

## **Rappahannock Christian Church – 11/6/11**

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### **Communion Meditation**

The Bible tells us that peoples' sin separates us from God. Sin is something that God cannot tolerate. He will not condone it. Nothing sinful can exist in His presence.

The New Testament speaks of sin as something that makes us dead. This reminds me of the story of Adam and Eve. You remember what God told them? "If you eat the fruit of that tree, you will surely die."

Well, they ate it. Did they die? No! What's up with that? It's not that God was mistaken. They died spiritually. The perfect and harmonious fellowship with God that they had enjoyed was severed and only God could do something about it.

In the New Testament it says that we are dead in our sins, but it is possible for God to do something about it and make us alive in Him. The chasm has been bridged. This is what we are reminded of as we gather here. We remember His body that was crushed and His blood that flowed so that we could be reunited in fellowship with God.

Let me read you the words of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians.

**1 Corinthians 11:23-26** – The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

### **"Are You Ready For Some Football?"**

Our text this morning comes from Matthew 25. We are going to examine the first thirteen verses. It is the parable of Ten Virgins. Five were wise, and five were foolish.

**Matthew 25:1-13** - "At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. The wise, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep.

"At midnight the cry rang out: 'Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!'

"Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. <sup>8</sup> The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.'

"'No,' they replied, 'there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.'

"But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut.

“Later the others also came. ‘Sir! Sir!’ they said. ‘Open the door for us!’

“But he replied, ‘I tell you the truth, I don’t know you.’

“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.

I have given today's sermon a strange title: "Are You Ready for Some Football?" Many of you recognize this as the title of the song that is played each week before "Monday Night Football" on TV. Well... today's sermon has nothing to do with football. Sorry! That was just to get your attention. It DOES, however, have to do with being ready, being faithful, being found doing the right things when the light is turned upon us.

Does the soldier want to be dozing off when he's supposed to be on duty? NO! Does the worker want to be found playing a game on the computer when the boss walks in? No way!

I saw a cartoon recently on Facebook. There was Noah and the ark full of animals floating away. The only dry ground was the peak of a mountain, and crowded on it were a bunch of dinosaurs. One dinosaur says to the other, “Was that *today*?”

Jesus tells us this story about the ten virgins; ten young girls who are supposed to wait and watch for the groom who is coming to the wedding banquet. When he arrives, they are supposed to escort him into the hall. Five of the ten maids, though, fail in their duty. They are not prepared! They have not brought enough oil for their lamps and they have to go off to buy more. While they're gone the bridegroom arrives and is ushered in by the five virgins who were ready. When the others return, they knock at the door, but the master of ceremonies says, “No, I can't open the door now. That's not the way it's done. Go away! Your job is over. We don't need your services anymore.”

By this story Jesus illustrates our need to be ready when the Son of Man, who is Jesus himself, comes. We don't want to be found dozing and not doing our job.

But how long will it be until that day? This becomes the question.

Even in those early days when Matthew wrote his gospel people were wondering over this. They had expected that it would be only weeks or months before their Master returned for them, but they were mistaken. They were puzzled, wondering how long it might be. Certainly unbelievers were taking note of this as well, “Where is this 'coming' He promised?” they mockingly asked!

Of course, Jesus tells us time and time again that we do not know when the Master will return, when the Bridegroom will arrive. However, whenever that event takes place, the servants are supposed to be ready! They are supposed to be faithfully working, continuing the ministry Christ himself began. They are to be proclaiming the good news that God is merciful and good, and that He will take to Himself whoever will come. They are to continue Christ's demonstrations of God's compassion. By their kindness, hospitality, generosity and love they demonstrate that God really is forgiving, welcoming, and merciful.

Being faithful is not easy. Waiting gets old. Are we fools to keep on believing, to keep on doing, to keep on being faithful to Jesus' mission? Some people think that in doing so we're wasting our lives. Maybe sometimes we ourselves begin to doubt.

But the Master's approval is important to us! We want to hear Him say to us, "Well done, good and faithful servant!" Not only that, but our service to the Lord is really not dull. It is satisfying! It's not like the job of those poor virgins waiting around doing nothing until the groom appeared. God has asked us to be His own partners in His work. Imagine! God is still active. God is at work all around us, and invites us to join Him in that work! Wow! Being used by God to impact the lives of people? That kind of work is anything but dull! It's the most satisfying work anyone can do!

### **Benediction**

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. – 2 Corinthians 13:14