

The Importance of Being Full

Matt 25:3-4

3 They that [were] foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

I. Introduction

1. There is an empty space on the shelf. There used to be something there; what was it? There is a blank space on the wall. Didn't there used to be a picture hanging there? What is missing from this picture?
2. Look at **picture number 1**. Can you tell me what is missing? That's easy. A tire is missing.
3. Look at **picture number 2**. While it is not as obvious because there is more to look at, you will see that a boy is flying a kite and his left arm appears to be holding the string, but there is no left arm.
4. Look at **picture number 3** and study it for a while. What is missing? By looking at the patterns of numbers, you want to say the answer is 6, but there is this statement below that says the answer is not 6.
5. If you study it a while longer, you come to the conclusion the answer has to be 6. There is no other logical answer. The answer is obviously 6.
6. Well I want to point you to another obvious, "what is missing" question.
7. When you begin to feel that something inside is missing, and you tried entertainment--binging on some favorite shows, and you still feel empty, you ask again, what is missing?
8. So you try to play your favorite games. You play, you win, you say, "Yes! I did it!" But you play again and you lose, and throw the control on the floor. You're done. And something is still missing.
9. You listen to music; you read; then venturing into the danger zone, you take a pill, drink something, smoke something, do something bad, all with the hope of finding the missing something.
10. But like this image showing 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, when the obvious missing thing is 6, yet someone you gave their opinion that the answer is not 6, it caused you to doubt the obvious.
11. I want to tell you, the true answer to what is missing in your life is God.
12. Maybe someone told you there is no God, or that faith is just for the weak-minded, or old people.
13. Maybe they told you that science is the answer, not faith.
14. You have heard that brilliant minds have used microscopes and telescopes to prove that all that is in existence came from the big bang explosion 15 billion years ago, out of which, just the right combination of physical, electrical, chemical, and evolutionary processes occurred to deliver just the right rare environment to cause our planet and all life on it.
15. Well guess what? That story requires a very large amount of faith to believe as well, because no telescope or microscope can demonstrate and prove all of those as factual conclusions. They remain theories.
16. So before you reject the obvious, that God is what is missing, I will restate the obvious: Jesus is still the answer for what goes in that empty place in your life.

17. Let's examine a story from the Bible about how important it is to fill that empty space, and with the right thing.
- II. The parable of the 10 virgins
- A. The story
1. The story begins like this:
Matthew 25:1-5
1 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.
2 And five of them were wise, and five [were] foolish.
3 They that [were] foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:
4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.
5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.
 2. These women all started out with oil in their lamps. You see, beginning well is not usually the problem. It is doing well during that long wait when nothing seems to be happening, is where the difficulty comes in.
 3. The next verse reveals that the bridegroom eventually came at midnight:
Matthew 25:6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.
 4. That means that the girls had to wait through half the night. They all knew that the bridegroom was going to return, and they all began the night with great excitement.
 5. But when the bridegroom tarried, that is when the trouble began to be obvious for some of them.
 6. What was the problem? An oil lamp can only burn as long as it has a supply of oil to the wick to fuel the flame. Anyone who uses an oil lamp knows that. All ten of the virgins knew that.
 7. The difference between the wise and the foolish was that the 5 wise took further action based on that knowledge, but the 5 foolish did not:
Matt 25:3-4
3 They that [were] foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:
4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.
 8. The story reveals that it is not only necessary to have a burning lamp, but to also have a continual supply of fuel.
 9. It is through the long night when that extra vessel of oil is needed. And the truth is, they all knew that.
 10. But the problem was that there was a longer wait than any of them had expected, and the foolish were not prepared for that wait.
 11. As the delay wore on, all of them—the wise and foolish—went to sleep:
Matthew 25:5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.
- B. Don't love sleep
1. I want to take a side trip on this point. While sleep is a need for everyone, and in this story, it was midnight, the time people would be sleeping, there is a real problem when we fall in love with sleep:
Prov 20:13 Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty; open thine eyes, and thou shalt be satisfied with bread.

2. Falling in love with sleep is a sign of a disorder in our spirit. It is a disorder called slothfulness:
Prov 19:15 Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger.
 3. Here is a danger territory for us at a time like this, when our activity is restricted.
 4. Let us not be caught loving sleep or making a habit of laziness. Keep your soul challenged.
Rom 13:11-12
*11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to **awake out of sleep**: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.*
12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.
 5. I am personally thankful for the extra time I have had recently to spend with my wife. And we have been able to communicate with our children as well. And for us anyway, our schedule is not as full as it used to be.
 6. But we must not allow our relationship with God to suffer from a lazy spirit of slumber. Keep up with daily prayer and reading the Word of God.
 7. Keep listening to those online sermons to keep your soul from starving during the “lazy days.”
- C. Keep full
1. Back to the parable. When the bridegroom arrived, they awoke and everyone trimmed their wicks, because that was necessary to keep a full and clean flame.
Matt 25:7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.
 2. The wise took from their reserves and refilled their lamps as the foolish looked on.
 3. One of the foolish girls, realizing they were dangerously empty, spoke up.
Matthew 25:8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.
 4. The foolish hadn't properly prepared so they hoped to take advantage of their friend's extra diligence to prepare.
 5. It was like saying, “We didn't prepare. You did. It's not fair that we should suffer for our lack of preparation, so give us some of your oil.”
 6. But notice the surprising response of the wise. It sounds selfish:
Matthew 25:9 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.
 7. Yes it was selfish. But this is an area where selfishness is valued as a virtue. They could not allow their oil supply to dwindle just because someone else close to you does not make it a priority.
 8. It is not wise to compromise with people about something so important as your oil supply, when they don't value it as highly as you do.
 9. Do what is needed to keep your vessel full.
 10. The parable reveals that it is only mid-night, so half the night remains. Don't give up your oil to please someone else. That is a bad idea.
 11. You need to have a vessel full of oil when the bridegroom comes.

D. The interpretation

1. In this parable, Jesus is the bridegroom, and we see from verse 13, the main point of the story is be mindful to be ready for the Son of man will return:
Matthew 25:13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.
 2. The 5 wise are those who are ready for Jesus' coming and the 5 foolish are those who are not ready.
 3. The 5 wise were welcomed in with Jesus and the 5 foolish were shut out with this fearful response from Jesus:
Matthew 25:12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.
 4. What was the difference? Those who were ready had a vessel full of oil.
 5. So what is the oil a symbol of in this story? If we use scripture to interpret scripture, we see in 1 Samuel 16:13 that when Samuel anointed David to be king, the oil brought the Spirit of the Lord on David.
 6. To be full of oil is symbolic of a command we are given in scripture:
Ephesians 5:18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;
 7. How will you be able to endure this present night? You must be filled with the Spirit.
 8. In fact, if we want to be ready when the Bridegroom comes to call us away, we must be filled with the Spirit. That is the power that will raise us up:
Romans 8:11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.
 9. As Jesus returns to earth in the clouds, the Holy Ghost dwelling in us will be that attracting power that pulls us right off this earth to be with Him, like how a magnet pulls metal objects toward it.
 10. So when the Bridegroom returns, those who are full of oil, those whom He knows by His Spirit dwelling in them, will leave with Him.
 11. But what about those 5 foolish who did not take oil? They were not permitted to go in. Remember what the Bridegroom said to them:
Matthew 25:12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.
 12. Why did He not know them? Why was there not a life-saving relationship between them and Jesus?
 13. We see the answer in that passage in Romans 8.
Rom 8:9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.
 14. If any man have not the Spirit, they don't belong to Him.
- E. Message of hope
1. This is message tonight is intended to be a message of hope at a time when life is out of order.
 2. Some people are coming to grips with the reality that there are some empty spaces in their lives.

3. And if you are recognizing that right now, you are actually in a very hopeful situation right now.
4. It may be easy to ignore the cry of our hearts when we are busy with so many things.
5. But the reason that this is a hopeful situation, is that our important questions have an obvious answer.
6. How do I fix this broken and empty heart?
7. Well, we can ask the One who makes our heart new.
8. How can I feel peace that I will go to heaven?
9. Well guess what, we can ask the One who went away to prepare a place for you so you can dwell with Him?
10. What will truly satisfy emptiness of our soul? That is a question with an obvious answer: *Ps 107:9 For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.*
11. Do you have a longing soul? God satisfies those who bring their longing to Him.
12. Do you have a hungry soul? God fills those with goodness who bring their hunger to Him.
13. I want to declare to you right now: I need the Holy Ghost! You need the Holy Ghost!

F. Fill the emptiness

1. Have you examined the picture and found that something is missing? I'm talking about the picture of your life.
2. Well there are many places that are empty right now, like churches.
3. I'm here at home teaching this lesson, and you are likely listening at home.
4. Restaurants are mostly empty right now.
5. Many work places are empty right now.
6. Places of entertainment are empty right now.
7. Many of our calendars have become surprisingly empty now.
8. But how about your oil vessel? Is it on full? Or is it running dangerously empty?
9. I believe this great emptiness has highlighted the importance of being full.
10. I need the Holy Ghost, Jesus inside me. You need the Holy Ghost, Jesus inside of you.
11. Have you ever received the Holy Ghost, or is there a great emptiness in your heart and soul?
12. Are you feeling a brokenness in your heart that you are desperate to have mended?
13. Well I want you to know, there is hope.
14. This is the time you have been waiting for. We can pray right now, and you can be filled with the Spirit.

G. Believing and repenting

1. If you have ever been filled with the Holy Ghost before, you will remember the experience as a divine response to a faith-filled prayer to God.
2. It begins with trusting that God is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him:
Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.
3. Your **faith in Jesus** as the one who **gave His life for you to forgive you** and take your sins away, will **lead to a desire for forgiveness**.
4. So let us ask for His forgiveness right now. Even if you have prayed that kind of prayer before, let us pray that together.

- H. Receiving fullness
1. If you prayed that way, we are all on the same page right now, humble, hungry, and ready to be filled.
 2. It is time to be filled. No more empty space. It is time for the Holy Ghost to fill that empty and broken place.
 3. Let us pray until the Holy Ghost comes through and speaks His words through you.
 4. The Bible says that when we pray in an unknown tongue, it is the Spirit that is praying, and it edifies or builds you up, and that speaking in tongues is a sign.
 5. When the first believers were filled with the Spirit, that was the sign they were filled: *Acts 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*
 6. So we will pray until you are filled and you speak with other tongues as the Spirit pours that oil on you.
 7. Next time, we will continue on the importance of being anointed.