



Normal Campus Sermon Study - 8.9.2026

## Leader's Corner

The Parable of the Bridesmaids

Matthew 25:1-13

**Main Idea:** Readiness for Christ's return isn't about predicting the future—it's about cultivating a faithful, personal relationship with Jesus today that perseveres until He comes.

**Key Passage:** Matthew 25:13

"Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour."

**Practice This Week:** Spend intentional time with Jesus every day this week—not out of fear, but out of love. Build the kind of relationship you don't have to borrow from anyone else.

## Prayer and Praise

### Opening Prayer:

*Jesus, thank You for inviting us into relationship with You. We don't want to simply know about You—we want to truly know You. Help us become people who faithfully walk with You every day so that whenever You return, we'll be found ready. Shape our hearts this week to love You more deeply. Amen.*

### Worship Suggestions:

- \* Christ Be Magnified
- \* Firm Foundation (He Won't)
- \* Yet Not I But Through Christ in Me
- \* Come Thou Fount
- \* Build My Life

### Prayer Focus:

Pray for perseverance—asking God to deepen your relationship with Christ so that your faith continues to grow through every season of waiting.

## Group Discussion

1. What's something you've had to prepare well in advance for because waiting until the last minute simply wasn't an option? (A trip, wedding, race, job interview, surgery, hunting season, etc.)
2. As you read Matthew 25:1–13, what differences do you notice between the wise and foolish bridesmaids? What surprises you about what they actually have in common?
3. Everyone fell asleep while waiting. Why do you think Jesus includes that detail? What does it tell us about His expectations of His followers?
4. The sermon emphasized that "Readiness isn't predictions and last-minute preparation. It's faithful devotion to Jesus." How does that challenge the way people often think about the end times?
5. The five foolish bridesmaids wanted to borrow oil, but they couldn't. What do you think Jesus is teaching about personal faith and discipleship through that picture? Who are people sometimes tempted to "borrow faith" from?
6. The bridegroom's words, "I don't know you," are some of the most sobering in Scripture. What's the difference between knowing about Jesus and actually knowing Jesus? How can someone honestly evaluate that?
7. If someone observed your everyday rhythms—not just Sunday mornings—what evidence would they see that you're cultivating a relationship with Jesus? Where are you currently growing? Where might you simply be coasting?
8. Waiting can make us spiritually sleepy. What tends to lull your heart into spiritual complacency? What practices help you stay spiritually awake and attentive to Jesus?
9. The rest of Matthew 25 describes readiness in three ways:
  - \* devoted to Christ
  - \* faithful with what He's entrusted to us
  - \* loving the people He lovesWhich of those feels strongest in your life right now? Which one needs intentional attention this season?
10. Imagine Jesus returned one year from today. What would you want to be different about your relationship with Him between now and then? What's one step you can begin taking this week?

## Practice

### As a Group:

Choose one simple way to encourage each other toward faithful devotion this week.

Ideas:

- \* text one another one Scripture each morning
- \* pray together midweek
- \* meet for coffee with someone in the group
- \* serve someone together

The goal isn't activity—it's helping one another remain faithful while waiting for Christ.

### On Your Own:

Each day ask yourself:

- \* Am I spending time with Jesus, or simply thinking about Him?
- \* Is my faith becoming more personal or more borrowed?
- \* If Jesus returned today, would He find me faithfully walking with Him?

Spend at least ten uninterrupted minutes each day in Scripture and prayer simply enjoying Christ's presence.

## Further Study

### Read:

- \* Matthew 24:36–51
- \* Matthew 25:14–46
- \* John 15:1–17
- \* Hebrews 3:12–15
- \* 1 Thessalonians 5:1–11
- \* Revelation 19:6–9

### Reflect:

- \* What habits help a believer remain spiritually ready over the long haul?
- \* How do the three parables of Matthew 25 complement one another?
- \* Why do you think Jesus emphasizes perseverance more than prediction?
- \* How does the image of Jesus as the Bridegroom change the way you think about His return?
- \* If someone asked you today, "What does it mean to be ready for Jesus?" how would you answer in one sentence?

### Leader Note:

This passage can easily drift into debates about prophecy or end-times timelines. If that happens, gently redirect the conversation toward Jesus' central emphasis. Throughout Matthew 24–25, His concern isn't that His followers correctly predict His return, but that they faithfully persevere until it happens.

A helpful question to bring the group back is:

"Instead of asking When is Jesus coming? this parable invites us to ask, Who am I becoming while I wait?"