason for the parable made clear,
how do we know whom the players represent?**

Interpreting parables is important but can be tricky. Among Christians, there are a wide variety of existing interpretations for this particular story. As we look at the symbols in the story, we will focus on explaining WHY we adhere to the understanding we have been given and proven it for ourselves through the Scriptures.

With the prophecy complete and some preliminary warnings in place, the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins begins:

Matthew 25:1-4: (NASB) ¹Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. ²Five of them were foolish, and five were prudent. ³For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, ⁴but the prudent took oil in flasks (vessels or jars) along with their lamps.



THERE ARE FIVE PRIMARY SYMBOLS:

1. Ten Virgins
2. Bridegroom
3. Lamps
4. Oil
5. Flasks/Vessels

We will go through each of these symbols and define what we believe they mean scripturally. We will also discuss prophetic meanings and practical applications.

The Ten Virgins

We believe them to represent THOSE CALLED by God through Christ to be joined with Jesus. They represent ALL the spirit-begotten Christians throughout the entire age of the gospel:

2 Corinthians 11:2-3: (NASB) ²For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin. ³But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.



How can these virgins represent the bride of Christ? They are clearly NOT a bride in the parable. In Scripture, the bride represents the true church, but here no bride is ever mentioned - only the bridegroom. The ten virgins are those called by God throughout the age of the gospel call, but they are not the bride.

*What Jesus
is teaching -
The Prophetic
Meaning:*



**A bride is not mentioned
in the parable of
the Ten Virgins.
Why?**

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**This is a story to represent
the development process
of the true church over
2,000 years!**



The Parable of the Wheat and Tares illustrates a parallel lesson as it shows the corruption of the true

church with false systems over the same time period (the age of the gospel). The grains of wheat collectively represent the true church over the entire age of the gospel.

The true church is represented by different symbols, each illustrating a specific point. For example:

Soil and plants = growing in Christ

Sheep = following after Christ

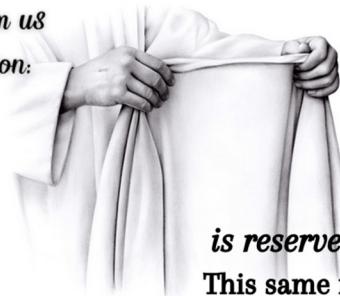
Fish in a net = being called from the world to Christ

Stewards = the responsibility on Christ's behalf

Virgins = uncompromised loyalty to Christ over time

Why would we say these others (the ten virgins) represent the church? These ten virgins, even though they are NOT the bride, technically represent the spirit-begotten ones who are running for the prize of the church (to be part of the bride of Christ). This shows *one part* of what is required of all who are faithful - *uncompromised loyalty to Christ over time*.

What Jesus wants from us
- *Practical Application:*



Be chaste – we are virgins.
Our life-loyalty
is reserved for only one special relationship.
This same requirement has existed for 2000 years.

Chaste means pure. A chaste virgin is unsullied by the world.

2 Peter 3:14: (NASB) *Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by him in peace, spotless and blameless,*

Why were there TEN virgins?

(Source: Matthew Henry's Commentary) ...It was a custom sometimes used among the Jews on that occasion, that the bridegroom came, attended with his friends, late in the night, to the house of the bride, where she expected him, attended with her bride-maids; who, upon notice given of the bridegrooms' approach, were to go out with lamps in their hands, to light him into the house with ceremony and formality, in order to the celebrating of the nuptials with great mirth. And some think that on these occasions they had usually ten virgins; for the Jews never held a synagogue, circumcised, kept the Passover, or contracted marriage, but ten persons at least were present. Boaz, when he married Ruth, had ten witnesses (Ruth 4:2).

The number 10 shows a sense of completeness. All true followers of Christ were represented in this timeframe.

The Bridegroom

This is the easiest symbol as it represents Jesus himself.

<i>What Jesus is teaching - The Prophetic Meaning:</i>		<i>Jesus would return, and it was imperative for his followers to be looking for him.</i>
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It was a key factor for his followers to be looking for him with anticipation.

2 Corinthians 11:2: (NKJV) *For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband (the bridegroom), that I may present you as a chaste virgin (pure individual) to Christ.*

Revelation 19:7: (NASB) *Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and his bride has made herself ready.*

Pictures are used to show us scriptural truths. Chaste virgins make perfect sense.

Matthew 25:1: (NASB) *...ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.*

What Jesus wants from us - Practical Application.



Not only are we to be chaste, we are chosen. We, therefore, must be that chosen one who does the right thing as instructed. All ten virgins were chosen.

All of the virgins were chosen, and therefore, they represent the true followers of Christ. We cannot underestimate the value of being chosen. With being chosen comes the gift of God's spirit.

Ephesians 1:4: (NASB) *just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before him...*

All ten virgins were chosen, and all were waiting for his return.

It is sobering to realize the responsibility of being chosen. We need to only choose one path - the path of loyalty.

Now that we have the people in the parable straight, what do the lamps, oil and flasks symbolize?

Understanding any parable is based on two things. First, knowing why Jesus told the story and second, getting the symbols right. We know this story was told as a warning that Jesus' return would take a long time. We know now the virgins symbolically represented his true followers.





Check out our CQ Kids video:
WHY DID JESUS SPEAK IN PARABLES?
christianquestions.com/youtube

What tools were they were given access to? What did they do with those tools?

Matthew 25:2-4: (NASB) ²Five of them were foolish, and five were prudent. ³For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, ⁴but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps.

We have the five foolish and five prudent virgins. We defined what the virgins symbolize earlier. In addition, there are several symbols: Lamps, oil and flasks or vessels.

Lamps

<p><i>What Jesus is teaching - The Prophetic Meaning:</i></p>		<p>We believe the lamps <i>are the word of God given to Jesus' followers</i> throughout the long age of the gospel to light their way.</p>	
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Most Christians would agree that this is what the lamps represent:

Psalms 119:105: (NASB) *Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.*

This shows the word of God in the hand of those who are chaste and chosen. Here is how to use this lamp:

2 Peter 1:19: (NASB) *So we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.*

The people of Jesus' day used lamps like in the picture above. The lamps in the hands of these ten virgins show that they are equipped with the ability to see the way because they have God's word in their hands.

*What Jesus wants from us
- Practical Application:*



Be equipped.
As a loyal and chosen follower,
*have God's word always in hand
to show you the way.*



This is a powerful thought for every Christian, and a powerful responsibility as well:

1 Timothy 4:6: (NASB) *In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following.*

This is obviously referring to the word of God. We are *nourished on the words of the faith and sound doctrine*. It is not enough to just read our Bibles; there is more to it. We need to understand the words of the Bible through study. In this part of the picture, lamps are God's word. We need that word to be equipped to see as we walk in the faith.

Oil

*What Jesus
is teaching -
The Prophetic
Meaning:*



We believe the oil
represents God's spirit
as each enlightened follower
is given this spirit to help
them discern their way.



We are using one Old Testament Scripture and one New Testament Scripture here to illustrate how oil was used to anoint those called, chosen and faithful:

Exodus 30:30-32: (NASB) ³⁰*You shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may minister as priests to Me.* ³¹*You shall speak to the sons of Israel, saying, this shall be a holy anointing oil to Me throughout your generations.* ³²*It shall not be poured on anyone's body, nor shall you make any like it in the same proportions; it is holy, and it shall be holy to you.*

It is interesting how sacred oil was considered. It was a special mixture used only for that anointing and no other use. We can appreciate the sacredness of being called and chosen, and of the chaste purity we talked about earlier.

The next Scripture takes the concept of the Old Testament anointing and brings it into the New Testament:

1 John 2:20-21: (NASB) ²⁰*But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know.* ²¹*I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because no lie is of the truth.*

There is a lot here. First, the *anointing from the Holy One*. God sends His spirit. Remember Pentecost, when the tongues of fire came down on the disciples and they were bathed in God's spirit. This gave them the ability to speak in foreign tongues. It also gives *us* the ability to know truth. In a sense, the oil is a tool for helping us understand what is in our hands (the word of God) and how to use it properly. Prophetically, oil represents God's spirit that is an enlightenment working along with His word, providing direction and victory in our experiences.

What Jesus wants from us
- *Practical Application:*



Be energized.

**We are not only given the word,
we are given God's own power and
influence to grasp and absorb it.**



The idea of oil, if you look at it as God's spirit, energizes a whole new life:
2 Corinthians 5:17: (ASV) *Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new.*

We need to be energized and take up this new life. Oil fuels the lamp. Jesus spoke in parables most of the time so that people, in general, would not understand unless they were seeking after God's truth. What did Jesus say to his followers about what would happen after his death? He told them the comforter, GOD'S SPIRIT, would come to help them understand. That was the energizing. What does Jesus want from us? To be energized!

John 17:17: (NASB) *Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.*

Set them apart, sanctify them, in God's word, the lamp; Your word is truth.

2 Timothy 2:15: (NASB) *Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.*

How did Timothy accurately handle the word of truth? He had the influence of God's spirit. He could not have done it without God's spirit.

Flasks or Vessels



This is the dividing line between full and faulty faithfulness. We need to pay attention to this important detail.

*What Jesus
is teaching -
The Prophetic
Meaning:*



We believe these flasks represent *the experiences of the true follower that expand the staying power of God's spirit in their lives. Throughout the Christian age, a common theme of faithfulness has been perseverance in trial.*

The vessel is the collection of those experiences:

2 Corinthians 4:7-10: (NASB) ⁷But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; ⁸we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; ⁹persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; ¹⁰always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

We have the lamp with the oil in it and that gives us life. But then we have the vessel that carries the extra oil. And in 2 Corinthians 4:7 it says we have *this treasure in earthen vessels*. Our lives carry the experiences that create faithfulness because of the influence of God's spirit. There is value in trial, difficulty, struggle, joy, happiness, blessings, all of it collectively. This is of INCREDIBLE value. These are vessels of sanctified experiences.

The prophetic meaning of the vessels is that they are the collective experiences of the true follower of Jesus guided by the power and influence of God's spirit.

*What Jesus wants from us
- Practical Application:*



Be mature.
Maturity is anticipation that is built upon preparedness and discipline.
Use your time wisely now, so you do not get caught off guard later.

This is the distinction between those that are wise and those that are foolish. *The foolish ones did not bring along any vessels, just their lamps.* This suggests that despite their practical experiences, *the foolish ones were not mature in Christ.* They had not learned along the way and collected holy sanctified experiences that the spirit brings us and can help sustain us in dark times. This literally happened in the parable.

Ephesians 5:15-17: (KJV) ¹⁵See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, ¹⁶Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

How do we use our time wisely? This is where sacrifice comes in. We need to avoid focusing on worldly hopes, aims and ambitions. We have a few comments from a sermon we heard from a good friend, Mark.



It is important to spend time with God in prayer and focus on His word.

We should also spend time discussing His word with our brethren - our church family - and sharing our experiences so we can all grow.

Always take opportunities of service that are presented to us.

A quote Mark read in his discourse:

Opportunities are never lost; someone will always be there to take them. – Author Unknown

The lesson for us: Do not lose these opportunities for serving God.

This is what happened to the foolish virgins - they were not engaged in the process before the time of waiting for the bridegroom. Spiritual maturity is critical. It is great to be a babe in Christ because everything feels good and is wonderful, but God is looking for us to grow into adults in Christ so we can deal with the difficult things and collect lessons. Spiritual maturity through experiences is represented by these vessels.

Now we can begin to see what Jesus really wants from us. It is not just our attention; it is our everything.

Now that we have all the pieces in place, what actually happens in the story? What can we learn?

Even though the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins represents the entire Gospel Age experience, it is a very short story. Lining up the moving parts makes this simple illustration come alive. We have already seen what the difference is between those who are wise and those who are foolish.

We have spent this entire podcast working on what all of the components of the parable represent. Now we need to look at how it plays out:

Matthew 25:5: (NASB) *Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep.*

This is a very important aspect of the parable. Many get thrown off in understanding the parable at this point. Notice ALL of the virgins *got drowsy and began to sleep*.

What Jesus is teaching - The Prophetic Meaning:



We believe Jesus is pointing to the time in history where true Christianity was nearly snuffed out by denominational persecution.

When we look at the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3, we see a chronological record of the development of the true church. If we examine how Jesus approached each stage, we see he was gradually leading them towards his return. In the sixth stage he warned, *Behold I come quickly*. In the seventh stage he said, *I stand at the door and knock*.

Let's see what he says in the fifth stage:

Revelation 3:1-6: (NASB) *¹To the angel of the church in Sardis write: He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars, says this: I know your deeds, that you have a name*



that you are alive, but you are dead. ²Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of my God. ³So remember what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. Therefore if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you. ⁴But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments; and they will walk with me in white, for they are worthy. ⁵He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before my Father and before His angels. ⁶He who has an ear, let him hear what the spirit says to the churches.

The key point here is that they need to wake up.
All of them were asleep.

In Matthew 25:5, it says they got drowsy. Sleep represents the time of trial for the true church during the Dark Ages. They did not have a lot of truth to go on because the false religious systems of the time did not speak in their languages and there were no Bibles to read. What little truth people did hear they took to heart, such as, God is love, forgive one another, love your enemies. But when the truth was suppressed, with persecution and hypocrisy all around them in the false system, they went to sleep.

Historically, this is the time referred to in Revelation 3:3-4, when the true followers of Christ were asleep. It says, *if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief... But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments. They will walk with me in white - chaste and chosen, remember?*

It is showing us the journey of true Christianity for the last 2,000 years. At the midpoint, they were asleep. The prophetic meaning is that from the time Jesus is raised and ascends unto the Father until the time he returns, there are a lot of different things that happen - including the church falling asleep. Jesus indicates that he knows it is going to happen and it is okay because those wise virgins have prepared for this - they are sleeping but ready with their vessels.

*What Jesus wants from us
- Practical Application:*



**Be patient, steadfast and alert.
Whichever time of the Gospel Age
any Christian lives in is feast or famine.
We are all required to steadfastly
*recognize and give our lives over to
doing only God's will.***

Be patient, steadfast and alert. This is hard to do. We see that the true church has times when this is much harder than others. Practically for us, we need to learn to be patient, steadfast and remain alert.

We quote the following often because these texts are powerful:

Romans 12:1-2: (NASB) *¹Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. ²And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

We are living in a different time. We live at the end of the Gospel Age in *the hour of temptation/trial*. Our experiences are different from those in the Dark Ages, but we have the same standard of faithfulness. We have more truth and can see more prophecies that have been fulfilled than in the past generations. We need to be steadfast and do God's will daily in our lives.

We are reminded that we are privileged! In the Dark Ages, there was little privilege. There was trial and difficulty, with little light to guide them. We have so much. This means that to stay steadfast and alert we have to work hard to not rest on our privilege and relax in our bounty. Instead we need to figure out what we have to do to be faithful in all that we have been given. No matter how much we are given or how little we are given, the same standard of sacrifice applies.

We need to remember **Luke 12:48:** (ASV) *...And to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required.*

Matthew 25:6-9: (NASB) *⁶But at midnight there was a shout, Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him. ⁷Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. ⁸The foolish said to the prudent, give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out. ⁹But the prudent answered, No, there will not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.*



These episodes go into a lot of detail as to why Jesus returns. They also cover *the thief in the night* aspect compared to *every eye shall see him*. They show how both those predictions apply to Jesus' return.



He comes at a time when they are not expecting him. The call - *Behold the bridegroom* comes and the virgins have to scramble to get ready. Then the foolish say to the wise, *give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.* The wise answer that they do not have enough to give away. They have only enough for themselves because they were prepared. They were mature about this. They had put their experiences in order. This conversation reveals the difference between the wise and the foolish, and that difference is the vessels, the experiences of their lives. They could not give that away.

1 Thessalonians 5:2: (NASB) *For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.*

This states his return is hidden and done in secret. It will not be obvious to the world. How can this be if **Revelation 1:7** says, *every eye shall see him.* We have to put the Scriptures in context. As students of the Bible, we need to look at this and figure out how the two texts work together. When we study it, we see how Jesus' return actually works. It is fascinating to watch the unfolding of his return. We do not have the time to delve into it today, unfortunately. Only his followers watched him ascend into heaven. And like the angel said, he will return *in like manner.* This means only his true followers will know when he has returned. It is not obvious to the world.

There is a conflict in the parable - some had enough oil, some did not. Some were mature and prepared. Some were foolish and came unprepared.

What Jesus wants from us

- Practical Application:



**Be prepared for action.
Faithfulness is not an
exercise in convenience,
rather it is a test of readiness.**

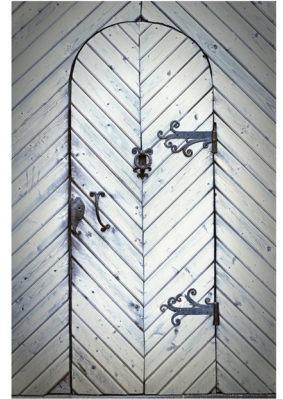
Faithfulness is never going to be shown in a convenient life. We have to be ready; this is what the parable is showing us. When we asked, what does Jesus expect of us? The answer is - plenty. This simple parable brings out many things and shows the length of time that it takes for him to return.

2 Corinthians 10:4-5: (NASB) *⁴for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. ⁵We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,*

Usually we think of faith in terms of belief. But faithfulness has to do with action - being ready to do whatever needs to be done. This Scripture talks about weapons of warfare. If we are in a battle, fully armed, but do not take the weapons out and use them, we will die! God does not protect us by removing the battle or putting a bubble around us so we cannot be harmed. He gives us the weapons so that we can fight the battle. We need to do our part.

Faithfulness is action-based. How do we do this? *We are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.* This is a hard job. We have the practicality of being prepared for action, so now let us finish the parable.


Matthew 25:10-13: (NASB) ¹⁰And while they were going away to make the purchase, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut. ¹¹Later the other virgins also came, saying, Lord, Lord, open up for us. ¹²But he answered, Truly I say to you, I do not know you. ¹³Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour.



This sounds harsh. Jesus does not let them in. Why? He is making the point that we have to use what we are given to the fullest extent without compromising. We cannot be covered by someone else's life-experiences. We cannot slip into the kingdom by hiding behind someone else's shadow, holding onto their coattails. Allying ourselves with a certain congregation or a certain preacher does not automatically guarantee that we will make it.

The wise virgins could not give their oil (holy spirit) to the foolish. It comes from God and it costs something. We are given more only when we are mature enough to handle it. We can learn from another's growth into maturity, but we cannot just wish for it. Each of us must be responsible. In conclusion, we cannot get the oil or holy spirit from someone else. We need sacrifice, study and our own experiences to be a wise virgin.

What Jesus
is teaching -
The Prophetic
Meaning:



We believe this is showing
the difference between those who
were more than overcomers
and those who simply overcame.

Remember, all of the virgins were part of the waiting process. They all had oil; they all had the lamps. They were all called, and they were all chosen. However, something is different between the two groups.

This verse looks at the wise or prudent virgins:

Revelation 17:14: (NASB) *These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with him are the called and chosen and faithful.*

Called: called out of the world to follow Christ.

Chosen: given God's spirit as a seal of that promise.

Faithful: they have used God's spirit in their lives to exhibit their obedience. This is what the wise virgins, the true church looks like!

Let's contrast that with what foolish virgins, the called and chosen, but not quite as faithful, look like:

1 Corinthians 3:14-15: (NASB) ¹⁴*If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*

The Apostle Paul is saying that even those who suffer loss, like the five foolish virgins, will be saved. Just because they were foolish does not mean they will not have life. It means they will not be rewarded with becoming the bride of Christ.

Two sets of Scriptures that prove this are Revelation 19:5-9 and Revelation 7:13-17. (These scriptures are quoted in the Bonus Material.)



THE TRUE CHURCH IS MADE UP OF THE CALLED, CHOSEN AND FAITHFUL.

Then we have this second group, the foolish virgins. They were called and chosen. They showed up and they waited, so there was a measure of faithfulness. They had oil (God's spirit), showing they were chosen. They did *almost* enough. They will still have life but not as part of the bride.

Jesus is using this parable to tell us that just because we have been called out of the world, and just because we have been given God's spirit as a seal on that promise, that is still NOT enough. We all have to do the work that is put before each of us.

What Jesus wants from us
- *Practical Application:*



Be acceptable.

This is the culmination of all the previous qualities. One cannot just stumble into acceptability; *they must live in a way that prepares them for it.*

This has to be a serious daily intention that we have and act upon. Does this mean we are always victorious? No! A just man falls seven times but rises up again. Proverbs 24:15: (NASB) *For a righteous man falls seven times and rises again...* To be a wise virgin, we need to repeatedly fall down and get up and collect in the vessel of our lives the value we learn from our experiences through the guidance of the holy spirit.

This parable ends on a harsh note. Jesus says we must be on the alert, but he is not done talking about preparedness or personal responsibility. He continues a little further in Matthew 25.

A verse from Jesus' very next message - the Parable of the Talents:

Matthew 25:21: (NASB) ²¹*His master said to him, Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.*



Well done, good and faithful slave (servant). God does not overwhelm us with things with which we need to be faithful. He gives us what we can handle. However, if we handle things well as an imperfect human being with the help of His spirit, He will give us charge of many things in the future. *Enter into the joy of your master.* The wise virgins were able to enter into this joy.

What did the vessels of sanctified experience, filled with oil, do for the wise virgins?

- 🍷 *Helped them see* - it was dark, so the lamps gave them enlightenment. The lamps needed to be filled from the vessels of experience.
- 🍷 *Helped them to be seen* - it is important to have the light of God's word with us. When Jesus approaches, we can be seen as ones prepared and waiting. It also means that others can see our light.
- 🍷 *Gave them staying power* - in the middle of the night when their original oil ran out, the vessel gave them more oil to see them through the night.
- 🍷 *Showed preparedness and foresight* - the virgins had to think it through ahead of time. They did not know when he was coming. They realized they better be prepared and learn through their experiences and glorify God through them.
- 🍷 *Gave them entrance into the banquet and wedding* - what a powerful ending!

What did we learn from this parable?

- ✚ We are called to be chaste.
- ✚ We are called to be chosen.
- ✚ We are called to be equipped.
- ✚ We are called to be energized.
- ✚ We are called to be mature.
- ✚ We are called to be patient, steadfast and alert.
- ✚ We are called to be prepared for action.
- ✚ We are called to be acceptable.



These things are all such important parts of what it looks like to have a Christian life. This is a pattern for every Christian life ever lived from the day of Pentecost until now. God has the same expectations for us all. What does Jesus expect from us - a lot! It does not matter when you lived or your personal circumstances. It does not matter if you are blessed with a lot or blessed with a little. If you are a spirit-begotten soldier of Christ you have the same level of responsibility to be faithful, the same level of privilege to enter into God's joy, and that is what this parable is all about.

Let us be always ready!

*So, what does Jesus expect from us?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*



Join us next week for our podcast on September 21, 2020
Ep. 1144: Can Biblical Strategies Resolve
Serious Conflicts? (Part I)

Bonus Material and Study Questions

The expectations of life depend upon diligence; the mechanic that would perfect his work must first sharpen his tools. – Confucius

Revelation 19:5-9: (NASB) ⁵And a voice came from the throne, saying, give praise to our God, all you His bondservants, you who fear Him, the small and the great. ⁶Then I heard something like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. ⁷Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and his bride has made herself ready. ⁸It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. ⁹Then he said to me, Write, blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he said to me, these are true words of God.

Revelation 7:13-17: (NASB) ¹³Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from? ¹⁴I said to him, My lord, you know. And he said to me, These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. ¹⁵For this reason, they are before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them. ¹⁶They will hunger no longer, nor thirst anymore; nor will the sun beat down on them, nor any heat; ¹⁷for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and will guide them to springs of the water of life; and God will wipe every tear from their eyes.

What does he mean by the kingdom of heaven or in some cases the kingdom of God?

First, the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God are the same:

Matthew 19:23-24: (KJV) ²³Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. ²⁴And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

Second, the kingdom of heaven or the kingdom of God has revealed itself already:

Matthew 4:17: (ASV) From that time began Jesus to preach, and to say, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Luke 17:20-21: (NRSV) ²⁰Once Jesus was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, and he answered, The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be



observed; ²¹nor will they say, Look, here it is! or There it is! For, in fact, the kingdom of God is among you.

Third, the kingdom of heaven or the kingdom of God is not a finished product, but in fact it is a project under construction:

Matthew 13:24-26: (NKJV) ²⁴Another parable he put forth to them, saying: The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. ²⁶But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared.

More detail on the anointing oil and its significance to us:

Psalm 45:7: (NKJV) You love righteousness and hate wickedness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness more than your companions.

In the Old Testament, anointing oil had a very sacred significance:

Exodus 30:25-32: (NRSV) ²⁵and you shall make of these a sacred anointing oil blended as by the perfumer; it shall be a holy anointing oil. ²⁶With it you shall anoint the tent of meeting and the ark of the covenant, ²⁷and the table and all its utensils, and the lampstand and its utensils, and the altar of incense, ²⁸and the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the basin with its stand; ²⁹you shall consecrate them, so that they may be most holy; whatever touches them will become holy. ³⁰You shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, in order that they may serve Me as priests. ³¹You shall say to the Israelites, This shall be My holy anointing oil throughout your generations. ³²It shall not be used in any ordinary anointing of the body, and you shall make no other like it in composition; it is holy, and it shall be holy to you.

As there are two distinctions that separated the priesthood from the people, so there are these same two distinctions that separate true Christians from the world.

1. Sanctification

1 Thessalonians 5:23: (NRSV) May the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 3:15: (NRSV) but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you;

2. The Anointing to the Priesthood

1 John 2:27: (NRSV) As for you, the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and so you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, abide in him.

1 Peter 2:9-10: (NRSV) But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

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Study QUESTIONS

Ep. 1143: What Does Jesus Expect from Us?

<https://christianquestions.com/parables/1143-wise-foolish-virgins/>

See:



1. What three questions does Jesus answer in this discussion with his disciples? (See Matthew 24 & 25). What was he preparing them for in the future?
2. How long would it take to fulfill these questions? Why was this important for the disciples to know? (See Habakkuk 2:1-3, Matthew 24:42-44)
3. What is the kingdom of heaven (or the kingdom of God)? (See Matthew 4:17, Matthew 13:24-26, Matthew 19:23-24, Matthew 25:1, Luke 17:20-21)
4. Who did the ten virgins represent? Which of these virgins was the bride? (See Matthew 25:1-5, 2 Corinthians 11:2-3, 2 Peter 3:14) Who is the bridegroom?
5. What does the term “chaste virgin” indicate? Why is this important? Why are there ten virgins? What does it mean to be chosen? (See 2 Peter 3:14, 2 Corinthians 11:2-3, Ephesians 1:4)
6. What do the lamps represent in the parable? What is our responsibility regarding the use of this tool in our lives? (See Matthew 25:2-4, Psalm 119:105, 2 Peter 1:19, 1 Timothy 4:6)
7. How does the oil put into the lamps help the virgins (and us)? What does it represent in our lives? (See 1 John 2:20-21, 2 Corinthians 5:17, John 17:17, 2 Timothy 2:15) What enabled Timothy to *accurately handle the word of truth*?
8. By not bringing a vessel with extra oil, the foolish virgins deprived themselves of what valuable resource? What do we collect to put into our “earthen vessels”? How does this help us with perseverance? (See 2 Corinthians 4:7-10, Ephesians 5:15-17). What do we gain by *redeeming the time*? What does that phrase mean? How do you redeem the time in your own life, or what can you do to better use your time?
9. How many of the ten virgins fell asleep? What part of the Gospel Age and the development of the true church does this represent? What did Jesus say to the fifth stage of the church (Sardis) in Revelation 3:1-6? (See Matthew 25:5-9)
10. Why is it hard to live in a time of privilege? (See Luke 12:48). Should we expect the Lord to fight our battles for us, or to protect us from trial? (See 2 Corinthians 10:4,5)
11. Contrast the wise virgins with the foolish. They were both *called* and *chosen*. Describe what *called* and *chosen* mean. (See Revelation 17:14, 1 Corinthians 3:14, 15, Revelation 19:5-9, Revelation 7:13-17)
12. What are eight points to take away from this parable? What does Jesus expect from us?