

Matthew 25:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.

Analysis

And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out (σβέννυνται, sbennyntai—present passive, 'are being quenched/extinguished'). The crisis exposes the foolish virgins' unpreparedness: their lamps sputter and die at the crucial moment. Their request—**Give us of your oil** (δότε ἡμῖν ἐκ τοῦ ἐλαίου ὑμῶν, dote hēmin ek tou elaiou hymōn)—reveals tragic misunderstanding.

Spiritual reality cannot be borrowed or transferred. The Holy Spirit's indwelling presence is personal, not communal—no one else's faith can save you (Ezekiel 14:14, 20). This demolishes notions of vicarious Christianity: relying on a believing spouse, godly parents, faithful church attendance, or Christian heritage. Each person must have their own oil. The foolish face the Bridegroom empty-handed despite proximity to the wise, illustrating that association with genuine believers doesn't constitute salvation.

Historical Context

Jesus warned throughout His ministry against secondhand religion—being children of Abraham without Abraham's faith (John 8:39-40), doing mighty works without knowing Christ (Matthew 7:22-23), or serving alongside the faithful without possessing faith (Matthew 7:21-23). The early church battled this issue: not all in the visible church possess saving faith (1 John 2:19).

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. Whose 'oil' might you be tempted to rely upon instead of cultivating your own Spirit-filled faith?
2. What happens when the 'midnight cry' exposes that you've been living on borrowed spiritual capital?
3. How can you ensure you possess genuine saving faith rather than mere association with believers?

Interlinear Text

αὶ	δὲ	μωραὶ	ταῖς	φρονίμοις	εἰπον,	Δότε	ἡμῖν	ἐκ	
G3588		And	the foolish	G3588	unto the wise	said	Give	us	of
G1161		G3474		G5429		G2036	G1325	G2254	G1537
τοῦ	ἐλαίου	ὑμῶν	ὅτι	αἱ	λαμπάδες	ἡμῶν	σβέννυνται		
G3588	oil	your	for	G3588	lamps	our	are gone out		
G1637		G5216	G3754		G2985	G2257		G4570	

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 13:9 (Parallel theme): The light of the righteous rejoiceth: but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.

Luke 12:35 (Parallel theme): Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning;

Hebrews 4:1 (Parallel theme): Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

Revelation 3:9 (Parallel theme): Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

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