

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2020 - 23RD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Matthew 25:1-13 (NRSV) The Parable of the Ten Bridesmaids

¹ Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. ² Five of them were foolish, and five were wise.

Notice all the similarities between the five wise and the five foolish bridesmaids.

³ When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; ⁴ but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps.

⁵ As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept.

⁶ But at midnight there was a shout, "Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him."

Jesus comes at midnight - in our hour of deepest need – at a time of greatest spiritual darkness.

⁷ Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps.

⁸ The foolish said to the wise, "Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out."

⁹ But the wise replied, "No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves."

A deep Christian experience – a deep relationship with Jesus – a deep in-filling of the Holy Spirit – we cannot give ours to someone else. We must all go to the source.

¹⁰ And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut.

If you wait until you really need it to get that saving and strengthening relationship with Jesus – if you wait until midnight, you may have waited too long.

¹³ Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

Before your lamp begins to go out – on a regular basis – stop and get a fresh supply. Daily renew your relationship with Jesus. Daily live the life He wants you to live. And always remember – we all have to get our own oil.

Psalm 70 Prayer for Deliverance from Enemies

¹ Be pleased, O God, to deliver me. O LORD, make haste to help me!

⁵ You are my help and my deliverer; O LORD, do not delay!

Marqin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives by Richard Swenson

The Day of the Lord – a threat or a source of hope?

Cf. Jonah 1: 3 – But Jonah set out to flee to Tarshish away from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid his fare and went on board, to go to Tarshish, away from the presence of the Lord.

Vs. Psalm 139: 7-8 –

*Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?
If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.*

Amos 5:18-24 (NRSV) The Day of the LORD a Dark Day – a Word of Warning

¹⁸ Alas for you who desire the day of the LORD! It is darkness, not light;

¹⁹ as if someone fled from a lion and was met by a bear;
or went into the house and rested a hand against the wall and was bitten by a snake.

²¹ I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.

²² Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them;
the offerings of your fatted animals I will not look upon.

²³ Take away from me the noise of your songs; I will not listen to the melody of your harps.

²⁴ But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

Cf. Grand Canyon – water always prevails.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (NRSV) The Coming of the Lord – A Word of Encouragement

¹³ But we do not want you to be uninformed about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.

¹⁴ For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died.

¹⁵ We who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died.

¹⁶ For the Lord himself will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever.

¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.