

NEXT STEP: STUDY & SHARE

READINGS

Amos 5:18-24

Psalm 70

*You are my helper & my deliverer;**O Lord, do not tarry. (v5)*

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Matthew 25:1-13

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God of justice & love, you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, & awaken us to the needs of others, through Jesus Christ, our Savior & Lord. Amen.

SERMON TEXT- Matthew 25:1-13

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹“Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps & went to meet the bridegroom. ²Five of them were foolish, & five were wise. ³When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; ⁴but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. ⁵As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy & slept. ⁶But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ ⁷Then all those bridesmaids got up & trimmed their lamps. ⁸The foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ ⁹But the wise replied, ‘No! there will not be enough for you & for us; you had better go to the dealers & buy some for yourselves.’ ¹⁰And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, & those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; & the door was shut. ¹¹Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ ¹²But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I do not know you.’ ¹³Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”

LISTENING TO . . .

GOD- *Christian life is rooted in the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit*

1. What makes the Amos reading a good pairing for Matthew? How does it model what Jesus says? *Hint: consider what's neglected in each story.* How does the oil in the lamps (or lack of) correspond (or not) to the works in Amos 5:21-24 & wisdom of Matthew 7:24-27? *See Micah 6:6-8; Revelation 19:6-9*
2. Jesus begins his teaching in 24:1; notice what prompts his discourse in 24:1, 3. How does this parable (& the next two, vv14-30, & 31-46) respond to the disciples' inquiries? What are at least 7 takeaways from the entire section of 24:1--25:46?

EACH OTHER- *Sharing & growing with our brothers & sisters in Christ*

3. Name several times that you were spiritually awakened, (e.g. at camp, a retreat, a “come to Jesus” moment in life, a particular duty/responsibility). What things did you notice about yourself at the time? What happened to that initial alertness & awareness? How are you doing in those same areas today?
4. How can we keep a sense of anticipation & expectation in our spiritual life? * How is it true that if we expect nothing in our spiritual life & worship, then that's what we get (*cf. James 4:2b*)? Rather than seeking novelty or amusement, how can we watch for God to make connections for us between various (sometimes distant) moments of everyday life?

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NEIGHBORS- *Bearing fruit for those not yet our brothers & sisters*

5. How does the relative prosperity of most mainstream Christians keep them unready (v10) to view of the kinds of injustice Amos describes in their own everyday lives, neighborhoods, business, & circles of affiliation & allegiance? How (or not) do red & blue types keep awake/watch (v13) for injustice in their own red & blue ideologies? Note: cast that critical eye mostly toward your “side.” *See Amos 4:1-12, 5:6-7, 10-15, 6:1-8, 8:1-13*
6. How can you explain to a pre-Christian the connection between v13 & the guaranteed, imminent return of Jesus? *See Matthew 24:31; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; 2 Peter 3:10*

24th Sunday after Pentecost

Series: Judgment

11.12.23

Rev. Jared Stillions, STS

Get Action!

God judges our “meh” response to his gospel

-Notes-

KEY VERSE: Keep awake therefore, for you know neither
the day nor the hour. (*v13*)

-NEXT STEPS MEMORY VERSE-

**Keep awake & be ready, for you do not know on what day
your Lord is coming. (*Matthew 24:42, 44*)**

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