

CGH Sept 14

## Preparation

Several of this week's parables have the common theme of preparation. We read the parable of the talents, the parable of the ten virgins, and the parable of the wedding feast. In these stories we are reminded that we need to be watchful and to be prepared not only to receive Christ's invitation but also to be prepared for His coming. We will look at these three parables today.

### Opening Questions:

1. What does "preparation" mean?
2. How should we be "watchful"?
3. Why is it often difficult to prepare and remain watchful?

### The Parable of the Ten Virgins

**Mat 25:1-13** "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. (2) Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. (3) For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, (4) but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. (5) As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. (6) But at midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' (7) Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. (8) And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' (9) But the wise answered, saying, 'Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.' (10) And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. (11) Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' (12) But he answered, 'Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.' (13) Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

1. What is the imagery of the bridegroom?
2. What is the imagery of the lamp? The oil?
3. What is the lesson of verses 8-10?
4. What is significant about the image of the shut door?

Joh 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

Psa 1:6 for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

## **The Parable of the Wedding Feast**

**Mat 22:1-14** And again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, (2) “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, (3) and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. (4) Again he sent other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast.”’ (5) But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, (6) while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. (7) The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. (8) Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. (9) Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.’ (10) And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests. (11) “But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. (12) And he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. (13) Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ (14) For many are called, but few are chosen.”

1. What is the significance of the imagery of the “wedding feast?” Is it different from the previous parable’s similar imagery?
2. What do the invitations to the wedding feast denote in scripture?
3. What are verses 5-7 talking about?
4. What is the message of verses 8-10?
5. What is the significance of the wedding garment?

**Mat 20:16** So the last will be first, and the first last.”

**Tit 3:10-11** As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, (11) knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.

## **The Parable of the Talents**

**Mat 25:14-30** “For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. (15) To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. (16) He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents

more. (17) So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. (18) But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. (19) Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. (20) And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.' (21) His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' (22) And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.' (23) His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' (24) He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, (25) so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.' (26) But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? (27) Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. (28) So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. (29) For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. (30) And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

1. What do the "talents" symbolize?
2. What does the master's return symbolize?
3. What does the returned master's reaction illustrate?
4. What is the meaning of verse 29?

Summary: we are to be prepared for Christ's return, and we are to be watchful for His coming. We prepare by being faithful to the calls that God places on us in our lives. We have been called to do His good works, and we do those from the standpoint of the grace and mercy God gives us through His forgiveness and our salvation. He gave us His son for an atonement for our transgressions. We respond in kind with good works through our own gifting and vocation. On the last day we will all stand before Him and give an account. May we be prepared!

Rev 21:7-8 The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. (8) But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the

sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”

*Augsburg Confession Article XVII:* [1] Our churches teach that at the end of the world Christ will appear for judgment and will raise all the dead [1 Thessalonians 4:13–5:2]. [2] He will give the godly and elect eternal life and everlasting joys, [3] but He will condemn ungodly people and the devils to be tormented without end [Matthew 25:31–46].