

## Ten Were Foolish and Ten Were Wise

Thirty-Second Week of Ordinary Time – Matthew 25: 1-13

I'm old enough to remember that when I went out with friends on a Friday night or out on a date in high school, a wise girl always had a dime in her pocket to call home. Now those of you who are too young to remember this need, never had to call your parents on a pay phone to let them know you'd had a flat tire or that you'd be just a little late making curfew. Wisdom was always having your dime with you. Most of the time you didn't need the dime but you had it just in case. As crazy as that might sound today it was well within the context of my lived experience.

Jesus' parable this week focuses on preparedness but in the spiritual and faithful realm. **"The Kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom"** To understand this parable we need to put it in context as well. It was common practice to send out a group to meet the bridegroom coming in procession to the banquet of the wedding. Taking oil along at night would have been as prudent as my dime. But there are those who, for whatever reason don't think in the long term. **"Five were foolish and five were wise."** The wise ones were able to meet the bridegroom and enter the feast while the foolish ones were so late that they were locked out of the banquet all together.

The truth is that Jesus is not using this parable to make a point about oil. He is talking about faith. In particular, Jesus is talking about our faith and our preparedness for eternal life. No one wants to be caught lacking in faith on the last day. As we move toward the end of the liturgical year, we hear more and more stories of the end of time, the Second Coming of Christ and the need to be prepared for our own eventual death.

In this week's parable, Jesus is the bridegroom. The wise are those who come with faith in hand. The foolish are the ones that think nothing of their relationship with God and end up trying to "borrow" faith from someone else.

Faith in Jesus Christ is the core focus of our Christian faith. To be truly prepared for our eternal home in heaven, we must be ever vigilant and ready with our faith in hand. That means we must practice and live our faith every day. Jesus reinforces this point, **"Therefore stay awake, for you know neither the day nor the hour."**

Blessings!

  
Sue Schettler