

The Parable of the Ten Virgins – Reflection and Questions

This reflection will help youth understand the Parable of the Ten Virgins. In this parable, Jesus asks us to be prepared and ready.

Imagine you have gone on a big trip. You have been away from home for a week. You are on a bus, making the long ride home. The trip was fun, but you are looking forward to sleeping in your bed.

You are about an hour away from your destination, so the trip leaders tell everyone to call their parents and let them know the time they should arrive to pick you up. You call and there is no answer. You look around the bus. Everyone else is talking to their parents. But your parents still aren't answering.

- How does this make you feel?

Finally, when you are about 10 minutes away from your destination, your mom answers the phone. She and your dad were at a movie. They can be there in a half hour. "But mom, you knew I was coming home tonight....."

- Now what are you thinking?

You have arrived. Everyone else's parent's have picked them up and are heading home. You spend an awkward 20 minutes waiting with the group leaders. Just you and the two adults. You feel sorry that they have to wait with you. It is embarrassing. Finally, your parents arrive.

- What do you want to say to them?

Read the Parable of the Ten Virgins ([Matthew 25:1-13](#))

Jesus told his disciples this parable: ""The kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise.

The foolish ones, when taking their lamps, brought no oil with them, but the wise brought flasks of oil with their lamps. Since the bridegroom was long delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep.

At midnight, there was a cry, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!'

Then all those virgins got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'

But the wise ones replied, 'No, for there may not be enough for us and you. Go instead to the merchants and buy some for yourselves.'

While they went off to buy it, the bridegroom came and those who were ready went into the wedding feast with him. Then the door was locked.

Afterwards the other virgins came and said, 'Lord, Lord, open the door for us!'

But he said in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, I do not know you.'

Therefore, stay awake, for you know neither the day nor the hour.'"

[Matthew 25:1-13](#)

The women in this story were part of the bridal party. They knew what was expected of them. And they should have known to be prepared for a delay.

In this parable, Jesus is telling us a couple of things. First, he is telling us to always be prepared for his coming. There are several ways to think of this:

- We need to be prepared for the end of the world
- We need to be prepared for our own deaths
- We need to be prepared to see Jesus coming to us in the people and events of our lives

The second thing he is telling us in this parable is that we cannot rely on others to make us prepared. This is our responsibility. The foolish women should not have depended on the wise women to give them oil. In the same way, we can't think that our parents, our teachers, our priests, and our youth ministers are responsible for making us ready to see Jesus. They can help, but in the end, we are each responsible for our own faith journey.

- How seriously do we take the need to be ready for Jesus?
- Do you feel we be prepared for the world?
- Do you think we should be ready for our own deaths?
- Should we be prepared to see Jesus coming in our daily lives, through people and events? Why or why not?
- What are some specific things we can do this week to improve our readiness?
- What sort of things can we do to remind ourselves to be ready?

This week, pick one specific thing you can do to improve your readiness and try to carry it out.