

# ***READY OR NOT ... HERE I COME!***

## **MATTHEW 25: 1-13; Luke 12: 35-48**

### **The 10 Virgins**

Matthew 25: 1-13

Get the picture: Jewish marriages.

> The groom and his friends would leave his house and proceed to the home of the bride, where the wedding ceremony would take place – often at night. After, the entire party returned to the groom's home for a celebratory banquet.

\* Who do the virgins represent?

(1) The Comfortable Answer:

- > 5 foolish virgins: SINNERS
- > 5 wise virgins: BELIEVERS (CHRISTIANS)

→ Conclusion: The Christians make it into heaven while the sinners are shut out.

\*\* But, there is a problem with this interpretation:

In scripture, virgins represent PURITY – those kept from immoral corruption. Sinners would never be referred to as “virgins.”

(2) The Hard Truth:

- > All of the virgins : FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST

\* Who is the bridegroom? JESUS

- > What is the meaning of v.5?
- > What usually occurs if we have to wait too long for something?

\* What does the oil (and lack of oil) represent?

- > In scripture, oil is a symbol for the HOLY SPIRIT.
- > Here, it represents PREPAREDNESS.
  - both groups had the Holy Spirit (there were believers)
  - but, the lack of oil can mean a lack of “Holy Spirit activity”
- > How are “being prepared” and “the Holy Spirit”

\* What is a good application of 25: 8-9?

- > *We can't make it into the kingdom on someone else's faith!!*

\* LIFE LESSONS: Is this parable teaching that some Christians will make it to heaven ... and some WON'T???

1. We must be READY for Jesus' RETURN
  - > What constitutes being ready? (see the next parable, Mt. 25: 14-30)
2. Those who are not ready are those who have TURNED FROM THE FAITH
  - > If this weren't true, we'd all be asking,  
“Am I Christian enough ... how much more do I have to do?”
3. This parable exposes NOMINAL CHRISTIANS!

## The Watchful Servants

Luke 12: 35-48

This parable continues other parables that take place at late-night wedding banquets. What happens when a master returns home late at night??

- \* What is the reward for the servants who are ready when the master returns?
    - > The master will SERVE the servants!
    - > Mt. 20:28
  
  - \* What is the 1 sure thing we know about when the Son of Man will return? (see v.40)
    - > He will return when WE DON'T EXPECT HIM!
    - > Practically speaking, what does this truth mean for us?
  
  - \* What will be the punishment for the unfaithful servant?
    - > He will be "cut in pieces" and assigned a place with the UNBELIEVERS
    - > Implied here: initially, this servant was considered a "believer"
  
  - \* Degrees of punishment?? (vv.47-48)
    - > In this parable who will be punished more? Why?
  
  - \* What kind of a person does this unfaithful servant figure symbolize?
    - > Someone who is SAVED, but who turns his back on Jesus for
      - 1) pursuit of the LUSTS OF THE FLESH
      - 2) lack of FAITH (instead, walking by SIGHT)
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Both of these parables give us some vital life lessons.

1. We DON'T KOW when Jesus will return.
2. We must be ready when He returns or we will MISS HEAVEN.
3. Being ready, means being BUSY ABOUT HIS BUSINESS.

Food for thought:

What is the line between being lazy about the Father's business and turning our backs on our faith? I'm not sure the answer, but I do know this: Stay away from that line!!!