Water of Life Community Church

Upside Down: Be Ready

WEEK #8 - LEADER GUIDE

Theme: Jesus wants to bring us into a life of wisdom, living in consistent readiness for His return.

Spiritual Rhythm: Quiet Time, Prayer, Scripture

Ice Breaker

Has there been a time in your life when you thought you were "ready," but looking back, you realize you weren't? It can be serious, silly, or fun. Share your story.

The hope is to connect our assumed readiness to the bridesmaids preparation in the parable.

Worship (Optional)

"God Really Loves Us" – Crowder, Dante Bowe, Maverick City Music

"Build My Life" - Housefires

Opening Prayer

LEADER NOTE: Use this sample or pray as the Spirit leads.

Jesus, make us aware of Your love for me. Help us see Your heart in this conversation and learn more about You that we were not aware of. Guide this time in peace and wisdom, helping us listen and respond like You would. Thank You for being present with us here. Teach us to know Your presence in more areas of our life. Thank You, Jesus. Amen.

Sermon Rewind

The sermon focuses on the importance of being spiritually prepared for Christ's return, as illustrated in the parable of the wise and foolish bridesmaids. The key difference between the two is the wise bridesmaids' possession of sufficient oil, representing the presence of God. We are challenged to live wisely and in obedience to God, emphasizing that mere church attendance or

good deeds do not equal relationship with Jesus. Ultimately, the message calls for genuine, consistent surrender and a life lived in anticipation of Christ's second coming.

Key Verses

Matthew 25:1-13 (NIV)

Discussion Questions

LEADER TIP: Read through one question at a time and be patient with silence. Invite openness and honesty. Share first if the group is hesitant.

1. **Presence of God**

The sermon discusses the significance of having oil, representing the presence of God, in contrast to the wise and foolish bridesmaids.

- What do you think it looks like to have the presence of God in your life?
- How do you believe God wants us to pursue and experience Him?

2. **Living Ready**

The passage highlights the need for spiritual readiness and the presence of God in our lives as signs of being prepared.

- Even though all bridesmaids dozed off, Jesus regarded five as prepared —how can we stay spiritually ready in the middle of ordinary routines and responsibilities?
- How can we kindly encourage others to live prepared in ordinary life?

3. **Relationship with Jesus**

Sometimes people think they are ready just because they attend church or do good things without genuine relationship with Jesus.

- What is the danger in living this way? What is the blessing bringing these together while in relationship with Jesus?
- What does daily relationship with Jesus look like to you? How can you begin to live that out?

4. **Pursuing Teacher**

Even in Jesus' stronger statements ("I don't know you"), it seems He is pursuing people by urging them to intimacy with Him and Kingdom wisdom.

- Why do you think Jesus gives such a strong statement at the end of the parable ("I don't know you")? What is Jesus' heart in this, in light of the *entire* context?
- Jesus clearly is wanting to touch their hearts; how do you think Jesus is pursuing your heart through His teaching?

Dive Deeper

LEADER NOTE: Use these if your group has time and is ready to go deeper. Help guide them to apply this week's teaching throughout the week through practical application.

Reflection Questions

Jesus' teaching is meant to challenge us towards wisdom, not to shame us in our struggle.

- Reflect and be honest. Where in your life do you relate to the wise group? How do you relate to the foolish group?
- What are some ways you can begin living into Kingdom wisdom every day?

Reminder: God seeks after both the wise and foolish because He is crazy about us all.

Practical Application

Being Ready: This week, write down:

• One daily habit *everyone* can practice to seek God more diligently.

• One daily habit *you* can practice to seek God more diligently.

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you be consistent in building relationship with Him.

Prayer & Ministry Time

LEADER NOTE: Transition gently. Ask for prayer requests first. Leave time at the end to pray over each other or allow silent moments for God to speak.

Prayer Themes:

• Knowing God's heart

• Being consistent seeking God

• Courage to be honest and live wisely

Closing Scripture:

2 Corinthians 12:9 (NIV): But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

Let the group rest in that promise as you close together in prayer.