

A New You Ministry

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July 14

THE TEN VIRGINS REPRESENT THE CHURCH

And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Matt. 25: 6

Christ with His disciples is seated upon the Mount of Olives. The sun has set behind the mountains, and the heavens are curtained with the shades of evening. In full view is a dwelling house lighted up brilliantly as if for some festive scene. The light streams from the openings, and an expectant company wait around, indicating that a marriage procession is soon to appear.

In many parts of the East, wedding festivities are held in the evening. The bridegroom goes forth to meet his bride and bring her to his home. By torchlight the bridal party proceeds from her father's house to his own where a feast is provided for the invited guests. In the scene upon which Christ looks, a company is waiting the appearance of the bridal party, intending to join the procession.

Lingering near the bride's house are ten young women robed in white. Each carries a lighted lamp and a small flagon for oil. All are anxiously watching for the appearance of the bridegroom. But there is a delay. Hour after hour passes; the watchers become weary and fall asleep. At midnight the cry is heard, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." The sleepers, suddenly awaking, spring to their feet. They see the procession moving on, bright with torches and glad with music. They hear the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride.

The ten maidens seize their lamps and begin to fill their flasks with oil. They did not anticipate so long a delay, and they have not prepared for the emergency. In distress they appeal to their wiser companions, saying, "Give us of your oil; for our lamps are going out." But the waiting five, with their freshly trimmed lamps, have emptied their flagons. They have no oil to spare, and they answer, "Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves."

While they went to buy, the procession moved on, and left them behind. The five with lighted lamps joined the throng and entered the house with the bridal train, and the door was shut. When the foolish virgins reached the banqueting hall, they received an unexpected denial.....

As Christ sat looking upon the party that waited for the bridegroom, He told His disciples the story of the ten virgins, by their experience illustrating the experience of the church that shall live just before His second coming.