

Matthew 25:1-13 (NLT) “Then the Kingdom of Heaven will be like ten bridesmaids who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. [2] Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. [3] The five who were foolish didn’t take enough olive oil for their lamps, [4] but the other five were wise enough to take along extra oil. [5] When the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep. [6] “At midnight they were roused by the shout, ‘Look, the bridegroom is coming! Come out and meet him!’ [7] “All the bridesmaids got up and prepared their lamps. [8] Then the five foolish ones asked the others, ‘Please give us some of your oil because our lamps are going out.’ [9] “But the others replied, ‘We don’t have enough for all of us. Go to a shop and buy some for yourselves.’ [10] “But while they were gone to buy oil, the bridegroom came. Then those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was locked. [11] Later, when the other five bridesmaids returned, they stood outside, calling, ‘Lord! Lord! Open the door for us!’ [12] “But he called back, ‘Believe me, I don’t know you!’ [13] “So you, too, must keep watch! For you do not know the day or hour of my return.

The Title of Today's teaching is...

“FILL ER’ UP!”

Last week I told you that we must value HIS voice and treasure HIS WORDS.

Jesus practiced a style of preaching that insured that only those who valued HIS voice would understand/treasure HIS words. **(The only people who got anything out of what he said were those who valued who he was).**

- The only people who get anything out of worshipping HIM are those who value HIM.
- The only people who get anything out of HIS word are those who value HIS voice.

- If you leave a service where HE was worshipped and HIS word was preached and say to yourself, “I didn’t get anything out of that.” Hmmm?

Don’t confuse emotional with spiritual.

Its not the loudness of the music

Its not the vibrancy of the environment

Its not the natural charisma of the preacher

Very often, most often, the loudest is not the most anointed! He still speaks in that still small voice.

* Billy Joe “yahhh”

Jesus practiced a style of preaching that insured that only those who valued HIS voice would understand/treasure HIS words.

He employed parables.

He did this for a number of reasons 2 of the main are

1. **To reveal truth:** “And the disciples came and said to Him, ‘Why do You speak to them in parables?’ He answered and said to them, ‘Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given’” (Mt. 13:10-11). The mysteries of the kingdom are contained in the parables of the kingdom (secrets hidden from the foundation of the world). But only those who valued HIM got it.

Skip vs 12 (will come back to that)

2. **To conceal truth:** Jesus explained, “Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: ‘Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive’” (Mt. 13:13-14).

Not everyone was intended to understand Christ’s message.

He skillfully used parables to throw curve balls and confuse those who were not open to truth.

Matthew 13:12 (NLT) To those who listen to my teaching, more understanding will be given, and they will have an abundance of knowledge. But for those who are not listening, even what little understanding they have will be taken away from them.

Parables have a unique way of withdrawing the light from those who love darkness.

The realities of the Kingdom are open to all but not intended for all.

The realities of the kingdom are intended for those who are desperately devoted to the King.

Just like last week we see these two characters again. The Wise & the Foolish.

Don't confuse the wise and the foolish with the good and the bad.

It's possible to be a good person but make foolish decisions.

Which explains why someone can be a good person but always suffering from lack.

Throughout scripture we learn that it is wisdom that rewards the wise with increase, prosperity and success

While the fool creates their own chaos, catastrophes & calamities.

And so in our story we have 10 who seem to be the same on the outside but on the inside their character was different.

[5] When the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep. [6] "At midnight they were roused by the shout, 'Look, the bridegroom is coming! Come out and meet him!'" [7] "All the bridesmaids got up and prepared their lamps.

CHARACTER IS REVEALED BY CRISIS

Proverbs 24:10 (NLT) If you fail under pressure, your strength is too small.

Character is a personal thing, and cannot be given by one man to another, but must be acquired and manifested by each one for himself

[8] Then the five foolish ones asked the others, 'Please give us some of your oil because our lamps are going out.' [9] "But the others replied, 'We don't have enough for all of us. Go to a shop and buy some for yourselves.'

What I am going to focus on today is the OIL

Oil is always symbolic of the Spirit of God

The ministry of the Spirit is so important that Jesus actually said that it was to our advantage that HE goes away

John 16:7 (TPT) But here's the truth: It's to your advantage that I go away, for if I don't go away the Divine Encourager will not be released to you. But after I depart, I will send him to you.

In every situation our advantage is the Holy Spirit - if we lose the Spirit we lose our advantage.

Think about the advantage of OIL

- Oil *lubricates* when used for that purpose – there is little friction and wear among those who are lubricated by the Spirit of God.
- Oil *heals* and was used as a medicinal treatment in Biblical times – the Spirit of God brings healing and restoration.
- Oil *lights* when it is burned in a lamp – where the Spirit of God is, there is light.
- Oil *warms* when it is used as fuel for a flame – where the Spirit of God is, there is warmth and comfort.
- Oil *invigorates* when used to massage – the Holy Spirit invigorates us for His service.
- Oil *adorns* when applied as a perfume – the Holy Spirit adorns us and makes us more pleasant to be around.

- Oil *polishes* when used to shine metal – the Holy Spirit wipes away our grime and smoothes out our rough edges. Galatians 5:22 (NASB) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

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Some would say that the ministry of the Holy Spirit ended with the launch of the early church. That we don't need such today.

Do we need love today?

Do you need joy today? How about peace?

What about patience, kindness and goodness?

Pastor I thought you were talking about the ten virgins? I am - they neglected their oil and it ran out.

If you don't Filler er' up you will run out!

And soon you will find yourself getting impatient with people, irritated by church folk and lacking love for those who need your love the most.

What about those wonderful gifts?

1 Corinthians 12:6-11 (TPT) The same God distributes different kinds of miracles that accomplish different results through each believer's gift and ministry as he energizes and activates them. [7] Each believer is given continuous revelation by the Holy Spirit to benefit not just himself but all. [8] For example: The Spirit gives to one the gift of the word of wisdom. To another, the same Spirit gives the gift of the word of revelation knowledge. [9] And to another, the same Spirit gives the gift of faith. And to another, the same Spirit gives gifts of healing. [10] And to another the power to work miracles. And to another the gift of prophecy. And to another the gift to discern what the Spirit is speaking. And to another the gift of speaking different kinds of tongues. And to another the gift of interpretation of tongues. [11] Remember, it is the same Holy Spirit who distributes, activates, and operates these different gifts as he chooses for each believer.

In studying church history I have never discovered any group that did not start out with both the fruit of the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit - but over time the gifts ceased and the fruit rotted

Expression / Manifestation.

Exodus 27:20-21 (NLT) “Command the people of Israel to bring you pure oil of pressed olives for the light, to keep the lamps burning continually. [21] The lampstand will stand in the Tabernacle, in front of the inner curtain that shields the Ark of the Covenant. Aaron and his sons must keep the lamps burning in the LORD’s presence all night. This is a permanent law for the people of Israel, and it must be observed from generation to generation.

Traditionally it is taught that God lit the lamp but the priest had to maintain the lamp.

Divine Partnership.

I’ve told you that God will never require anything of you that HE doesn’t first provide for you.

He will provide but we must maintain.

Paul wrote in *Ephesians 5:17-18 (TPT)* *And don’t live foolishly for then you will have discernment to **fully understand God’s will.** [18] And don’t get drunk with wine, which is rebellion; instead **be filled with the fullness of the Holy Spirit.***

These verses tell us that it is possible to know what the will of the Lord is for our lives. For one thing, God’s will is that believers be filled to overflowing with His Spirit.

Ephesians 5:18-19 (NLT) Don’t be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, [19] singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts.

Be Filled: In the Greek is a command and actually reads “Be Being Filled” a continuous action.

Well Pastor I was baptized with the Holy Ghost and spoke in tongues back in 1972! Well good for you - have you been running on "E" since 1973?

The command is to be filled "BY" the Spirit not "WITH" the Spirit

Everyone say, **"BY not WITH"**

In other words, we are to maintain a constant experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

It's a continual, ongoing action, not something that occurred once sometime in the past. *The will of God for our lives is that we be filled to overflowing with the Holy Spirit.*

Maintaining a **Spirit-filled life** is as much a part of following God's plan for your life as receiving specific direction from the Lord about something He wants you to do.

Romans 12:11 tells us to be *"fervent in spirit."* Another translation says, *"Be thoroughly warm-hearted"* (Weymouth). The *Revised Standard Version* says, *"Be aglow with the Spirit."*

The Moffatt translation says, *"Maintain the spiritual glow."* I like that one best.

That's the will of the Lord for our lives. He wants us to maintain the glow of the Holy Spirit.

Being filled with the Spirit and maintaining the glow is God's *will* for us because it's written in His *Word*. And we know that God's *Word* is God's *will*.

Ephesians 5:18 (AMPC) **And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but ever be filled and stimulated with the [Holy] Spirit.**

God wants you to be filled to overflowing with His Spirit and maintain the glow!

Maintaining the Glow Is Recognizable

Certain characteristics accompany the Spirit-filled life.

The first characteristic is *“Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord”* (Eph. 5:19).

If you’re filled with the Spirit and maintaining the glow, you will have a song in your heart. And if you do, you can’t help but speak it out, because *“out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks”* (Matt. 12:34; Luke 6:45).

If you’ve got oil in your lamp, if you have FILLED ER’ UP there will be a song in your heart whether you’re at church, at home, or on the job—wherever you might be.

Another characteristic of a Spirit-filled life is a heart full of thanksgiving. *Ephesians 5:20* says, *“Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

It’s easy to shout, jump, and dance in a church service. But when you’re really filled with the Holy Spirit, you’re motivated by Him, and you’re fervent in spirit and aglow with God all the time. And you can thank God in the midst of any and all circumstances.

If you’re going through a test or trial, you’re not thanking God *because* of the test. But you can thank Him because you have another opportunity to exercise and develop your faith and to prove Him faithful to deliver you.

A third characteristic of having oil in your lamp life is humility. *Ephesians 5:21* says, *“Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.”* The word *submit* simply means “to give in to one another.” Some people have a difficult time submitting to others. But when we’re aglow with the Holy Spirit, it’s easy, because a fervent spirit makes it easier to keep the flesh under the dominion of our spirit.

We need to maintain a teachable attitude. Without humility and a teachable spirit, we hinder ourselves spiritually from fulfilling the plan of God.

God’s will—His purpose—for our lives is for us to be continually aglow with His Spirit. Because He knows that when we do that, it will be much easier for us to successfully follow His plan for our lives.

At the beginning of the story all the bridesmaids looked alike.

They all looked like bridesmaids, talked like bridesmaids and walked like bridesmaids.

They all had lamps, they all went out to meet the groom and they all fell asleep.

The tragedy here was the lack of oil.

*(running out of gas in car)

Its not about how our story began - its about how it ends.

Don't be so enamored with your pedigree, your history that you neglect your destiny.

Kingdom life was never designed to be an experience it's intended to be a relationship.

Not a once upon a time thing, but a daily infusion of the Zoe, God kinda life into our mortal frames.

IF YOU DON'T FILL UP YOU WILL RUN OUT!

[8] Then the five foolish ones asked the others, 'Please give us some of your oil because our lamps are going out.' [9] "But the others replied, 'We don't have enough for all of us. Go to a shop and buy some for yourselves.'

There are some things you need to get for yourself.

You can't live forever on someones else's resources (prayers, anointing, etc)

You must go to the source.

As our story comes to a close so does our Sunday time together lets finish it up by looking at the last of the verses

[10] "But while they were gone to buy oil, the bridegroom came. Then those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was locked. [11] Later, when the other five bridesmaids returned, they stood outside, calling, 'Lord! Lord! Open the door for us!' [12] "But

he called back, 'Believe me, I don't know you!' [13] "So you, too, must keep watch! For you do not know the day or hour of my return.

The Lord doesn't tell us where they went, or if they managed to secure any oil - that doesn't matter

What matters is they missed out on God's best because they failed to keep their lamps full of oil.