



## World Christian Fellowship

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### The door is about to close!

#### Matthew 25:1-13

**Matthew 25:1-13**, *“Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. <sup>2</sup>Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. <sup>3</sup>Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, <sup>4</sup>but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. <sup>5</sup>But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.*

*<sup>6</sup>“And at midnight a cry was heard: ‘Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!’ <sup>7</sup>Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. <sup>8</sup>And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ <sup>9</sup>But the wise answered, saying, ‘No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’ <sup>10</sup>And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. <sup>11</sup>“Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’ <sup>12</sup>But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.’*

*<sup>13</sup>“Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.*

The Olivet Discourse recorded by Matthew detailed in chapters 24 and 25. This is the Lord's own sermon on His second coming.

This parable is taken from the great Olivet Discourse.

This parable is a warning parable.

There are several such warning parables in this section of the sermon.

Jesus gave the signs of His coming.

Now in the light of that, He warns the world to be ready for when it happens.

The disciples had asked couple of questions.

**When shall these things be?**

**What are the signs?**

They wanted to know the time of the second coming, the time of the establishing of the Kingdom, the time of setting up the Messiah's rule on the earth.

**Matthew 24:36**, *"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.*

Jesus repeated this in

**V42**, *Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.*

**V 44,** *Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.*

**V 50,** *the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of,*

Four times already, the Lord has said He is coming in an unknown moment.

Now Jesus gives a parable and concludes the parable by saying,

**V 13,** *“Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.*

**When will it be?**

**Answer:** “No one will ever know.”

It will be sudden, and it will be unexpected.

We will know the general times since the signs have been given by Jesus in **Matthew 24:4-31.**

Jesus called it “birth pangs” leading to the birth of the Kingdom. But the exact moment and the exact hour, no one will never know.

The Lord will come as a thief in the night, unexpectedly and suddenly.

This parable is with the intent of teaching us the suddenness and the unexpectedness of the coming of the Lord.

This parable calls us to preparedness so that we are not caught in that unexpected moment unprepared for His coming.

**V 1**, *“Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.*

Then takes us to a time when the Lord comes that He has just been speaking of in the prior passage closing chapter 24.

The time when He comes to reward the faithful servant and to punish the unfaithful servant.

It's at that time that the Kingdom of heaven will be like this. This parable is to illustrate the time period of the second coming.

It takes us to the time of the coming of the Lord and calls for **Alertness, readiness, and preparedness** on the part of all of us for that time will come unexpectedly and suddenly.

We are aware that the first time Jesus came, the world was not ready. They should have been. The prophets had marked out very clearly the signs to look for.

They said there would be a forerunner. There was. They identified him as a voice crying in the wilderness. Exactly what John the Baptist did.

- ✓ They said the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem,
- ✓ They said He was born of a virgin, and He was.
- ✓ They said He will in the line of David, and He was.
- ✓ They said He would come to Galilee and He did.
- ✓ They said He would have great power, and He had it.

But the world still was not prepared and not ready.

Jesus came unto His own and His own received Him not. He was in the world and the world was made by Him. But the world knew Him not.

**Luke 19:41-42**, *Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, <sup>42</sup>saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.*

He cried out saying O Jerusalem, O Jerusalem!

This parable warns the world not to let that happen again. For there will be no recourse in the future.

Now, the theme of the parable is very simple.

The parable is meant to teach us that Jesus is coming.

Jesus is coming to judge sinners and to reward the righteous.  
Jesus is coming in a sudden and unexpected moment and everyone should be prepared.

There will be **NO SECOND CHANCE!**

People may knock all they want, but the door will be shut. The day of opportunity will have come and gone forever.

The parable is very simple, rich, and exciting.

There are the devotionalists who want to see in everything something applicable to the Christian life and it is wrong.

There are the critics who just want to deal with the data and say it's a confusing parable because they can't figure out who the bride is and even where the bride is since there's no bride mentioned.

Were the bridesmaids at the bride's house or the groom's house or were they out in the street?

If they were out in the street, did they sleep in the street or did they go into a house and sleep?

How heavy were the poles that they carried with the lamps on them?

Could young maidens do that?

Who are the young maidens?

But all of that just needs to be set aside.

The message is in the simplicity and clarity of the parable, not in the confusion brought to it by allegorists, devotionalists, and critics.

All we need to know is four things:

- 1. The wedding,**
- 2. The bridesmaids,**
- 3. The bridegroom, and**
- 4. The warning.**

### **1. The wedding.**

It is a wedding scene.

Only that which is significant to the application is drawn from the wedding scene.

The setting of a wedding.

It would be a very typical wedding in a typical Israel town in the time of our Lord.

A wedding was the greatest event in a village or a town. It was the greatest single social celebration those people knew anything about.

Everybody got involved, friends, family, extended family and everybody in the village.

- It was a time of happiness.
- It was a time of festivity.
- It was a time of celebration.

Important for us to know that in a Jewish marriage, there were three elements.

- a) Engagement.**
- b) Betrothal.**
- c) Wedding.**

First is **Engagement** long before the scene here.

The engagement was an official contract between the two fathers who were giving their daughter and their son to each other.

The engagements weren't really made with the couple, but they were made with the fathers.

A little while after that, there would be what was called the second phase was a betrothal.

The **betrothal** was the official ceremony.

The couple would come together before friends and family, and they would make vows and covenants and binding promises.

They had an actual **marriage** ceremony, and they made their commitments.

They were then officially married.

Any breaking of a betrothal period was a divorce. There had to be an actual divorce, that was that binding.

If the husband happened to die during that period, the wife was considered a widow, even though the marriage had not been physically consummated nor had they come to live together.

The point was this. The fathers made an initial engagement for the children to be married. The children then made their vows to each other which were binding.

Then there was up to a year for the young man to get things ready to take the bride to be his own.

He had to provide a place for her, perhaps to build an addition on his father's house, or a house of his own, or to purchase land and cultivate a field.

He must show that he could care for her. He had a year to prepare his home for her and to prepare his life for her.

At the end of the time that he needed he would go to take her, and she would become his own and live with him.

There was no ceremony to that.  
That was just the official wedding.

The third phase is what we see here.

It was a very good way to set up a marriage. Parents, who very often have a little longer-range view than their children, were involved.

Secondly, the betrothal was a wonderful thing because when the vows were made, they were absolutely binding. Because certainly a man didn't want to spend a year getting ready for a girl to come and be his wife and have her say at the end, "I don't know how to tell you this, but I found somebody else."

So once the betrothal was made, it was absolutely binding, and all his preparation would indeed lead to fulfilment.

We can imagine the anticipation in the heart of a bride and a bridegroom having to go through the process of finally getting to the culmination, of finally coming to the place where the marriage was going to be consummated. Great anticipation!

The scene here is phase three which is the wedding feast, the wedding celebration itself, where he comes to her house.

She is waiting there with all her bridesmaids, and he arrives with all the men that are with him, and he collects his bride. Her maids all go with torches, parading through the night sky through the village in a celebration of singing and joy that is just unequalled in their social life.

Finally, it has come to that. Everything is ready.

He has prepared a home for her.

He is now going to get her and take her to that place.

When they arrive at his home that night and they always started those weddings at night. So that they could have a processional through the village and everyone in the village could enjoy the festivity. Then the wedding party would go into the house and celebrate as long as seven days.

At the end of that period of celebration, the friend of the bridegroom, who was like the best man, would take the hand of the bride, place it in the hand of the bridegroom. Everyone would leave hopefully. Enough is enough.

It would be a marvellous beginning to a glorious celebration for which this bride and bridegroom had waited a long time.

That is the wedding.

Everything is ready and we join in on the beauty and the wonder of the festivities.

## 2. The bridesmaids.

V 1, *“Ten virgins took their lamps,”*

Actually, the Greek word means torch not the lamp.

This is the word torch, for example, in **John 18:3** to speak of the torches that the Romans carried when they came into the Garden of Gethsemane to take Jesus as a prisoner.

There was a long wooden pole.

On the top of the wooden pole would be a wire mesh apparatus attached, filled with cloth. That cloth would be soaked in oil and then lit to give a flaming torch.

They would carry on their person somewhere a little flask of oil so that they could keep that lit for as long as was necessary.

So here are ten virgins who take their lamps and go forth, no doubt to the house of the bride, waiting to meet the bridegroom.

They are her chosen ladies.

They are the young girls who will attend to her.

It calls them virgins, ***Parthenos***, which means an unmarried girl.

They were young in those days when they married and these were her friends who yet were not married, chosen because

they were sisters or cousins or very dear and close and intimate friends.

It was a special joy and a special thrill to belong to her special group in anticipation of this glorious evening.

There is nothing intended in the fact that they were virgins regarding the morality of the people that they illustrate.

The fact that you have virgins here is not to say something spiritual about the people they represent. It simply fits the wedding pattern. They were just ten bridesmaids.

The custom was that virgins were the bridesmaids. That is not to say that though they represent others in the parable are not necessarily pure and spotless and undefiled. Don't draw any spiritual conclusions.

Unless the Lord gives the meaning, we are really on our own if we start giving meaning to other things. They are intended to convey very simple, direct truth which the Lord explains.

There were ten.

Apparently, the Jews were really delighting in the number ten.

- It took ten men to eat the paschal supper, according to Josephus.
- It took ten men to constitute a synagogue.
- It took ten men to give a wedding blessing.

- Apparently, ten bridesmaids was just the proper number.

She had what seems to be a rather customary number of people in many of the Jewish festivities and rituals, ten of them.

Now they take their torches. On the wooden pole they have the torch, they bring it because that's sort of like their invitation. These days in wedding Bridesmaids may carry flowers or light candles or whatever, this was the symbol that they belonged to the wedding party.

They brought their torches along to light the night sky in the wonderful procession that they would all enjoy when the bridegroom finally came.

It says they went to meet him.

The word "meet" is technically used to refer to greeting an official, newly arrived dignitary. It is kind of an official term. This was a very official event.

### **Who are these girls?**

Obvious from what our Lord says that they are professed Christians. They are those who claim to belong to Christ.

- They are those who have gathered with the assembly of Christian people to await the coming of the Lord.

- They are those who say they know Christ and they anticipate His coming.
  - They believe and they know about the wedding.
  - They know the time is near.
  - They have made their preparation.
  - They have on their wedding garment.
  - They have their torch.
  - Their presence symbolizes their interest,
  - Their torch symbolizes their profession of faith in Christ.
- 
- They show outward marks of watching for the coming of the bridegroom.
  - They show outward marks of readiness.
  - They show outward marks of commitment to Jesus Christ.
  - They are part of the believing community.
  - They are gathered as bridesmaids ready to be received into this glorious marriage celebration.
  - They profess to love Christ's appearing.
  - They profess to hear the gospel and believe.
  - They profess to be disciples to wait for the Son, to desire the Kingdom.

When we see the ten of them, **they look similar and there is no difference to identify.**

They all have on their wedding garments.

They are all chosen bridesmaids.  
They all attend to the bride.  
They all have their torches.

**They are indistinguishable, but they are not alike.**

This is the message of the parable.

**V 2, *Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish.***

The searcher of the heart knows. It may not have been clear initially, but the searcher of hearts knows.

There is a characterization when He looks into the heart of these ten and five were ***Phronimos***, having to do with the brain, thoughtful, sensible, prudent, and wise.

Five were ***Mōros***, from which we get our word moron, stupid.

They are very different.

**Not outwardly distinguishable, but inwardly very different.**

Here's a simplified version that keeps the heart of the message:

There is nothing more beautiful on earth than a group of people worshipping God together. Even though we can't see any difference among them, God knows who truly belongs to

Him and who doesn't. He sees our hearts and judges rightly, even in a crowd of worshipers.

A powerful reminder that outward appearances don't fool God, He sees the truth in each of us.

God could look down on this assembled group, as bridesmaids, all of us wait for His coming, we have our garments on, we have our torches in hand.

But **God knows whether we are wise or stupid.**

We may not.  
God knows.

The differentiation here is preparedness.

**V 3-4, *Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, <sup>4</sup>but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.***

Their wisdom and foolishness manifest here.

The vessels they carried on their person to pour onto the torch along with their torches.

- The wise, they carried the flask with the oil.
- The fools had no oil at all. They made no proper preparation.

It was all outside.

It was all external.

But they hadn't cared for the most necessary thing, and that is the oil so they could light the torch. They all made profession, but only five had the genuine oil of preparedness.

### **What is that oil?**

It is the necessary reality of saving grace that distinguishes people. There may be a crowd of people all of whom outwardly, apparently honour Jesus Christ, but there will be different hearts, some prepared and some unprepared.

The oil is like the garment.

**Matthew 22:11**, *“But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment.*

The king calls a wedding for his son, and he sees the guests, and he finds a man without a wedding garment. He is also unprepared. He tries to crash the Kingdom without a prepared heart.

The oil is the necessary grace without which no man shall see the Lord.

- It is true salvation.
- It is imputed righteousness.

- It is genuine holiness granted by faith in Jesus Christ.
- It is a transformed inward life.

But some of them were like those of who had a form of godliness but without power.

**2 Timothy 3:5**, *having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!*

- The foolish virgins were outwardly attached.
- They were committed intellectually.
- They were committed socially.
- They were even committed religiously.

But they had no light, and life.

They had no ability to be conformed to the law of God. Their faith was dead faith.

It was faith that had no product, that could do nothing.

The purpose of the parable is to warn us not to be caught in such unpreparedness when the Lord comes.

Jesus repeatedly speaks to this issue.

In the Kingdom there will grow together **wheat and tares**. They will look so much alike that we don't dare start pulling

them out lest we pull up the wheat but wait until the coming of the Lord when He will make the distinction.

Jesus taught in the **Parable of the Sower**, about the **soil** that looks good, the seed is planted, the plant comes up and flourishes, but it has **no deepness of earth**, or it is **strangled out by the roots of weeds** and found to be dead. **Non-fruit-bearing.**

But at first, we can't tell the difference.

This is a repeated message of our Lord.

This needs to be emphasized in every church across this world, that the church is filled with people who are unredeemed and unprepared for the coming of the Lord. It's filled with them.

The Lord said five of them didn't. God sees many people like this.

It isn't to say that half of everybody in the church is unredeemed. The church is filled with these kinds of people who are unredeemed people and unprepared. Whether they meet the Lord at His second coming should He come in their lifetime or whether they meet Him in death.

They will be at that moment unprepared though they have been religious and though they have been involved with Christian people and though they have nice feelings toward

Christ and though they may be self-deceived into thinking that all is well.

**V 5**, *But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.*

The bridegroom tarries. In this analogy that our Lord is drawing, the bridegroom doesn't come when they expect him.

A subtle hint to the disciples who think Jesus is going to establish His Kingdom immediately that it's going to be longer than they think.

In the context of **Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24 and 25** that the Lord is saying that

- even when you have seen the signs given **V 4-31**,
- even when you have seen all those signs that will happen in the time of the Tribulation,
- even when you have seen the sign of the Son of man in heaven,

it is still going to be a time before He finally comes.

There is a gap of time in there, and people are seen waiting and waiting then sort of just going back to the normal things of life and go to sleep.

Some people are so excited at the thought of a wedding that they can't sleep for a long time before. But these people have

waited so long, and they finally just settle, they can't keep themselves awake, and they fall asleep.

What our Lord is saying is there will be a time of waiting before He comes. Nothing wrong with sleep. Sleep's a wonderful thing.

But there is something wrong with it if you are not prepared for what is going to waken you out of your sleep. That is the issue.

Sleeping is not condemned.

The wise were asleep like the foolish.

When the bridegroom comes and they wake up, the rest of the wise was sweet rest because they are ready. The rest of the foolish was folly indeed because they are caught unexpectedly.

We can't all the time be on our tiptoes. We can't spend all our lives on the roof in our pyjamas singing "The King Is Coming." Life goes on.

We settle back into the fact that you must eat and sleep and work. It doesn't mean that we are not waiting. The fact that we are not all congregated on a hill somewhere doesn't mean we are not waiting. It means that while we wait, we go on.

**Matthew 24:40-41**, *Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. <sup>41</sup>Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left.*

They will be going on with the routine things of grinding and ploughing and planting. Some will be in business, and some will be at the farm.

It would be like it was in the days of **Noah, (V 38)** there will be eating, drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage. In other words, life as usual.

He tarries and the girls fall asleep. That is how it is in human life.

We must take care of the human things. It doesn't mean they weren't prepared.

Five were,  
Five weren't.

The ones who were prepared could well afford to go on with the routine of life. The ones who weren't prepared could ill afford to go on with the routine of life, they should have taken care when they could, when they had opportunity.

Their false security let them sleep through their day of opportunity. The tragedy.

### 3. The bridegroom.

**V 6,** *“And at midnight a cry was heard: ‘Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!’*

He has tarried a long time. A funny time to start a wedding at midnight. But for the point that our Lord wants to make, He is simply saying it’s at an unexpected time.

We understand more why they were asleep.

Sleep is wonderful and sleep is where you are supposed to be at midnight. But the tarrying was so long that now at midnight, when no one expects the wedding to start, is exactly when he comes.

**Exodus 12:29,** *And it came to pass at midnight that the Lord struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of livestock.*

The deliverance of Israel from Egypt began at midnight, also in an unexpected time. Maybe that’s why the rabbis used to say that the Messiah would come when He came at midnight.

An unexpected time reminds us of the epistles where it says He will come as a thief in the in the night.

The world somehow is lulled into complacency, and He comes in an unexpected moment, even after all the signs. The bridesmaids knew the wedding was near. They could read the signs.

They knew it was time to gather at the bride's house and the festivities were going to occur.

They knew the preparations had been put in place.

If they were living in the Tribulation time, they had seen the birth pains. They knew it was time, but they still wasted their opportunity.

At midnight, there was a cry that obviously was to announce his approach. There will be such a cry when He comes finally to set up His Kingdom in that last and glorious moment, a cry out of heaven.

**V 6,** *“Behold, here comes the bridegroom. Go out to meet him.”*

The glorious moment that begins the wedding. Even though it's late but will go on for seven days anyway.

The procession is collected as the bridegroom comes with his ten attending men, perhaps, meets the bride with her ten bridesmaids together with their lamps. They are ready to light

them and proceed to his prepared home for her. This is the second coming.

**V 7**, *Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.*

Perhaps they readied all the cloth, and the ones with the oil poured the oil on, ready to go, and lit the torch and it flamed in the night sky.

Those who had no oil, they knew it now.

- Maybe they thought they could just go down the street just before he got there.
- Maybe they didn't think it would be midnight when he came and everything would be closed.
- Maybe they thought they could just sort of borrow.
- We don't know, they were just unprepared.

**2 Corinthians 13:5**, *Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.*

Examine yourself to see whether you be in the faith. They were deceived.

Now when everything is revealed, they are naked. They have no oil. They possess not the necessary internal grace of holiness. They can't light the torch.

*V 8, And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'*

They no doubt lit the dry brittle cloth, and it smouldered for a little while and then went out. It won't burn.

If the call to go to be at the judgment seat of God came to you whether in death or the second coming of Jesus Christ, and it came to you when you were not ready and you were not prepared, all the saints in heaven and all the people on earth could stand weeping in your behalf but could never save you.

Never.

Salvation is non-transferable.

The point is not to interject into this that the wise were selfish.

The parable is not intending to teach selfishness.

It is intending to teach the **non-transferable nature of salvation.**

The saved can't save the lost.

Give us your oil is a request that no one can answer.

Every person must have his own salvation.

Every person must make his own life right before God.

You can't grab my arm and be dragged into the Kingdom.

You can't share my oil.

**V 9**, *But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'*

You must procure your own.

The buying does not assume that you must pay a price for salvation, that it's not a gift.

You do pay a price in a sense that you pay the price of giving up your whole self.

Like the man who sold everything he had to buy the treasure hidden in the field and the other man who sold everything he had to buy the pearl of great price.

**Isaiah 55:1-2**, *"Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price. <sup>2</sup>Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, And let your soul delight itself in abundance.*

You must procure your own.

No one could give it to you.

Oil was plenty and available. But not at midnight and not right now.

You had equal opportunity, but you slept away the day of grace and the time of opportunity.

### **The sellers of oil:**

- The Scriptures,
- The apostles,
- The prophets,
- The teachers.

The implication here is that no one is allowed into the festival without a lit torch. It was sort of like the symbol that you were a part of the wedding party.

There was no way in without it. They didn't have it.

This is the most fearful teaching the Bible gives.

Jesus gave it repeatedly, that there are in the church myriads of people who are unprepared to face God. They are deceived about that.

In the moment when they face the reality of their unpreparedness, it will be in that moment that it's too late.

**Luke 6:46-49**, *“But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say? <sup>47</sup>Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: <sup>48</sup>He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream*

*beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. <sup>49</sup>But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great.”*

The same thing.

There are people who have built their religious house but have no foundation. That necessary grace isn't there.

The imputed righteousness isn't there.

The resident holiness of God isn't there.

The transformed character isn't there.

Salvation isn't there, no matter what appears on the outside.

Yes, they are happy about Jesus.

Yes, they may like to belong to the community of believers.

But they are not prepared.

In that last moment when they are told to go and get their own.

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

No teachers now. The teachers are silent.

No place to buy the oil now and the door is shut.

There are those moments of sheer terror immediately after the awareness that you have met holy God and are unprepared.

The feeling that must have been in the hearts of the people in Noah's time as the water started to go over their heads and they beat on the door of the ark to no avail.

Their mockery had ended and was replaced by the sheer terror of their foolishness.

The door is open now. It will be shut then.

Some will not be ready.

Some in that time of Tribulation will see all the signs. They will see the sign of the Son of man in heaven. Then they will go to sleep when they should be preparing.

Even so today. The lesson is the same for us.

Every one of us meets God at the moment of death if we are not alive in that time of His great coming.

<b>Element</b>	<b>Symbolic Meaning</b>
<b>Bridegroom</b>	Jesus Christ, returning at an unexpected hour
<b>Ten Virgins</b>	Professing believers (the visible church), all awaiting Christ's return
<b>Lamps</b>	Outward profession of faith or spiritual life

<b>Oil</b>	Inner spiritual reality—often interpreted as the Holy Spirit, genuine faith, or readiness
<b>Sleep</b>	The delay before Christ’s return; all experience it, but only some are prepared
<b>Midnight Cry</b>	The sudden announcement of Christ’s return
<b>Closed Door</b>	Final judgment—entry into the Kingdom is no longer possible
<b>Wise Virgins</b>	True believers who are spiritually prepared and persevering
<b>Foolish Virgins</b>	Those who appear ready but lack true spiritual life

The moment we will be awakened to the unpreparedness, and the shock of all shock is those who will stand there.

**Matthew 7:22-23**, *Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’<sup>23</sup> And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’*

Frightening to see, these days the church is filled with those kinds of people.

**Luke 13:23-28**, *Then one said to Him, “Lord, are there few who are saved?” And He said to them,<sup>24</sup> “Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will*

*not be able. <sup>25</sup>When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open for us,' and He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you, where you are from,' <sup>26</sup>then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.'<sup>27</sup> But He will say, 'I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.'<sup>28</sup> There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out.*

**V 11,** *"Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!'*

They are gone.

The marriage begins.

They want to be in.

No oil.

We are part of the wedding party.

We belong in the fellowship.

We were involved.

**V 12,** *But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'*

Incomprehensible.

There is NO second chance.

The only sure way to be ready on the unexpected day is to be ready every day!

Today may be your day, the day when the Lord comes or the day when the Lord comes to you and you face the inevitable hour of judgment, and you can knock all you want, and you will know you are not prepared but to no avail.

## **Conclusion:**

### **4. The Warning.**

**V 13,** *“Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.*

Keep on the alert. Be ready.

You don't know that exact moment.

Yes, the era we know, immediately following the Tribulation.  
Yes, the signs we know, immediately after the sign of the Son of man in heaven.

But how far, **how much space, how many moments, how many days, how many months?**

We don't know.

But in an hour when you don't expect!

This is the fifth time He has said it in this sermon.  
You don't know!

**Luke 21:34-36**, *“But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. <sup>35</sup>For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. <sup>36</sup>Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.”*

Don't be caught unawares. Don't be caught unprepared. That's the message of the parable.

