



when you will wake to find, beyond hope, that you have attained it, or else, that it was within your reach and you have lost it forever” (C.S. Lewis, *Problem of Pain* pg. 148).

(Heb. 9:27 KJV). There will be no allowance for changing sides on that day, because on that day it will be revealed whose side you’ve been on along (1 Cor. 4:5). One of my favorite authors puts it this way: “We can understand hell in its act of privation. All your life an unattainable ecstasy has hovered just beyond the grasp of your consciousness. The day is coming

Fourthly, Jesus says “**keep watch, for you do not know the hour or the day**”. There is an urgency too great to be ignored, and if we do not act today, then we can be certain of eternal separation from God. The time to act is *now*, the Spirit says “**today is the day of salvation**” (2 Cor. 6:2). We don’t know when the groom shall be announced to us, nor do we know if we shall go to meet Him first (James 4:14), but He has done everything short of force us to be ready for Him; that is a choice each of us must make. Let us make every effort to *be ready*, for there is *no* reason good enough that would justify delaying, for He is able to “**save to the uttermost**” (Heb 7:25).



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Welcome Visitors

We are so glad that you joined us today.
Please come again.

● Let us know if you have any questions.

ISSUE

12.32

BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

August 8
2010

Faithful Sayings

Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM
10:20 AM
6:00 PM
Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Pat Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn
Kyle Pope

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
Eddie Cook
Bill Davis
Steve Dixon
Pat Goguen
Jack Langley
Neil Ledbetter
Brady McAlister
Walker McAnear
Lance Purcell
Rusty Scott

Evangelists:

Kyle Pope
Jason Garcia



The Ten Virgins & Spiritual Preparedness

By Jason Garcia

In Matthew chapter twenty-five we read of ten women who are anticipating the arrival of the groom in their wedding party. They have all prepared lamps to make ready for the groom’s coming, (for it was often late at night before festivities began) but as they journey out to meet him, they find the groom is delayed in his coming, and they fall asleep. When the groom is finally announced, only five of the ten women are able to keep their lamps burning because they have carried extra oil along with them. To the dismay of the other five, their lamps have gone out and they have no more oil to burn, and implore the other women to share what they have. In response, the women who are prepared tell them to go buy extra themselves. So the two groups part ways, and those whose lamps are burning accompany the groom and arrive at the feast, while the others go and search for more oil. When the others finally arrive, they are denied entrance and the groom tells them, “**I tell you the truth, I do not know you**” (25:12, NIV).

What is the meaning of this story, and what lessons should we take from it? Beginning with verse one, Jesus says the **“Kingdom of Heaven will be like”** and then proceeds with the parable. We understand then that the elements in the story have a spiritual meaning. The groom represents Jesus and His arrival is a figure of the second coming. The women represent his followers, and the wedding feast is a figure of heaven.



Olsen Park church of Christ

The Lord closes the parable with the words **“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour”** (25:13), stressing the need for diligence in preparation. At first glance it would seem that the problem of the foolish five women was that they were unprepared, and that’s true, but this stems from another more fundamental issue—they did not have a personal relationship with the groom. When the women arrive late to the feast they are told, **“I do not know you”** (25:12), thus if we are to be truly prepared for the Lord’s coming we *must* have a personal relationship with Him. Notice that this point is made repeatedly in Scripture. In Matthew seven we read of people who will claim on the last day to have done miracles, preached in the name of Jesus, and even acknowledged Him as Lord, but they too will be told, **“I never knew you, depart from me”** (7:23, NKJV). We also read in Luke thirteen of men and women who will claim to have personally known the Lord while He was on earth, and even claim to be familiar with His teachings, but they will receive the same response (13:27). Can we conclude then that *knowing* that Jesus is Lord, even preaching His Gospel, and doing miracles are no substitute for having a genuine relationship with Him? The invitation He offered in Revelation 3:20 still stands today, **“Behold I stand at the door and knock, if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with Me”** (ESV).

The second thing we notice in this parable is that all the women appeared to be the same until the groom came. They were all dressed for the feast, they all had lamps with oil,

and were concerned about the groom’s coming, and they all fell asleep while he was delayed. It is only when he is announced that any difference becomes apparent. The ones who were prepared (i.e. the ones who had oil for their lamps) were able to enter the feast with the groom, while the others were left to find more oil. What does this mean for us? A lamp without oil is essentially useless, isn’t it? It may have some aesthetic value, but that is all, it cannot serve the real purpose for which it was intended, only outward appearances. Likewise, faith without works is useless (James 2:17). The unprepared women sought the oil or good works of those who were prepared, but obedience (the outward manifestation of our faith) has never been transferable, and thus the foolish women are told to “go to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.” We read in Romans 14:12 that, **“each one of us shall give an account of HIMSELF to God”** (NASB, emphasis mine). So then it is not enough to be a member of the church outwardly and nominally, because in the end it will be revealed who has genuinely prepared for the Lord. The Spirit through Peter tells us how to supplement our faith that we may become partakers of the wonderful promises God has made (2 Pet. 1:5-9). He ends declaring, that **“the one who lacks these qualities is so NEARSIGHTED, he is blind”** (1:9, ESV emphasis mine). Is it fair to say that the five foolish women also lacked foresight, and so were prepared only in *appearance*? Brethren, let us take great care that we

do not deceive ourselves, but rather be diligent workers for the Lord, so that when He comes or when we go to meet Him, we will not be found wanting.

Thirdly, notice that there was a limited time in which the women had to prepare themselves. In the parable Jesus says “the groom came...and the door was shut.” The message here is seen clearly: there came a point in time when it was too late to enter the feast. Christ has paid our entrance fee into the kingdom, but *we* must accept that sacrifice and live accordingly. While we are here we have the freedom to choose to accept His invitation, but if we fail to do so, the opportunity is lost forever. There will be no second chances, for it is **“appointed once for man to die, and after that comes the judgment”**