

**The Parables of Jesus #41**  
**The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins**  
**(Mt 25:1-13)**  
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**INTRODUCTION**

A. Many years ago Orson Wells produced a radio drama of an imaginary attack from outer space. A student at Campbell College in North Carolina turned on his radio midway through the broadcast and did not realize he was hearing a fictitious report. When the announcer vividly described fire falling upon the earth, the student recalled some sermons from his boyhood years and concluded that the end of the world had come. He grabbed the telephone and called home, saying: "Mama, Mama, have you got your radio on? The fire is falling, the end of the world is coming, and I'm not ready to meet God!" The next morning he was the object of jokes and teasing around the campus.

But in the chapel service a godly Bible teacher took the podium and said, "I understand that one of the boys got a lot of ribbing because he got scared listening to the radio program last night. But, young men and women, what if it had truly been the end of the world last night -- would you be ready?"

**B. Ready! Perhaps one of the greatest failures and cause of great tragedy**

1. How many things happen because we aren't ready?
  - a. accidents
  - b. mistakes
  - c. damage to people and property
  - d. "I wasn't ready!" is the cry following many disasters
2. Little wonder Jesus used the same idea to communicate some important information about the kingdom of heaven

**C. In the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, we learn just how important readiness is**

## **I. THE PARABLE (Mt. 25:1-13)**

### **A. Some preliminary thoughts**

1. The parable is clearly a story intended to illustrate the kingdom of heaven
  - a. Note that the kingdom is likened to 10 virgins (not just 5 wise ones)
  - b. To fully appreciate the kingdom, we must consider all ten
2. The story concerns the events of a wedding
  - a. a banquet would be held at the home of the bride's father
  - b. later, the husband would escort his bride to their new home (perhaps his father's house)
  - c. the servants (virgins) were to provide a proper welcome
  - d. this would have been as familiar to them as our own wedding customs are to us today

### **B. The story**

1. Ten virgins went out to meet the bridegroom
  - a. five were wise
  - b. five were foolish
2. All ten took lamps
  - a. the foolish took no (extra) oil
  - b. the wise ones did take (extra) oil
3. The bridegroom was delayed
  - a. perhaps because of the celebration itself
  - b. while they waited, it got late and they napped
4. At midnight, the bridegroom arrived
  - a. the virgins were summoned to go out to meet him
  - b. they arose and trimmed their lamps
  - c. but there was a problem -- the foolish virgins were out of oil
  - d. they tried to borrow some, but there wasn't enough and were told to go buy some from the vendors
5. While they were gone the bridegroom arrived
  - a. the five virgins who were prepared went in with him to the wedding
  - b. the door was then shut
6. Later, the other five returned
  - a. "Lord, Lord, open to us!"
  - b. he answered, "I don't know you."

### **C. The application**

1. "Watch therefore"
2. "You know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming"

## II. LESSONS TO LEARN

### A. Watch (note just a few of many exhortations to “watch”)

1. Pr 23:26 My son, give Me your heart, and let your eyes watch My ways. (MKJV)
2. 1Co 16:13 ¶ Watch! Stand fast in the faith! Be men! Be strong! (MKJV)
3. 1Th 5:6 ¶ Therefore let us not sleep as the rest [do], but let us watch and be calm. (MKJV)
4. 2Ti 4:5 But you watch in all things, endure afflictions, do [the] work of an evangelist, fully carry out your ministry." (MKJV)
5. Re 3:3 Remember then how you have received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you. (MKJV)

### B. The reason we watch is that we don't know some things

1. Ge 27:2 . . . (Isaac) And he said, Behold now, I am old, I do not know the day of my death. (MKJV)
2. Pr 27:1 ¶ Do not boast yourself of tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth. (MKJV)
3. Jas 4:13-14 Come now, those saying, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city and spend a year there, and we will trade and will make a profit, who do not know of the morrow. For what is your life? For it is a vapor, which appears for a little time, and then disappears. (MKJV)
4. 1Th 5:2 For you yourselves know accurately that the day of [the] Lord comes like a thief in the night. (MKJV)

### C. How to get ready for the coming of the Lord

1. Know God's will for your life by knowing his word
2. Be mindful of how to practice what you learn
3. Be vigilant in prayer
  - a. confessing and repenting of sin
  - b. asking God's help
  - c. seeking God's wisdom
  - d. trusting God to provide what you need
4. Be aware of the deceitfulness of sin and the wiles of Satan
5. Guard against allowing others to entice you into disobeying God

## CONCLUSION

- A. Ready! There are few words that speak so much in a few letters
- B. Only those who are ready will enjoy the kingdom of heaven
- C. Invitation