

Getting Ready

12th November 2017

Matthew 25:1-13,

Jesus' parable of the ten virgins is about the Second Coming of Christ. We see a contrast between the wise and the foolish bridesmaids, watchful preparedness and foolish, wishful thinking. In fact, they were all close friends of the bride and groom. They all want to be in the wedding party but only five of them are able to join the party. The other five could not get into the house when they return from their search for oil for their lamps.

This parable is addressed to insiders rather than outsiders, that is, it is spoken for those of us on the inside of the church community. We are those who call Jesus "Lord" and consider ourselves to be friends of the groom. And the central theme of the parable seems to be preparedness. We must get ready for ourselves. We have much to do while we wait. We must watch by getting ready for what is to come, not by passively watching and waiting.

In the parable, ten young women are invited to a grand marriage celebration that may be probably lasted for days. Here is where the trouble begins. Five of the young women have carefully prepared and have filled up their lamps to the brim. They calculated and figured that, what with a sometimes tardy groom, and with the city traffic and all, they would need the extra oil. However, five of the young women are called "foolish" because they have foolishly come out in the night with insufficient oil for their lamps. **"Therefore, keep watch,"** Jesus ends this story, **"because you do not know the day or the hour."** Keep watch. Be prepared. Always be at the ready.

