

Fresh Fire for Your Life

Opening Text: Matthew 25:1-13

This parable is basically a story that illustrates the importance of

- Preparedness,
- Applying diligence to our relationship with Jesus and
- Alertness

In this parable we hear of people who somehow disqualified themselves because they were asleep (at a time when they should be awake) and who let their flame die out!

- The flame would have **led them to Jesus**. Without its light they couldn't find their way to Him.
- The flame would have **identified them**. That is why He said in **Verse 2**, *"I do not know you"*. Jesus will come looking for a Bride. His Bride carries a flame!
- The flame would have **qualified them**. The absence of that flame is the only reason they were called *'foolish virgins'*.

1. Our greatest challenge

I believe that one of the greatest challenges for Western Christians today is to stay awake, alert, and with our lamps lit with the fire of God. How is your lamp today? Is there fresh oil in it? How is your spirit today? Is it awake? Is it alert? Can you hear the voice of the bridegroom?

Mark 13:35-37 - *35 Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming—in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning— 36 lest, coming suddenly, he finds you sleeping. 37 And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!"*

V.37 – AMPC: *And what I say to you I say to everybody: watch (give strict attention, be cautious, active and alert)!*

2. Our greatest priority

Our greatest priority in this time is to be fully awake, fully present and fully aware.

In the **9th chapter of Luke**, we find an account of such an amazing visitation of God's glory. I find it interesting that right in the middle of such powerful event, the Bible says that Peter, James and John were heavy with sleep!

Luke 9:32 - *But Peter and those with him were heavy with sleep; and when they were fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men who stood with Him.*

That was not the time to be asleep, it was a visitation!

The second part of the verse says, *and when they were fully awake, they saw His glory...*

They saw the glory when they were fully awake! That is why we need to be fully awake in this hour.

When we are fully awake, alert, on fire, then we see the glory of God, we see what God is doing, we hear Him with clarity, we take hold of miracles and supernatural solutions.

In the crucial moment of the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus also found His disciples sleeping and said,

Matthew 26:40 - *“What! Could you not watch with Me one hour?”*

Verse 45a - *45 Then He came to His disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand (...)*

I believe that this is a crucial hour for the church. We need to make the decision to be fully awake, fully present and fully aware!

1 Thessalonians 5:5-8 - *You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. 8 But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.*

1 Peter 5:8 – *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*

In Judges 16, we read about Sampson’s downfall: he was strong and invincible... until the day he fell asleep on Delilah’s lap.

Judges 16:19 - *Then she lulled him to sleep on her knees and called for a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him.*

His downfall was gradual, it was a process – it didn’t happen overnight. He slowly allowed himself to get to that place where he became vulnerable and fell asleep on Delilah’s lap.

Verse 20b – (...) *But he did not know that the Lord had departed from him.*

He became unaware of his true spiritual condition: The Lord wasn’t with him anymore; the anointing was gone and the fire extinguished.

Our greatest priority in this hour is to stay awake and stay alert!

Joel 3:9 - *Proclaim this among the nations: “prepare for war! **Wake up the mighty men**, let all the men of war draw near, let them come up.*

An army asleep is of no value.

3. Wake yourself up!

Ephesians 5:14-17 AMPC - ¹⁴ *Therefore He says, Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine (make day dawn) upon you and give you light.* ¹⁵ *Look carefully then how you walk! Live purposefully and worthily and accurately, not as the unwise and witless, but as wise (sensible, intelligent people),* ¹⁶ *Making the very most of the time [buying up each opportunity], because the days are evil.* ¹⁷ *Therefore do not be vague and thoughtless and foolish, but understanding and firmly grasping what the will of the Lord is.*

Paul wrote this letter to a church that, at the time, was only 5 years old. And this was the word from the Lord to the church: *awake o sleeper.*

- a) Following the initial excitement of their conversion, in only 5 years, some of the Ephesians had already gone to sleep spiritually – and the Holy Spirit was sounding a wake-up call!

Maybe some had gone to sleep on Delilah's lap, maybe some had lost their vibrancy, maybe some had left their first love (like Jesus pointed out in Rev.2:7). They had become desensitized and distant.

They had become sedated, groggy and lethargic like sleepy people. They lacked energy, zeal and oomph.

- b) ***Awake o sleeper and arise from the dead.*** They were not exactly dead, but they were probably as good as dead:
- Unresponsive
 - Unconscious
 - Inactive
 - With weak vital signs
 - In a state of spiritual comatose
 - They were vulnerable and unable to fight or defend themselves – easy prey for the enemy.

- c) ***Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine (make day dawn) upon you and give you light.***

If you respond to Jesus today, if you wake yourself up, He will turn the light on (He will give you light), He will give back what you lost, He will give you your fire back, He will revive you, assign you, and anoint you afresh!

The Bridegroom comes!

Make a daily decision to wake yourself up, to be a *wise virgin* with oil and fire on your lamp, so that at His coming

- You can find your way to Him,
- You can be identified and
- You can stand qualified!