The Foolish Virgins

Zanesville, OH | December 15, 2019 | John Pollard | Sermon Notes

**Foundational Scripture:** Matt. 25:1-13

**Intro**:

* This morning we focused on the wise virgins in Jesus’ Parable of the Ten Virgins. Tonight we will focus on the foolish virgins in the story. The word foolish is never used in the scripture without weight. It is often used to describe a person or a group of persons who have access to knowledge but fail to act upon it. But more importantly, it is used to speak of those who do not listen to God and who ultimately reject Him in their freewill decisions. What do the foolish virgins tell us about what we should avoid in our lives as Christians?

1. **The Five Foolish Virgins**
   1. The five virgins being called foolish is not a description of their intellectual capacity but rather a description of their failure to make the right decision. Their foolish nature is further paralleled with the illustration of having lamps but taking no oil with them (v. 3).
   2. Typically in the Jewish weddings, these virgins would walk in the procession lighting the way to the wedding feast. Generally speaking, a lot of these weddings occurred at night-time and so the lamp would play a crucial role. The fact that they took no oil may indicate they thought they knew when the groom was going to arrive.
   3. While the bridegroom delayed, all the virgins fell asleep (v. 5). Can the foolish virgins afford to sleep? When the shout came and they all awoke, the foolish quickly realized that the oil in their lamps would not be enough and since they had no extra oil, in desperation they turned to the other virgins but to no avail (vv. 6-8).
   4. As a last-ditch effort, they hurry to the dealers to get some oil but when they return the groom had come and the wedding feast had begun. The doors are shut. They plea desperately to the groom to open up for them but his response is deathly, harrowing and final (vv. 11-12).
   5. They were a part of the procession but they left which was an insult to the groom. That they weren’t present when he came leaves the impression that he wasn’t important enough to them and the wedding wasn’t important to them.
   6. These 5 foolish virgins may symbolize unfaithful Christians, half-hearted disciples and the so-called religious people of the world. These are those who believe they will get to Heaven by showing up to services on Sunday morning to warm the pews. These are those who may be at services on Wednesday and Sunday but they make no concerted effort outside of that to be a faithful disciple to Christ.
   7. These virgins assume a relationship with Jesus which is really non-existent (Matt. 7:21-23). They make no effort to fuel their and yet their hope is to get into the wedding feast. Pilot lights aren’t gonna cut it! Jesus is looking for people who will fan the flame, shine their lights and do whatever it takes to be ready to be at the wedding feast (Lk. 9:23; 14:27).
   8. There is constant and consistent effort that needs to be poured out in our relationships with God and these virgins were not willing to do that. They had the same opportunities as the other virgins did but they would not listen and they would not take advantage of it (Rev. 3:15-17).
   9. Jesus emphasizes individuals in this parable because individuals and many Christians have a tendency to depend on the faith of others. We must individually work out our own salvation and we must cultivate our own faith (Lk. 14:27; Phil. 2:12).

**Conclusion:** The description of these 5 virgins being recalls the end of Jesus’ powerful discourse on the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 7:26-27). The foolish virgins cannot afford to sleep (go about day to day activities of life as if all is okay)! They need to table everything else that is not Jesus and His word until they get their lives together. They need to prepare and get ready. God has blessed us richly and given us all the tools we need to be prepared for His return. He has given us His word and His principles and the ball is in our court. We need to make an informed decision and put in the work. If we think we’re going to get to Heaven by sitting around doing nothing and scrambling at the last minute we are in for a rude awakening like these foolish virgins.