

The Parables of Jesus

Lesson 5

Parable of the Ten Virgins – Matthew 25:1-13

The parable of the ten virgins alerts all people about the coming of the Bridegroom. The foolish unprepared will be denied entrance to the banquet while the prepared wise will enjoy a banquet with their Groom.

Setting for the Parable

Jesus finished talking about His 2nd Coming then went into a series of five parables. Jesus spoke with concern and urgency about His return found in Matthew 24. He knew people weren't taking His return seriously enough.

Matthew 24:44 warns that we can't possibly know when God will send his Son back to earth. The angels and Jesus himself don't know that highly secretive information (Mark 13:32). The reason Jesus is so desperate to draw an emotional response from people is the seriousness of the matter. Once we see Jesus in the clouds returning from heaven it will be too late to act. His children will have been called home already and all others will be left behind. Such a tragedy has never happened to this degree but Jesus used the flood and Noah's ark to illustrate this disaster.

Telling of the Parable

Let's open up the parable of the ten virgins now and attempt to grasp Jesus' warning. Jesus is painting a vivid picture so people can understand their responsibilities to their Creator. Jesus now tells of a wedding ceremony in which the Groom...representing Himself...is coming soon to His wedding. He also tells of ten virgins all waiting for the Groom to arrive.

The lamps were familiar objects used in Jewish wedding processions. They were a critical element to this particular wedding feast. Five of them had prepared their lamps properly and thought to bring enough oil to keep their lamps burning. The other five brought their lamps but neglected to bring enough oil to burn for the entire evening.

These five foolish virgins were apparently too busy or otherwise occupied to properly plan and prepare for such an important event. Their priorities were clearly not set properly.

Suddenly there comes a call that the Groom is coming. They asked the five wise virgins if they would split their oil with them. The wise virgins were smart enough to know that they could not share a portion of their oil and suggested that they go and purchase oil for their lamps. And, of course, they go and do this very thing.

While they were gone, the Groom arrives and the five who are prepared enter the house with Him and the door is locked.

Before long there was a knock at the door. The others had returned with their lamps and newly purchased oil. They were so excited to be able to see the Groom. No one was answering the door so they shouted, "Lord, lord, open the door for us!" The Groom replied to them, "Truly I tell you, I don't know you."

Meaning of the Parable

This parable teaches that the two groups of women had much in common. It is apparent the Groom was no stranger to any of them. The ten virgins had the address to His house. They were all notified of the festivities. They all anticipated the Groom's return and brought their lamps to the wedding feast.

The difference between the two groups is that one group prepared properly and the other did not. There are only two groups of people spiritually speaking – saved and lost. There are those who prepare for eternity and those who don't.

The Groom is Jesus and He is returning soon to celebrate with all who are properly prepared for the wedding feast. Once the Groom is spotted in the clouds, time will have run out and He will lock the door. Those unprepared will be left behind and will soon find themselves in judgment before the Great White Throne where their final verdict will be read.

Get This!

The parable of the ten virgins explicitly informs us that Jesus is returning soon. Those who aren't prepared (not saved) will be shocked to discover they are not allowed to go to heaven.

We can also infer a warning to those of us who are saved. We should constantly remind ourselves that He is coming soon and we need to be busy doing what He's called us to do. The thought of being found living in a lifestyle of sin when He returns should be a scary thought for all of us.

We are called to actively serve God. We must make conscious effort to continue to minister to and reach other people for Christ. The parable of the ten virgins should be motivation for us Christians to remain in diligent service to Him. All of us have moments when we are tired. We need to be ministered to in order to strengthen our spirit.

To be successful, every Christian must learn to live and work through His power and not our own. Always remember that "we can do all things through Christ."