

# Five foolish virgins

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 01 January 2000

Preacher: Rev Norman Macleod

- [ 0 : 00 ]     Now let us turn to a portion of scripture we read together in the Gospel according to Matthew.
- The Gospel according to Matthew, chapter 25, and we shall read again from the beginning of the chapter.
- When shall the kingdom of heaven be lacking it unto ten virgins which took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom, and five of them were wise and five were foolish, and so forth.
- So Christ made great use of illustrations and parables.
- These helped to make his preaching attractive and also helped to clarify the message.
- [ 1 : 24 ]     It also had a serious motive because in the 13th chapter we found that the Sanhedrin or the Sadducees and Pharisees resolved to put Christ to death.
- It was a serious decision that Christ began to speak in parables. So the parables was a confusion and darkness to these men while they were light to those who could understand them.
- Something like the cloud that followed the Israelites in the wilderness. It was light and guidance to the Israelites.
- But it was a black cloud to their enemies.
- So in order to understand a parable, it is most helpful to grasp and understand the context in which the parable is given.
- [ 2 : 49 ]     And if we do so in this one we shall find rather interesting that it is an enlargement of a question asked by the disciples.
- And I shall read it. In the 24th chapter we read, And Jesus went out and departed from the temple.
- And his disciples came to him to show him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things.
- Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down. This was said at the temple in Jerusalem.
- And they went out and they sat upon the Mount of Olives. The disciples came unto him privately saying, Tell us, When shall these things be?
- [ 4 : 02 ]     And what shall be the sign of thy coming? And of the end of the world. Now we can, We can, We can, We can, Appreciate a little, Of, The amazement, That came, Upon the disciples, When he said, That, When Christ told them, Concerning the temple, That not one stone would be left upon another.
- That it would be cast down. And, And, And, They thought that the temple would exist to the end of the world. And that is the, That is what they're asking him.
- And, They said, Tell us, When shall these things be? And, And, And, And, And, Of the end of the world.

And, Christ, If you read the 24th chapter, Is first describing, The judgment, That, That is to come upon the Jewish nation, Because, Because, They rejected him.

He, He wept above him, In the mount of olives, When he was coming in, And, And, And, And, And, They were, As it were, At the door of salvation, And, They were closing that door upon themselves, And, And, And, And, And, And, The Israelites, Going into, The depths, Of the earth of darkness, And, And, Rejecting, The only Savior, That could deliver them.

[ 5 : 51 ] That was the reason of his weeping above them. And, He, In the 24th chapter, He gives an account, Of the judgment, That is coming upon Jerusalem.

The lack of it that never came upon a people. And, It came upon them. The Romans attacked them, Thirty years after the death of Christ.

And, They maintained, If that is true, That there were not sufficient trees, Around Jerusalem, To make crucifixions, For the Jews.

They slaughtered, And killed, And destroyed the city, And left it in ruins. And ruins. Now, In this chapter, He was answering, He was there answering, The first one concerning the temple.

How it was to be destroyed. And how Jerusalem was to be destroyed. And how the Jews, Who would be loved, Would be carried away into captivity. And now, He is telling them, Concerning, The end of the world. And we are all concerned, In the end of the world.

[ 6 : 55 ] Whatever interest we might find, In the destruction of Jerusalem, And in the predictions he made concerning it. But here, In the 25th chapter, We would, Concerning, The end of the world. Now, We are all concerned, In the end of the world.

And we are all concerned, In the end of the world. And we are all concerned, In the end of the world. Whatever interest we might find, In the destruction of Jerusalem, And in the predictions he made concerning it.

But here, In the 25th chapter, We would, Concerning, The end of the world. Now, He makes this parable, Or illustration, Concerning, The church of God, Or the church of Christ.

Then shall the kingdom of heaven. And, Matthew, Who wrote this gospel, In deference, To the Jews, Who would not name, God by name, At any time.

They would use, Some other, The highest, Or the glorious one. Or heaven itself. And that is why, We have, Again and again, In this gospel, The kingdom of heaven.

[ 8 : 12 ] Instead of the kingdom of God. It simply means, The kingdom of God on earth. Then shall the kingdom of heaven, Be like unto ten virgins, Which took their lamps, And went forth to meet the bridegroom.

Five of them were wise, And five were foolish. Now, He illustrates, There is something, That we should, Take into account, When we consider this, That, That he is using, The church, Or revealing to us, The church, Has, What actually, Takes place, In a Jewish marriage.

And we would have to understand, The Jewish, The form of marriage, At the time, That Christ lived.

Or else, We would be enabled, To understand, The parable itself. That he is illustrating, The coming, The second coming of Christ, Something like, What happens, In a Jewish marriage.

There was always a period, Between, A betrothal, Or a spousal, And, The marriage itself.

[ 9 : 48 ] And, The betrothal was something, That was, That was done, With witnesses present, And, The, The, The, The woman, And the man, Were giving certain promises, To each other, That they would marry, In due time.

And, During that period, They weren't really married. They were betrothed, Or espoused.  
And, It, The, The period was not specified.

It could, It was during that period, That a dowry, That a dowry, Would be paid, To the father, Of the bride. But, She was known, After that betrothal, She was known, As the bride.

And, He known, As the bridegroom. Although, They weren't married, They were bride, And bridegroom. Supposing the period, Supposing the period, Would continue, For years.

And, During that period, The, The bridegroom, Paid, The dowry, That the father, Of the bride, Demanded. And, It could be paid, Either in labour, Or it could be paid, In money, Or it could be paid, In some other way.

[ 11 : 14 ] But it had to be paid, Before, The marriage could take place. Jacob had to labour, For 14 years, Before, He obtained Rachel.

And David, When, When he knew, That he could have, Saul's daughter, He said that he had not, Sufficient dowry, To pay, For a king's daughter.

And, And these things, Were absolutely, Necessary. And it cast, Quite a lot, Of light, Upon, Words, And phrases, That we find, Throughout, The new testament, And throughout the bible.

It is a bit confusing, In the old testament, Because, We have there already, A typology. In the old testament church, There was the deliverance, Out of Egypt.

And there was, The faulty years, Journey through the wilderness. And then, Once they entered, Into the promised land, They were, As if it were in heaven.

[ 12 : 29 ] And there they were married. But during that pilgrimage, Pilgrimage, The marriage, The Israelite marriage, I mean, The talk of the church, Was not, Fulfilled, Until, They, Went into, The promised land.

And after that, The, The, The church is called, The lamb's wife, Or, Or his wife. And he's dealing with her, In the whole, In the promised land, As his wife, Because he mentions again, And again, That he was married to them.

Now in the new testament, We have this betrothal. John the Baptist, Rejoiced, In the voice of the bridegroom.

He was, He was the bride, And he was hearing the voice of the bridegroom. And rejoicing in it. Now we have, Christ, Illustrating, By a Jewish marriage, How, How the church would be, When he would come again.

Now when the marriage, When the marriage itself was to take place, It was, Usually, Performed at night.

[ 13 : 53 ] The celebrations were at night. And the bride, The bridegroom rather, With his friends, Would come, In the evening, And, Came to the bride's home.

And take the bride, Home with himself. To his own house. To his own home. And it is there, That the celebration of the marriage, Or the marriage supper, Was, Done.

And then, We found, That the marriage supper of the lamb, Is to be, When he comes again. And when he takes his, When he takes his, When he takes his, When he takes his, Wife home, And she has made herself ready, And she goes in, With him, To the marriage.

Now we have, We have, We have, From, From, The, The parable which Christ, Has given to us. We have here, Declared, Clearly, The state, In which the church, Shall be, When, When he shall come again.

There is no, This, As far as we are able to, To gather from the words of Christ himself, Here, About a millennium, At all.

[ 15 : 10 ] That doesn't, Indicate that there is no, Not to be a millennium before. But here, The disciples are asking, How, How things will be?

When the end of the world will be? And when, What is going to happen? Up till then. They are amazed at the teaching, That they had heard, And at the time, The day they will come again.

And they are amazed at the teaching, That they are told, and accepted and they wanted to know more about this and Christ is during that as I mentioned the 24th chapter and now in this chapter he is telling us how things shall be when he is coming again and he is coming again and going to take the church whom he bought with his own blood to take her up and present her before the throne of his glory with great joy. Now we see the similarity here within the kingdom of God on earth. Now the kingdom of God is really the visible church of Christ. Now I know that this conveys very little to many of you.

What is the visible church? And the visible church is all those who profess the Christian religion and probably there's no one in this building but one of the visible church. If you're if the Christian religion is yours and you attend means of grace privately or publicly you're in the visible church and the visible church is a mixed people. There are people who are saved by Jesus Christ who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior and therefore they are united to him and they are the people who will go in to the marriage when he comes again. Now as we look upon them here that it's rather difficult to differentiate between a true believer and one who is a believer by profession only. He is in the visible church, he attends the means of grace, he might be regular in these means and he might know quite a lot about the Christian religion. He might be able even to defend it against the enemies of religion.

He might be even ready to die for it and yet be a non-believer. I was speaking recently to a man who had been a prisoner of war in Germany and he refused to work on the on the Sabbath and he was told if he wouldn't he would be shot and killed right out and yet yet he refused whatever they would do and they let him go when they realized he had strong convictions over it.

[ 18 : 59 ] Now why I mentioned this he is not a professing Christian and he wasn't a professing Christian then. He was brought up in a Christian society. He knew the Christian religion and he was only of the visible church.

On the Bible the Christian years So The Christian And this is why it's so very difficult to differentiate between a true believer and one who has mental feelings and rentable convictions and who has certain feelings and yet who's not slides it to Christ.

to Christ. Now we had all these virgins, the foolish virgins, are indicating those who might be in the visible church and yet without saving faith. And the wise virgins are those who believe in Christ to the same. Now we can see here that both seem to have the same expectation. They went out, they went forth, they went to meet the bridegroom. As I illustrated from the Jewish form of marriage that the bridegroom would be coming usually at night because it was then they were going to have the celebrations as he was going to take his bride to his own home. And they went out to meet him and they took their lamps because it was dark and it was part of the professional thing to do. They took their lamps and they would be singing and no doubt, songs and other kind of music, I don't know. But they would go out to meet the bridegroom and follow him right on to the bride's home and then take her to his own home.

There was no difference as far as outward means could differentiate. There was none. They were all, they all appeared to be the same. They had their lamps lit. Now that would indicate they had the same kind of profession. They lived like true Christians. And many a person in the visible church are doing accordingly. They will support the cause. They testify to the cause of Christ in various ways. They attend the means of grace. They might be reading their Bibles continually.

And some of them might have a great grasp of the Christian teaching. They might be real good theologians. And yet they have not received the needed grace. Now where was the deficiency? And when did it appear?

[ 22 : 33 ] When did it appear? Well, we can, we see that there was no evidence shown this side of the grave. That they all slumbered and slept. And although that might be, that might be referred to a stage or a condition that might come over the church at certain time, like the church of Laodicea, when they might slumber and sleep in their journey. But because of what Christ is describing, we are inclined to accept that he refers to the fact that they had all died.

The foolish virgins and the foolish virgins and no one could know who was the wise or who was the foolish. Because they both had light in their lamps until they slept. Until they ended their journey in this world.

The foolish virgins and no one could know who was the foolish. And then we know by what Christ is saying here, and at midnight there was a cry made. And we know that cry that we have from the apostle Paul, as we found it in Thessalonians.

In the Thessalonians. And the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first.

Now that is the cry that we have here. Now that is the cry that we have here. That we have here. Behold, the bridegroom cometh. Behold, the bridegroom cometh. The Lord himself shall descend with a shout from heaven.

[ 25 : 00 ] And with the trump of God, and the voice of the archangel, and the dead shall arise. With the resurrected body. And it is here that Christ gives in a vivid way the state of the foolish.

The foolish. That they couldn't be disowned till the resurrection. Let them all grow together. But here that we see the failure of the foolish virgins.

They hadn't, though they had lamps, they had no oil. And beside what was already in the lamps when they slept, that perished.

That went out. The natural attachment to religion and all the faculties that were exercised in connection with their salvation.

All these things perished. Because they had no oil. And the oil generally in scripture we find it as typical of the Holy Spirit.

[ 26 : 18 ] And unless we have the Holy Spirit of God, we shall eternally perish. It is absolutely necessary for us that the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, whose ministering in the church on earth, would take possession of us.

It is he who regenerates. Or what we call being born again. It is entirely his work.

No other thing can do it. All the services and all the teaching that we receive from the Bible and from the church itself.

They will have no efficacy whatsoever as far as our eternal salvation without the Spirit of God quickening us.

Or bringing us alive spiritually. And it is not everyone who is able to follow the way by which the Spirit of God operates or works in the heart that brings us unto Christ.

[ 27 : 38 ] It is a very sacred work because no one knows exactly how the Spirit of God works in regenerating.

A Christian regenerating a sinner who is dead in trespasses and sin. Who is under the power of darkness.

Whatever knowledge he has of the Bible and so forth. This is his condition. That they are all dead in sin. And under the wrath and the curse of God.

And they might not be conscious of that very fact. Even the coming to the means of grace. Reading your Bible and saying your prayer at night might be darkening your mind concerning your eternal condition.

I know a man. And he was telling me not so very long ago. That he never goes to bed without praying. He is a very foolish man.

[ 28 : 46 ] But he makes his prayer before going to bed. And one night he was telling me I forgot. And I was in bed when I remembered I hadn't said my prayer.

Until you know he said I couldn't sleep. And I had to get up and make my prayer. And then he went to bed and slept at once. He put his conscience to rest.

And every other thing you can pacify your conscience by doing certain things. And you think that that is acceptable to God.

And you continue on and on and on till you sleep. The sleep of death. Now the Bible continually presses upon us to make our calling sure.

And that is what the Spirit of God does. He calls you. He calls you effectively. And when the Spirit of God calls you effectively, He brings home to you that you are a sinner.

[ 29 : 56 ] That is what we call an effectual calling. Convincing us of our sin and of our misery. But today you can convince a person that he is saved. Without convincing him that he is a sinner at all.

But when the Spirit of God is working upon a person, He convicts him that he is lost, that he is without salvation, that he is an heir of eternal condemnation, if he is not saved from his sins.

And that is the uttermost thing in his mind. What shall I do to be saved? You find it in the heart and in the mind of the pagan in Philippi.

You find it in the mind of the lawyer in Jerusalem. What shall I do to obtain eternal life? It is the main thing in the history of anyone that he came to the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, I am stressing here the fact that the early the oil was a symbol of the Spirit. It was by the oil that a king was appointed and the high priest was anointed with a certain ointment that no one was allowed to produce, but for that purpose alone.

[ 31 : 34 ] Now, the Holy Spirit convinces us of our sin and also works strangely and powerfully, whether we are aware of it or not.

Now, he changes our attitude and gives us grace to seek the Lord while he is to be found, and to call upon him while he is near, while you have the opportunities, while you have the means of grace where he has promised to be.

Now, you are in one of the means of grace where the word of God is declared, where you have the Bible open before you, where the author of the Gospel is.

And while it is good enough, in a way, to come there, it is not sufficient.

We have to examine ourselves. Why did you come to the service this evening? Were you actually seeking anything?

[ 32 : 54 ] Was it actually to pacify your own conscience? Was it actually to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ? Was it actually to seek food for your soul?

Or what was the actual motive which made you to come to this meeting? Well, many came that they might find fruit for their souls, that they might find Christ where he has promised to be.

This is where he has promised to be, where two or three are gathered together in his name, where he has promised to be. And here he is, this very night, in our midst, in the power of the Spirit of God.

And the Spirit of God works in various ways by enlightening your names, as well as convicting us of our need of our Saviour, showing to us that we have sinned, and that we have come short of God's glory, that we are not glorifying his name, that we are not prepared to enter into the glorious mansions above, that we must have a new heart and be wholly sanctified and made ready to enjoy the eternal glory.

Now that is not an easy thing.

[ 34 : 40 ] To receive the Lord Jesus Christ, as he is freely offered to us in the Scripture, we have to be made willing to do so.

To receive the Lord Jesus Christ is, includes to follow him by good and evil report.

To renounce the world and its service and its glory. To turn right back and follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

That is what is included in conversion. That is what is included in repentance. Repentance is to turn from our sins to serve the living God.

And we can only do so by the aid of the Spirit of God, creating in us a new heart and enabling us to receive the Lord Jesus Christ, as he is freely offered to us in his word.

[ 36 : 03 ] And he is offered to us there as he is, the mediator between God and man.

And in order to mediate, you know what he had to do? He had to come into this world to take into the real human nature, a true body and a reasonable soul, and fulfill all the demands of the law of God, which sinners have trampled under their feet.

And by doing so, by trampling over the law of God, one was as if, put a reflection upon the revealed glory of God.

God's glory was revealed in the law. Now perhaps you can't understand what I'm saying, but God showed it in a certain way when he gave the law the second time, we might say at Sinai.

It was given first to Adam in a state of innocence. It was written in his heart. The law there was written, not as it was written on the tables of stone, but written in the faculties of his being.

[ 37 : 43 ] His faculties were made in the image of God. And the image of God was throughout all his faculties, and that was identical to the law of God.

Now when man sinned, that was defaced. And the image was more or less, it was so defaced that you couldn't see it anymore.

His righteousness and his good work perished with it. Now that is what is being done again when we are renewed by the Spirit of God, and born again, he is rewriting the law of God in our hearts, which is the image of the invisible God.

And in that image that is in our heart, it shows itself, and it works in our lives according to the will of God.

Now, when the Son of God appears again, you see, all went down to the grave, all perished, and all seemed to be finished at death.

[ 39 : 03 ] But you see, death is just something that has come in through sin. Man was not made for that.

That is, not the wages of sin, but it is appointed unto all to die, and after that the judgment. But it's not a real judgment upon those who are in Christ.

It is appointed to them to die all the same, but it's not part of the wages of sin. Because Christ endured their death, and you endured all that they should suffer.

He endured it on their behalf. And he left nothing for them to suffer in that respect. But it is appointed unto all to die.

And we seem, therefore, that we seem to die like non-believers. You cannot discern any difference in their slumbering here.

[ 40 : 13 ] The foolish and the virgin, they all slumbered and slept. And there was no one who could say, well, the five of them were wise and five were foolish.

And ten, there was the cry of, Behold the bridegroom cometh.

Go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps, and the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out.

But the wise answered saying, Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you. But go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

Now, it is rather difficult to apply everything that is in a parable to the very situation or the very thing that the parable is meant to convey.

[ 41 : 24 ] This is what would actually happen in an ordinary situation of this kind. But that cannot take place when the Lord Jesus Christ will come again.

That they will begin to beg all of the righteous. We have, we have read already how Christ separates the just from the unjust.

And we have the marks of those who are just here in that, in this chapter itself. As we, as he gave them that he was a stranger, and that he was naked, and they clothed him, that he was in prison, and he came unto me.

All these things. No, he says, as long as you have done it, to the least of these little ones. That is, one of the wise virgins.

They have been in all situations. They have been in prison. Many of them are lingering in their own homes in prison for years.

[ 42 : 36 ] And no one is going to see them. Others are poor and moody in various parts of the world. Whatever happens here, the Church of Christ is worldwide.

And some, as some Christians are in, in, in countries where they are persecuted, where they are naked, where they are without food or drink.

And even one who would give a cup of water to one of these little ones because he is a Christian. He shall not lose his reward.

And Christ shows us the work of the wise ones. And the reward that they are to receive, they are to be placed on his right hand.

When he shall come again, he is going to come in great glory. He is going to sit on the great white throne.

[ 43 : 38 ] And all the people that ever came to the world shall be ushered before him. And he shall separate them, as a shepherd would separate the goats from the sheep.

Now the great question is, on what side will you be on? Will you be on his right hand? Will you be among those who will hear the invitation?

When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.

And before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them. And the righteous shall be brought into eternal glory with him.

He shall ascend. And sin will maintain that it was not his first going up to the right hand where he is at the moment.

[ 44 : 56 ] And that is implied in the twenty-fourth Psalm, which we were reading about the King of Glory entering in, as he brings up the redeemed with him, to the gates of glory, and sets them on his own right hand in the presence of the throne of glory.



And they shall be ever with the Lord. Now that is the great privilege, the great premises of the Gospel. That is why we are here tonight.

It is not just to pass an hour in church, but to partake of that eternal life, and to know that we are giant heirs with Christ, and that we shall enter eternal glory with him.

Not for anything that we have done. These things, what we do, might indicate what we are, and what will be our eternal portion. But we are here in order that we might receive a token that we are Christ's.

And that we might find a life that he imparts through the means which he himself has ordained. His word and prayer, and these are the means by which he gives himself.

[ 46 : 34 ] Now let us, let us try ourselves. Let us question ourselves what we are and where are we going. We shall soon appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

That will happen in our death. The believer will have his reward. His soul is made then perfect in holiness, and to immediately pass into glory.

And his body, which he leaves down in the earth and goes back to the earth, is still united to Christ until the resurrection. And the body of the foolish, the unbeliever, perishes also.

But it is still a body that has to receive back the soul which he had. And the body and the soul will unite again and will appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

And the body and the soul will appear before the judgment seat of Christ. And the body, which is good, the flesh will be. And the body and the body will appear after the judgment seat of Christ. Now there is no remedy then.

[ 47 : 56 ] There is no going to go for oil at that time. This is the acceptable time. This is the day of salvation where you can go for oil for your lamp, For the Spirit of God is still working mentally.

And will you pray that the Spirit of God, will enlighten your minds, may come in and give you or show you your great need of salvation.

And the salvation is in Christ Jesus. By believing in him, just trusting in him, standing in what he has been and in what he is, having nothing of your own, but simply trusting in Christ and accepting it as it is freely offered to us in the gospel.

And that is what makes it a gospel. It is not something that we buy or something that we earn, but something that we receive as grace.

And grace cannot be bought or it couldn't be grace. So therefore, now is the acceptable time.

[ 49 : 20 ] Now is the day of salvation. We do not know what a day or an hour may bring, but blessed are those who are in Christ Jesus, who are passed from death to life and are united to Christ.

They shall never be cast away. May the Lord bless his own word. Let us pray. Let us pray.

May we call upon thee, to convict us concerning our need of salvation, that we may call upon thee, while thou art near.

Bless to us thy word, and help us to learn from these foolish virgins, the danger of being unconcerned over our eternal salvation.

May we call upon thee, and may it please thee to answer, by speaking to our hearts, and giving us the holy oil, that would enlighten our minds in the knowledge of Christ.

[ 51 : 01 ] Bless each one of us. Follow us with thy favour. Ignore us with thy hope. Come before us. Thank you. Thank you.

Please think about the passing of the Lord.