

## *Preparation or Procrastination?*

### I. Slide1,2 **Announce:**

- A. Slide3-6 Larry: Women's Retreat. CMCS Drama. Men's Breakfast. EtC Video.
- B. Slide7 Empowered to Connect - April 7,8.
- C. Slide8 Children at Risk - 3pm. *Natalie Franks* from CM & from *Shared Hope Int.*
- D. Slide9,10 Suits for Haiti - HEF has a team leaving this week. M-W in front office. *Suits, ties, dress shirts, shoes.* [its for a Pastors Conf in May]
- E. Slide11 Easter - April 16th. 4 *all church* services.

### II. Slide12 **Intro:**

- A. Jesus continues his end times teachings on the Mount of Olives. Jesus know tells another parable that underscores His call to be **prepared** for the Son of Man's arrival.
- B. Slide13 Parable of the Ten Virgins (only in Mt.).
  - 1. We have here a *suspenseful picture* of the Lord's own return.
  - 2. It's a pointed lesson intended to teach **Preparedness**.
- C. Note as I read: Jesus is the bridegroom (His 2nd Coming). His bride is not mentioned (actually we *the church* will be coming back with Him). But the story line is built around the 10 virgins, *guests at a wedding/ or poss maids of honor/attendants to the bride*, representing those alive (Jews) right before his 2nd coming to earth.

### III. Slide14 **PREPARATION (1-9)**

- A. Slide15a Explain the whole marriage process in the *ancient Jewish Tradition*:
  - 1. Slide15b The **prospective groom-to-be** left his Fathers house to go to the **prospective brides** house.
    - a) Jesus came to earth; His 1st advent.
  - 2. The groom negotiated & paid the price to secure the bride.
    - a) His **precious blood** was our price, or our dowry.
  - 3. Once the price was paid the cov was established. They were **betrothed**, set apart for each other, **though not married** yet.

- a) We believers are betrothed (engaged/set apart) right now awaiting our wedding day.
4. They both drank from a cup to confirm this cov.
- a) This is symbolic in **communion**, as Jesus did at the last supper.
5. **Slide15c** After this the Groom left the Bride's house & went back to his fathers house.
- a) Jesus left **earth/the brides home**, went back to **heaven**. *I go to prepare a place for you.*
6. **Slide15d** During the separation, **the bride** would prepare her wardrobe & prepare for married life. **The groom** prepared the living accommodations in his fathers house.
- a) Her wardrobe: white gown/holiness/sanctification.
- b) The living accommodations: *In my fathers house are many mansions.*
7. **Slide15e** **Invitations** go out, **but** all do not accept the invitation. [prble wedding fst Mt22]
- a) Double invitation: sudden invite **then**, it's ready!
- b) It is the same with the call to Christ's wedding. [*all invited, some accept*]
8. **Slide15f** After a time (determined by the Father), the groom, best man, & other male friends left the fathers house, at night, in a *torchlight procession*, to the house of the bride.
- a) *I will return again & receive you to myself.*
9. **Slide15g** The Bride was **expecting** His coming **but** didn't know **exactly when...** **Thus** the grooms arrival was preceded w/a **shout**.
- a) *The Lord Himself will descend from heaven w/a shout.*
10. **Slide15h** The groom **received** the bride & her female attendants & returned to his father's house.
- a) *I will return again & receive you to myself, that where I am there you may be also. i.e. the Rapture.*
11. **Slide15i** The Bride & Groom entered their Bridal chamber to consummate marriage. [Jewish marriage feast lasted for 7 days]
- a) The Marriage supper of the lamb will last for **7 years in heaven**, during the 7 year tribulation on the earth.

12. Slide15j Then, after the 7 years, the Bridegroom will return w/His bride(the church) from His Fathers house, to earth, at midnight, to start/enter the millennium.

a) Note: in vs.10, in the 2 ancient versions of scripture, the Syriac version (*Peshitta*) & the Latin Vulgate both read, *and when they went to buy, the bridegroom came with his bride.*

b) The Jews in the Tribulation will be some of the invited guests privileged to share in the feast. [Mt.8:11*And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven*]

B. Slide16 (1) An introductory sentence *that sets the stage.*

1. These virgins took their lamps & went to receive **the groom & His bride** at His home.

2. The parable focuses on the 10 girls, especially the 5 foolish one's.

C. (2) Wise & Foolish - not good & bad. [Like home builders: 1 choose rock foundation, & 1 sand]

1. Foolish - seem to speak of **professing** believers.

a) Why does Jesus pick 50%...could there be that many be Pretenders?

D. (3,4) All 10 women are **expecting** the bridegroom, but only 5 are **fully prepared.**

E. Slide17 Many believe this was speaking of a **Torch** instead of the typical indoor lamp (wick/oil) As outdoors the wind could extinguish the flame.

1. Torches = long pole w/oil soaked rags at top. [oil would last approx 15 min. Additional oil had to be poured on the rags to keep it burning]

a) They would help light the way to the Grooms home.

b) The **foolish** virgins gave no thought to the future, or to what was expected of them.

c) The **wise** on the other hand, took every precaution to avoid being embarrassed or neglectful.

F. (5) The charge was not to go w/o sleep, but to be **prepared** whether they were asleep or awake.

- G. Slide18 (6) **At midnight** - midnight was also the time *the death angel* appeared over **Egypt**. **And** those that had prepared themselves were ready for *the death angel* coming.
1. **Samson** snuck out of Gaza **at midnight** & took their gate with him, while the Gazites slept.
  2. **At midnight Ruth** startled Boaz as she lay at his tootsies.
  3. It was **in the middle of the night** that the **1 Harlot** snatched away the other harlots live baby, **then** stood b4 Solomon (1 Kings 3).
  4. It was **at midnight** that **the friend** came to his neighbor for bread.
  5. **God** came **at midnight** to open Paul & Silas' prison doors in *D block*.
- H. Different from our Western culture...*the Groom* was the center of the Wedding.
- I. (7) **Everyone sparked up** - The *unwise* virgins wicks lit also, probably because they had been saturated w/oil, **but** it was only a flicker for a moment, **& then out it went**.
- J. Slide19a (8,9) **Give us some of your oil** - They gave a **courteous** reply, **but a decisive one**
1. Had they shared, then they could only go themselves 1/2 way.
  2. **The Groom would have been disgraced** if they would have ran out of oil.
  3. **Oil** = H.S. cannot be transferred from *human to human*.
    - a) Jn.1:12,13 *But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood (by heredity or inheritance), nor of the will of the flesh (by natural instinct), nor of the will of man (by human volition), but of God (by the direct, supernatural exercise of divine power).*
      - (1) **God has no grandchildren**. Each must answer on his own.
      - b) We can urge them to prepare, but we cannot do it for them.
  4. Slide19b **Our lamps are going out** - What terrible words! *“Those that are putting off their repentance till their dying hour are like these foolish virgins.”*
  5. Jeremiah had asked, *Can a virgin forget her ornaments, Or a bride her attire? Yet My people have forgotten Me days without number.* Jer.2:32
    - a) Slide19c **Young people** tell what they are doing. **Old people** what they have done. **Fools** what they wish to do.

6. Pr 13:9 The **light** of the righteous rejoices, But the **lamp** of the wicked will be put out.
  7. Is.62:1b I will not rest, Until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, And her salvation as a lamp that burns.
  8. Jn.5:35 He/*John the Bap* was the burning and shining lamp, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light.
- K. Neglecting preparations...Is like an **ambassador** going to a far country and forgetting his message. It's like the **invited guest** who didn't put on his wedding-garment. It's like the **fool** who counseled his soul to take ease, while God's voice called him to judgment.
1. Slide20 [funny dog pic] It's all about *Preparedness*.

#### IV. Slide21 **PROCRASTINATION (10-13)**

- A. *Procrastination is the Assassination of Motivation.*
- B. Top 5 Things People Put Off Until the Last Minute: *House chores/yard work. Holiday gift shopping. Making doctor/dentist appointments. Calling relatives. Changing oil in the car.*
  1. Some things are a little bit more important...like salvation.
- C. *Poem: I spent a fortune on a **trampoline**, a stationary bike and a rowing **machine**. Complete with gadgets to read my **pulse**, and gadgets to prove my progress **results**, And others to show The miles I've **charted** - But they left off the gadget to get me **started**.*
- D. (10) The lamps of the 5 virgins *without extra oil* were going out. So they had to go searching for oil and missed the arrival of the bridegroom.
  1. When they returned and found the wedding feast in progress, they sought admission **but** were denied.
  2. Slide22 There was no *Oil Shortage!* They failed to avail themselves of the Spirits supply
- E. How were the others ready? They had their Oil. They had the H.S.
  1. **Readiness** was the issue.
  2. The point is to be **Prepared** *before* the groom comes.
- F. **Door was shut** - The door **sealed in** those were ready & **sealed out** those who were not ready. [just like with Noah's ark]

- G. (11,12) Ignorance of the time of the 2nd coming is **not an excuse** for neglect, **but a reason for readiness**.
- H. What a terrible death sentence...*I do not know you*.
- 1 Cor.8:3 **But if anyone loves God, this one is known by Him**.
- I. (13) **Watch Therefore** - perpetual **awareness** is not possible, **but** perpetual **readiness** is.
1. **No one knows when** the worlds **2nd greatest interruption** will take place.
  2. All people **at all x's** must be **prepared personally** to go with Jesus at any time. **Wether now**, in anticipation of **Jesus coming for His saints** (rapture), **or** during the tribulation in anticipation of **Jesus coming back with His saints** (2nd coming)
- J. Maybe the worse *procrastination* is when one **understands** *the good news of salvation through Jesus* **yet puts off** the decision.
- K. **Slide23** Their issue was...*they were Functioning on Fumes!*
1. I remember as a teenager in my 70 camero, being short on money, **I'd run it always close to empty**, a couple of dollars at a time, **just to keep it off empty**.
  2. **I learned how to run on fumes**. I learned **E** didn't always mean **E**. I'd dream of a day where I'd have money enough to keep it filled up & just top it off.
- L. **Functioning on Fumes**
1. **Slide24** Have you lived your life thus far...**running on empty?**
    - a) **"Running On Empty"** was written while Jackson Browne was driving to the studio each day to make his record *The Pretender*. In Rolling Stone magazine, Browne stated *"I was always driving around with no gas in the car, I just never bothered to fill up the tank because — how far was it anyway? Just a few blocks."*
  2. Gambling with the letter **E** (in your **car** meant **Empty**. In **life** means **Eternity**)
- M. **Slide25** We've been made for more than *Functioning on Fumes* - **or Flirting w/Fume Fellowship like the other 5**.
1. We are told to **be filled with the HS**. **And** continue to enjoy being filled daily.
  2. **Be prepared** ahead of time, **for either the Rapture**, **or if you miss that, the 2nd Coming of Jesus Christ**. Be Prepared, do not Procrastinate.



3. **Slide26** Eph.5:15-20 NLT *So be careful **how you live**. Don't live like **fools**, but like those who are **wise**. 16 Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. 17 Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do. 18 Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. **Instead**, be **filled** with the Holy Spirit, 19 **singing** psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and **making music** to the Lord in your hearts. 20 And **give thanks** for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

N. **Are you prepared?**

- O. **Slide27** North Pole Expedition - The 19th-century explorers of *the Franklin Expedition* tried to reach the North Pole, Annie Dillard, in her book *Teaching a Stone to Talk*, describes the **provisions** they took for that hazardous journey: *“Each sailing vessel carried an auxiliary steam engine and a **12-day supply of coal** for the entire projected **2 or 3 year voyage**. **Instead of additional coal**...each ship made room for a 1,200-volume library, a hand-organ playing 50 tunes, china place settings for officers and men, cut-glass wine goblets, and sterling silver flatware. The expedition carried no special clothing for the Arctic, only the uniforms of Her Majesty's Navy.”<sup>1</sup>*
1. Imagine heading into **frigid wastelands** with supplies like that? **What utter folly!**
  2. Imagine heading into **eternity unprepared spiritually**? **What utter folly!**

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<sup>1</sup> Our Daily Bread, February 6, 1998