

**Week of November 8, 2020**

**Matthew 25:1-13**

"Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom.

<sup>2</sup> Five of them were foolish, and five were wise.

<sup>3</sup> When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them;

<sup>4</sup> but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps.

<sup>5</sup> As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept.

<sup>6</sup> But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.'

<sup>7</sup> Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps.

<sup>8</sup> The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'

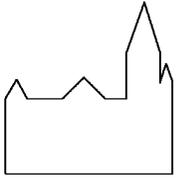
<sup>9</sup> But the wise replied, 'No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.'

<sup>10</sup> 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.

<sup>11</sup> Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.'

<sup>12</sup> But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.'

<sup>13</sup> Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.



### Group Leader

Remember: you don't need to use all of the questions. Go with what works. Give people a chance to think before answering, but if a question falls flat, move on. Let the discussion go where it needs to go, as long as it remains centered around the lesson. Give the participants page 1. Use this page for yourself.

### Gathering questions:

- A. What was the last truly rejuvenating thing you did?
- B. How has Covid changed your perception of what it means to be "ready" for the unexpected?

### Bible Study Questions:

**NOTE:** This passage is generally regarded as an *allegory*, not a parable. A parable is a story that teaches a moral lesson. In an allegory, people or things represent ideas. Therefore, most of the questions concern what is *represented* by elements of the story.

1. In verse 2, do you see any significance of the number of wise and foolish bridesmaids being equal? What would that be?
2. In verse 5, what does it mean to you that all ten fell asleep?
3. In verse 9, are the wise bridesmaids right not to share their oil?
4. In verse 12, how do you feel about the late bridesmaids being told "I do not know you"? What does this symbolize to you?
5. What "burns your oil"? That is, what drains you?
6. Where do you feel most depleted right now? What can you do that would be restorative to you?
7. What might you be missing out on because you're overworked or over-stressed?

Closing prayer: particularly invite prayers about self-care.