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## *Devotion for November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021*

*"Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise answered, 'Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.' 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. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' But he answered, 'Truly, I say to you I do not know you.' Watch, therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."*

*- Matthew 25:1-13*

**The other day a lady came to the front door of the Church Office just as I was leaving for the day.** She said that she and her husband were traveling and got a flat tire. They were parked on the side street next to the east parking lot. She said that they didn't have a jack to lift the car to change the tire. So, I went to help. After an archeological dig in the back of my Explorer, I got my jack out and went with her and met her husband at the car. He thanked me for the jack, but I soon found out that they also didn't have a tire iron to remove the lug nuts. They were basically and totally unprepared to change a tire. They had no idea how to do it and didn't even have the equipment. At least they had a spare tire. After they were back on the road, I said to myself, "That was my Boy Scout good deed for the day."

I couldn't imagine why someone would go on a trip without a jack and tire iron and not even know the basics of changing a tire.

By the way, I was a Boy Scout. The Boy Scout motto is "Be prepared." I loved being outside in the woods and seeing the different trees and wildlife. I would wear a sturdy pair of hiking boots and carry a backpack. I would dress appropriate according to the weather so my adventure would not get cut short. I had a ton of "What if?" stuff in my backpack and pockets. What if something went wrong? It is relatively easy to sprain an ankle or even break one while hiking in the woods. So, I had water, trail mix, a cell phone, rope, jackknife, poncho, small blanket, jacket/hoodie, compass, flashlight, and matches or flint to start a fire if needed. I always told someone where I was hiking and how long I would be gone. I almost forgot a map with roads and rivers and streams marked on it. I would be prepared.

It is easier to be prepared when you know what to expect, isn't it? When you drive your car on a trip you take what might be needed. You might get a flat tire. When you hike in the woods you take what may be needed. You might hurt yourself or get caught in severe weather.

You might ask, how does this relate to the parable of the ten virgins, which is the Gospel reading for today? Before Jesus told His 12 disciples the parable, they were on the Mount of Olives and they asked Jesus to tell them about the last days or the end times and what would happen.

Jesus told them not to follow anyone pretending to be Him. He said there would be wars and rumors of wars, famines, and earthquakes, just to start. He said they would be hated just because they believed in Him. There would be false prophets trying to lead them astray. Lawlessness would increase. He told them what to watch for:

*"For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man." ([Matthew 24:27](#))*

Then, a few verses later in Matthew, Jesus told them this:

*"But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only." ([Matthew 24:36](#))*

Jesus gave His disciples some information as to what to expect so that they could prepare themselves for the tough times to come. The parable of the ten virgins contains a warning, but also a great hope looking forward to the marriage feast of Jesus for those that trust in Jesus for their life.

*In Christ,  
Rev. John Kyle, Associate Pastor  
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