



HOME GROUP MATERIAL

THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW

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i. Introductory Discussion Questions

1. What stood out for you most about the “The Day After Tomorrow” Sermon on Sunday?
2. Read the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25 vs 1-13. What do you think is the essence of the message Jesus is communicating to His followers through it?

Matthew 25 vs 1-13:

"At that time the Kingdom of heaven will be like this. Once there were ten young women who took their oil lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and the other five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any extra oil with them, while the wise ones took containers full of oil for their lamps. The bridegroom was late in coming, so they began to nod and fall asleep. "It was already midnight when the cry rang out, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come and meet him!' The ten young women woke up and trimmed their lamps. Then the foolish ones said to the wise ones, 'Let us have some of your oil, because our lamps are going out.' 'No, indeed,' the wise ones answered, 'there is not enough for you and for us. Go to the store and buy some for yourselves.' So the foolish ones went off to buy some oil; and while they were gone, the bridegroom arrived. The five who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast, and the door was closed. "Later the others arrived. 'Sir, sir! Let us in!' they cried out. 'Certainly not! I don't know you,' the bridegroom answered." And Jesus concluded, "Watch out, then, because you do not know the day or the hour."

ii. Being prepared for the beginning of forever

1. This parable reminds us that tomorrow isn't guaranteed for anyone and that in an unexpected and sudden moment, this life could be over and the next will begin. Why do you think it is important that we be prepared for our final day?
2. What difference do you think an awareness of our mortality makes in the way we live our lives?
3. On the one hand, an awareness of the transient nature of this life may make us feel small and insignificant, but on the other hand, we know that what we do in this brief earthly existence impacts and has consequences in eternity. What eternal impact would you most like your life to have?
4. While we know, that as Christians our eternal destiny is secured because we belong to God, we will still have to give an account of our lives and the way we lived them when the day of judgement comes. Read the following Scriptures and discuss what implications you think they have (or should have) for the way you are living today:

- **Matthew 12:35-37:**

“A good person brings good things out of a treasure of good things; a bad person brings bad things out of a treasure of bad things. You can be sure that on the Judgment Day you will have to give account of every useless word you have ever spoken. Your words will be used to judge you---to declare you either innocent or guilty.”

- **Romans 14 vs 11:**

“For the scripture says, ‘As surely as I am the living God, says the Lord, everyone will kneel before me, and everyone will confess that I am God.’ Every one of us, then, will have to give an account to God. So then, let us stop judging one another. Instead, you should decide never to do anything that would make others stumble or fall into sin.”

- **1 Corinthians 3 vs 13-15:**

“And the quality of each person's work will be seen when the Day of Christ exposes it. For on that Day fire will reveal everyone's work; the fire will test it and show its real quality. If what was built on the foundation survives the fire, the builder will receive a reward. But if your work is burnt up, then you will lose it; but you yourself will be saved, as if you had escaped through the fire.”

5. Not only will we need to give account of our earthly lives, but who we are becoming now, determines who we will be in the future and in eternity. Read and reflect on the following quote by C.S. Lewis:

“Christianity asserts that every individual human being is going to live forever, and this must be either true or false. Now there are a good many things which would not be worth bothering about if I were going to live only seventy years, but which I had better bother about very seriously if I am going to live forever. Perhaps my bad temper or my jealousy are gradually getting worse – so gradually that the increase in seventy years will not be very noticeable. But it might be absolute hell in a million years: in fact, if Christianity is true, hell is the precisely correct technical term for what it would be.” – C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity

6. If your life on earth were to be over today, what would you regret about the way you are currently living it?
7. What is one thing you can practically do to be more prepared for the day you meet Jesus face to face?

iii. Foolishness v. Wisdom

1. The parable in Matthew 25 separates the ten virgins into five who are wise and five who are foolish. Those who are wise get to enter into the celebration, and metaphorically, into the Kingdom of Heaven, while those who are foolish are left out. What do you think it means to be truly wise?
2. Read the following Scriptures. What insights do they give you concerning true wisdom?

- **Ephesians 5 vs 15-17:**

“See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord *is*.”

- **James 1 vs 5:**

“But if any of you lack wisdom, you should pray to God, who will give it to you; because God gives generously and graciously to all.”

- **James 3 vs 13-18:**

“Are there any of you who are wise and understanding? You are to prove it by your good life, by your good deeds performed with humility and wisdom. But if in your heart you are jealous, bitter, and selfish, don't sin against the truth by boasting of your wisdom. Such wisdom does not come down from heaven; it belongs to the world, it is unspiritual and demonic. Where there is jealousy and selfishness, there is also disorder and every kind of evil. But the wisdom from above is pure first of all; it is also peaceful, gentle, and friendly; it is full of compassion and produces a harvest of good deeds; it is free from prejudice and hypocrisy. And goodness is the harvest that is produced from the seeds the peacemakers plant in peace.”

3. According to James, wisdom:

- Is pure
- Is peaceful, gentle and friendly
- Is compassionate
- Produces good deeds

- a) How would you define / what do you understand by each of these concepts?
- b) How would you say you are faring in terms of each of these?

IV. Keeping our flames burning

Perhaps another message in the parable of the ten virgins is one about keeping our passion and faith fuelled and ensuring that we seek and find refreshing for our souls so that our relationships with God do not grow cold. If we do not ensure that we have spiritual fuel at hand, the flame of our love and passion will soon flicker and die.

Give each person in your group a piece of paper and a pen and let them answer the following questions. Depending on the vulnerability and openness in your group, let everyone share their insights from this exercise:

1. How would I rate my relationship with God right now on a scale from 1-10? (1 being practically non-existent, 10 being the best I can imagine)
2. How are my passion levels? Would I say I am hot, cold or lukewarm?
3. What has led me to this spiritual place / season?
4. What am I doing to replenish myself spiritually / to ensure I have extra oil to keep my love for God burning?
5. What are the things that really sap my spiritual fuel and deflate me? How can I avoid or deal with these things?
6. What are the things that fill me up, refresh my soul and grow my relationship with God? How can I do more of these things?

V. Call to action

1. What will we do with what we have discovered in this session?
2. How will we hold each other accountable to this?