

Ten Bridesmaids and Three Servants Matthew 25:1-30

by David Servant

The sermon emphasizes the importance of staying ready and being faithful, as Jesus will return unexpectedly and hold everyone accountable for their actions.

Scripture: Matthew 24:44, Matthew 25:13, Matthew 25:21, Matthew 25:30, Matthew 25:46, Luke 12:48

Topics: "Eternal Preparation", "Spiritual Accountability"

Description

David Servant emphasizes the importance of staying spiritually prepared for the return of Jesus, drawing insights from the parables of the ten bridesmaids and the three servants. The parable of the ten bridesmaids highlights the need to be vigilant and ready for Christ's return, as those who are spiritually asleep will miss out on eternal blessings. The parable of the three servants underscores the accountability believers have in using their gifts and opportunities for God's kingdom, warning against faithlessness and laziness that lead to eternal consequences.

Transcript

Today's reading is a continuation of Jesus' response to His disciples' questions about His return. The first parable of the ten bridesmaids is a little difficult for us to understand unless we know something about the wedding customs of Jesus' day.

Back then, people didn't get married in churches, but in their own homes. With his friends, the bridegroom would walk from his house to the house of the bride. From there he would take her back home in a wedding procession, and the wedding guests would light their way through the darkened streets with oil lamps. The ten bridesmaids in this story were either stationed at the bride's home, waiting for the bridegroom to arrive, or at his house, waiting for both bride and bridegroom to arrive.

The important point of the story is that, because the bridegroom was delayed, five of the bridesmaids ran out of oil to fuel their lamps and had to go and purchase more oil. When they returned, they couldn't gain entrance into the wedding feast that was by then in progress.

We should be very cautious about searching for significance in every detail of parables such as this, otherwise we'll become confused. Every parable is an imperfect comparison that usually serves to make one major point. We don't need to wonder what the oil represents, what is the significance of the number

of bridesmaids, or why the five foolish ones were excluded from the wedding feast just because they arrived late. The obvious point of this parable is that we need to stay ready for the return of our bridegroom, Jesus, even if it seems He's delayed. People who are spiritually asleep will miss out on a great eternal wedding feast.

The story of the three servants is very similar to the parable of the ten servants we read in the nineteenth chapter of Luke's Gospel. Notice that in this parable, the unfaithful servant was cast into "outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 25:30), obviously hell. We can be sure he wasn't a Christian. So what did the one bag of gold he was entrusted with represent? It represented either his life, a gift given to him by God, or it represents gifts, abilities and opportunities that God gave him. When he had to give an account at the final judgment, he had nothing to show for what God had given him. He was considered to be lazy, wicked and useless by God (see Matthew 25:26, 30). The least he could have done would have been to invest his master's money in the bank and earn a little interest for him. A true believer would have at least produced a little fruit in his life. But this man had none.

The other two servants represent those who, by their obedience, prove their faithfulness. (The reason they had been given more money than the other servant was perhaps because they had already proven themselves faithful with one bag of gold). As God finds us faithful, He entrusts us with more responsibility. This is true in this life and the next one.

The primary point of this parable is that every person is accountable to God for what God entrusts to him. Those who prove to be completely faithless will suffer eternally, but those who prove themselves faithful to serve God with their gifts will be rewarded. Again, this parable teaches us that true believers are identifiable by their deeds.

Q. If Jesus visited the earth for the first time today, do you think He would tell people the same parable of ten bridesmaids as He did two thousand years ago?

A. He probably wouldn't, because it doesn't fit our modern customs. He would probably adapt it to fit modern weddings or use an entirely different story to illustrate the same truth. Perhaps He would talk about a man who was late for his job interview and who wasn't hired, or a young lady who arrived late for her college entrance exams and was consequently prohibited from entering the room where the test was being taken.

Q. How do you think Jesus might change the parable of the three servants to fit our modern culture?

A. He might change the wealthy master into an employer who, upon leaving for a business trip, gave his employees certain assignments according to their abilities. Upon his return, he would discover that one employee, to whom he gave the easiest task, had accomplished nothing. That employee would be fired. Or Jesus might tell a story about a mother who gave her three children jobs to do while she went grocery shopping. When she returned earlier than expected, she found out that one child had been watching TV the whole time. Because of this, his mom grounded him for a week!

Application: What did we learn today? Stay ready, and be faithful. If Jesus returned right now, would you be ready to meet Him?

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/david-servant/ten-bridesmaids-and-three-servants-matthew-251-30/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net