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Preparing: Be Filled

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Preparing: Be Filled

Abstract

"What are you doing to prepare your heart? How are you welcoming and inviting the Holy Spirit to fill your being with the longing and excitement of this Advent season?"

Posting about being ready for Christ's coming from *In All Things* - an online hub committed to the claim that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ has implications for the entire world.

<http://inallthings.org/preparing-be-filled/>

Keywords

In All Things, Advent, preparedness, ten virgins (parable), Holy Spirit

Disciplines

Christianity

Comments

In All Things is a publication of the [Andreas Center for Reformed Scholarship and Service at Dordt College](#).

Preparing: Be Filled

▫ inallthings.org/preparing-be-filled/

Erin Olson

This is post 5 of 5 in the series *“Advent Devotions”*

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“At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five of them 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.”

Matthew 25: 1-5

Have you ever run out of gas and been stranded on the side of the road waiting for someone to come fill up your tank? Maybe it's because I have a fairly long commute to work and therefore, I drive quite a bit, but I have a tendency to let my gas tank get very low before filling up. Thankfully, many cars today are not only equipped with very accurate gas gauges, but many cars also tell the driver how many miles are left to be driven before the car stops working. I just got a “new” car and it is equipped with such technology, but my previous did not have this technology and also had a faulty gas gauge. This often proved to be problematic for me and my tendency to let my tank run low. I can remember at least three times over the past two years when I was stranded somewhere (usually between work and home) because I had not prepared for my trip and filled with gas in time.

The ten virgins (or bridesmaids, as they are referred to in some commentaries) in this parable are waiting for the bridegroom of a wedding. In Jewish weddings it was custom for the bridegroom and his wedding party to form a processional starting at his house and going to the house of his to-be bride. The bridesmaids were to be waiting outside for the bridegroom to arrive so they could join in the processional and ultimately wedding celebration. To join in the celebration, each participant needed to have their own torch or lamp. If you didn't, you were considered an intruder or party-crasher.

When the bridegroom finally did appear, five of the bridesmaids in the parable had oil in their lamps, but five did not and therefore were not able to participate in the procession or celebration.

To some, the oil in this parable represents the Holy Spirit and the whole point of the parable is that we should be prepared for the appearance of the bridegroom and be anointed with the oil of the Holy Spirit in preparation for Jesus' return. Just as the five virgins who were not prepared were stranded and not allowed to follow the processional to the wedding celebration, so we can be left stranded during this time of anticipation, preparation, and waiting.

In the busy-ness of this holiday season, we can easily run out of gas. We rush around from parties to programs; we frantically shop and wrap and decorate; we cook and bake; we primp and prime. We spend time preparing our homes and our parties, but often our hearts are left running empty.

In this Advent season, may we work to prepare our hearts for the nativity of Jesus by praying for and seeking the fullness of the Holy Spirit so we can fully participate in the celebration of Jesus' first coming and anticipation of his second. What are you doing to prepare your heart? How are you welcoming and inviting the Holy Spirit to fill your being with the longing and excitement of this Advent season?

As we celebrate Jesus' first coming to earth, may the Holy Spirit so fill our hearts and minds and souls that we have no choice, but to be working eagerly to prepare ourselves and this world for Jesus' second coming.