

"WHEN CHRIST COMES"

Matthew 25:1-11

Today we're going to pick up the series we started before Christmas. The title of that series is "*PERFECT ENDING.*" We're giving our focus to Matthew 24—25. This section of Scripture is called "*The Olivet Discourse.*" When Jesus taught this to His disciples, He was mere hours from fulfilling His life mission of offering Himself as a sacrifice for the sin of humanity. Three days later He would be resurrected from the dead thus achieving victory over Satan, sin, and death!

It was almost too much for our Lord's disciples to take in. However, they were curious . . .

Matthew 24:1–3... Jesus came out from the temple and was going away when His disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to Him. **2** And He said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which

will not be torn down." **3** As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things happen, and what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

With that question, Jesus launched into this extended teaching time. He shared with them some specific signs that indicate His coming is near. He spoke to them about the great tribulation that will be so devastating. He even gave them a vivid description of His second coming. . .

Matthew 24:29–31... "But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. **30** "And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. **31** "And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL

GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds,
from one end of the sky to the other.

What a glorious moment that will be! I'm sure you have many questions about the future . . .

- **Will believers go through the tribulation?**
- **What happens at the judgment?**
- **If I die before Jesus comes, where do I go?**
- **Do I receive a new body?**
- **Will I know my loved ones?**

Some people are so obsessed with the future that they are oblivious to the present. Others are so obsessed with the present that they are oblivious to the future. We've got to strike a happy balance between the two!

The one question that we should be asking is this—**AM I PREPARED FOR JESUS TO COME?**

Robby Robins was an Air Force pilot during the first Iraq war. After his 300th mission, he was surprised to be given permission to immediately

pull his crew together and fly his plane home. They flew across the ocean to Massachusetts and then had a long drive to western Pennsylvania. They drove all night, and when his buddies dropped him off at his driveway just after sun-up, there was a big banner across the garage—
"Welcome Home Dad!"

How did they know? No one had called, and the crew themselves hadn't expected to leave so quickly. Robins said. . .

"When I walked into the house, the kids, about half dressed for school, screamed, 'Daddy!' Susan came running down the hall—she looked terrific—hair fixed, make-up on, and a crisp yellow dress. 'How did you know?' I asked.

'I didn't,' she answered through tears of joy. 'Once we knew the war was over, we knew you'd be home one of these days. We knew you'd try to surprise us, so we wanted to be

ready every day."" *Lee Eclov, in the sermon "Heaven,"*
PreachingToday.com

That's what Jesus emphasized in the Olivet Discourse. . .

Matthew 24:42–44... "Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. **43** "But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. **44** "For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think *He will*.

When Christ comes, will you be prepared or will you be unprepared? That's the question that dominates our text today. **[READ THE TEXT]**

Matthew 25:1–5... "**Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.** **2** **"Five of them were foolish, and five were prudent.** **3** "For when the foolish took their

lamps, they took no oil with them, 4 but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps. 5 "Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep.

Jesus was a master teacher. He often used *parables* to make His point crystal clear.

A parable is basically an extended metaphor or simile woven into a story and placed alongside one point that Jesus wanted to stress.

In this parable the Lord utilized a Jewish wedding to make His point. Jewish weddings included. . .

- **The engagement**—The two fathers meet and make an agreement as to what the dowry, obligations and the arrangements would be.
- **The betrothal**— This was a legal union brought about by the exchange of marriage vows between the bride and groom before family members. The dowry was given for the bride. After this the groom would spend a year building a place for his wife and family to live.

- **The wedding feast**—This is what Jesus is describing in this parable. The groom and his friends would come to the bride's house where she and her bridesmaids were waiting. The whole party would then parade through the streets eventually arriving at the groom's home or some other place that was chosen for the wedding feast.

These 10 virgins were bridesmaids gathered at the home of the bride's parents waiting for the groom and his friends to come and get the bride. What do you notice about them?

- **They all had torches.**
- **They were anticipating the wedding feast.**
- **They were all together.**
- **They all went to sleep.**

Here's the surprise. 5 were prudent; 5 were foolish (No extra oil). Were they being presumptuous, or were they simply careless?

Whatever the reason, there were no acceptable excuses!

Matthew 25:6–9... “But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ 7 “Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. 8 “The foolish said to the prudent, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ 9 “But the prudent answered, ‘No, there will not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.’”

All of the bridesmaids knew the groom would be coming soon and they were gathered at the bride's house waiting for Him. They were well aware that the engagement and betrothal periods were over and that the wedding feast was about to begin. **However, they did not know precisely when the Bridegroom would come. They were awakened by a shout...**

“Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.”

All the virgins jumped up and began to cut off the ragged edges of their torches, started to soak them in oil, and lit them. At that moment *the foolish bridesmaids* were exposed. They had no oil!

They tried to borrow some oil from the bridesmaids who were prepared, but they couldn't give them any of their oil lest they would run out also.

There are some things you cannot borrow from others. Salvation is a non-transferable gift from God!

So, off they went in the middle of the night to buy some oil for themselves. What a predicament they were in!

Matthew 25:10–12... "And while they were going away to make the purchase, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut. 11 "Later the other virgins also came, saying,

'Lord, lord, open up for us.' 12 "But he answered, 'Truly I say to you, I do not know you.'"

The bridegroom came and took his bride, the 5 prudent bridesmaids, and with torches lit they joyfully processed through the streets in the middle of the night. Guests and families joined with him as they made their way to the wedding feast. Once inside—**THE DOOR WAS SHUT!** The time had come and the foolish virgins were unprepared. When they showed up at the door, the bridegroom refused to let them in. He said he didn't even know them!

Listen the Lord Jesus knows where you stand spiritually...

Nahum 1:7... The LORD is good, A stronghold in the day of trouble, And He knows those who take refuge in Him.

John 10:14... "I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know."

2 Timothy 2:19... Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness."

There will come a time when it will be too late for you to believe in Jesus and be saved!

It will be a moment of sheer terror when unbelievers face a holy God and realize with absolute certainty that they are eternally lost. That must have been the feeling of the people of Noah's day when they saw the flood waters rise above their heads and knew the door to the ark was unalterably shut. At that moment the opportunity for salvation was gone and they were left without hope! Now, here is the point of this parable. . .

Matthew 25:13... "Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour."

The exhortations to be prepared for the coming of the Lord appear throughout the Gospels and epistles with remarkable consistency. . .

Luke 21:34–36... “Be on guard, so that your hearts will not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day will not come on you suddenly like a trap; **35** for it will come upon all those who dwell on the face of all the earth. **36** “But keep on the alert at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

Colossians 3:1–4... Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. **2** Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. **3** For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. **4** When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

Titus 2:11–14... For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, **12** instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, **13** looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, **14** who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

Jesus is coming again. We don't know when He's coming. **YOU MUST BE PREPARED!**

In his epic poem, Alfred Lord Tennyson used this parable as a backdrop. . .

Late, late, so late, and dark the night and chill!

Late, late, so late, but we can enter still.

Too late, too late, ye cannot enter now.

No light had we, for that we do repent;

And, learning this, the Bridegroom will relent.

Too late, too late, ye cannot enter now.

No light, so late, and dark and chill the night!

O let us in, that we may find the light.

Too late, too late, ye cannot enter now.

Have we not heard the Bridegroom is so sweet?

O let us in, tho' late, to kiss His feet!

No, no, too late! Ye cannot enter now.