

Checking In

1. Take a few minutes to check in with everyone, see how they are doing, and open with prayer.
2. Church Life: , Prayer Retreat June 3rd for Small Groups, Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser for High School Camp June 3rd

Learning

Knowing God

Key Doctrines

- *Salvation* – We are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.
- *Final Judgment* – Through the power of Christ’s resurrection all humanity will be resurrected and face judgment.

Key Observations

- What was anything that stood out to you about this week’s sermon, or what did you take away?
- *Read:* Matthew 25:1-13; Matthew 7:21-23; John 6:40; Ephesians 2:8-9
 - What is the relationship between “doing the will of the Father,” being “known” by God, and faith in these passages? *The passage in Matthew clearly teaches that only those who “do the will of my Father” will enter the kingdom of heaven. The question then becomes “what is the will of the Father?” Jesus later in his ministry (John 6:40) tells us that “this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the son and believes in him should have eternal life.” So the will of the Father is the*

belief in Jesus, and without believing in him we can’t know the Father. Jesus closes the parable of the ten virgins by telling us that the Bridegroom doesn’t know the five foolish virgins, a parallel statement to what Jesus said in Matthew 7:23. In other words what is essential to being known by God is to do the will of the Father which is to have faith in Jesus. It is this faith in Jesus that makes us “recognizable” to God.

- Why might this (salvation by grace through faith in Christ) be so important to understand when we read Jesus’ parable? *It could be very easy for us to read the parable in such a way that leaves us feeling fearful or ashamed because we don’t have “enough” of what it takes (like the foolish virgins with not enough oil) to get in to heaven (the wedding feast). But Jesus is actually teaching us that “having enough” is precisely the problem. The foolish virgins went to the wedding thinking the “had enough.” Many anticipate that they can enter the kingdom of heaven because they have enough (good life/good works/good behavior/etc.). The wise virgins on the other hand were those that realized that they didn’t have enough. The wise in this life are those who realize they aren’t enough and so turn to Jesus in faith, trusting completely in him and not in themselves to enter the wonder of God’s heavenly banquet.*
- *Read:* Daniel 12:2; John 5:25-29; Acts 24:14-15; Colossians 1:19-20; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 9:27; Revelation 20:12-15
 - What do these passages have to say about who rises from the dead? *These passages clearly teach that there is a “general” resurrection, in which all humanity will rise from the dead (not just Christians). The infinite power of Jesus’ death and resurrection will work on every human being that has ever existed, this is the extent of Jesus’ reconciling work on the cross.*

- What do these passages teach about what happens after we are all raised from the dead and how does it relate to the parable? *Every human will stand before God the righteous judge and before Jesus Christ. At that point the only relevant question is “does he know you?” And by saying does he know you what we mean is does Jesus see in you what was true of himself, do you bear the family likeness as one who “does the will of the Father.” In that moment, before the face of God, Jesus will either say, ‘Oh yes, I know you, you trusted in me as I trusted my Father, well done!’ or “Depart from me, I never knew you.” Those who are sent away from the “wedding feast” aren’t sent away because they didn’t know Jesus’ name, but because they, like the foolish virgins came without faith, without trust, except for trust in themselves and their own “good life.”*
- How does Jesus’ command to “watch” relate then to this final judgment? *Watchfulness is a word that is used often in the New Testament to talk about prayer. When Jesus is telling us to “watch” he is telling us, “if you trust me (have faith), you will remain in prayer, staying close to me (abiding), staying awake to my love.” In other words, it is the way we build relationship with Jesus, so that on that last day, he will say to us “Oh yes, I know you, we have had many wonderful conversations and spent much time together.”*

Listening

Responding to God

- In light of hearing this week’s sermon, our study together, and listening to God’s Word, how might God be inviting you to take a step of obedience?

Loving

Obeying God

- What is happening in my own life right now that I need to share and for which I need prayer?
- This week I am committed to praying for _____ about:



Checking Out

- What was most meaningful about this group session for you (*Give each person 1-2 sentences to share*)?
- Close in Prayer and Read Ephesians 2:8-9.