Jesus Unfiltered - **WK 3 - The Wedding Planner**

**What is your favorite chick flick? (Men, put your man card away) I have a wife… I’ve seen many. Shout it out. Happy V-Day**

**We have been in the parables of Jesus – his unfiltered – take on life, love, heaven, hell, eternity, and the kingdom of God.**

**Number 1 way Jesus taught - parables. 1/3 of His teachings.**

**Today a wedding parable for the wedding party and the guests**

**TWO STORIES: Parable 1 – THE WEDDING PARTY**

**Obscure Parable not preached on much - Parable of the 10 Virgins**

**Matthew 25:1 “At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 Five of them were foolish and five were wise. 3 The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. 4 The wise ones, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. 5 The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep. 6 “At midnight the cry rang out: ‘Here’s the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!’ 7 “Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. 8 The foolish ones said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.’ 9 “‘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.’ 10 “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. 11 “Later the others also came. ‘Lord, Lord,’ they said, ‘open the door for us!’ 12 “But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I don’t know you.’ 13 “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour. (Okay got it…right?)**

**The context of the parable:**

**Virgin = unmarried bride to be. We are the bride - Jesus the bridegroom The Virgins (bride to be) is His followers - pure, set apart, different**

**The Four stages of a Jewish wedding:**

**1. Engagement- formal agreement between fathers**

**2. Betrothal- secured w/ dowry - stronger than engagement - not yet married, but good as done / 3. The Guest List – family & community**

**4. The Wedding day – the marriage begins**

**Jesus is not just King - he is a betrothed King. Soon a married King. His betrothed bride are the people who trust him, from every race and nation, the redeemed – the church – Christians.**

**He came 2,000 yrs ago (the engagement) to die for his bride, paid w/ his own blood (the dowry). Resurrection sealed it. Those who trust in Jesus are (the betrothed). One day Jesus will come 2nd time to marry his bride the church (the wedding) and carry us into His presence of love and joy forever (living in kingdom with the King)**

**King Jesus came into the world to take a wife - Not a harem. He does not seek his pleasure but for the joy of his bride. Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her (the dowry), 26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, (Jesus at work by his Spirit and Word purifying and beautifying her) 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. (The return) 32 This is a profound mystery – but I am talking about Christ and the church. 33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.**

**John the Baptist saw this - asked if he was jealous of his popularity waning in light of Jesus – he dared not lay any claim to Jesus’ bride. John 3:28 You yourselves can testify that I said, ‘I am not the Messiah but am sent ahead of him.’ 29 The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend (John the best man) who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom’s voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete.**

**Jesus often spoke of himself this way - Matthew 9:14 Then John’s disciples came and asked him, “How is it that we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?” 15 Jesus answered, “How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast. (A function of fasting is to say with our hunger that we miss the bridegroom and want him to return)**

**The betrothed King is returning some day for his bride – His return (the wedding) will result in a great wedding feast party!**

**Revelation 19 - describes that wedding day - 6 Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: “Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. 7 Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. 8 Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.” (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God’s holy people.) 9 Then the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!” And he added, “These are the true words of God.”**

**Everyone who trusts in Jesus is in the wedding party. But not every person will be a part of the marriage supper of the Lamb. Some will be outside wishing they could get in.**

**I urge you, “Trust Christ. Be a part of his bride.” The joys he give are beyond anything we can imagine in this present life.**

**In light of this what is this 10-virgin parable about? It answers…**

**What we to be about while we wait for the return of the bridegroom**

**Let’s break it down - a parable about a kingdom, a bridegroom & 10 bridesmaids**

**Matthew 25:1 “At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins (bridesmaids = those who consider themselves Christian) who took their lamps and went out to meet (to wait for) the bridegroom. (A betrothed king has gone on a journey - when he returns there’ll be a wedding… until then they wait…)**

1. **While we wait - we are to shine!**

**All ten had a mission – be ready to welcome the groom with shinning lights**

**(Lantern) Our mission, our purpose – Shine! Let the world see the hope, life, and light of God in us.**

**Isaiah 60:1 - "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you." / Daniel 12:3 Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever. / Philippians 2:15 …shine among them like stars in the sky. / Matt 5:16 – In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.**

**The power to shine came from the oil in the lamp (Holy Spirit)**

**It was the source of their light – and the power to shine!**

**The oil – identifies a true follower of Jesus.**

**Mathew 25:2 Five of them were foolish and five were wise. (Know any foolish Christians?) 3 The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. 4 The wise ones, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. (5 did not have the power they so deeply needed – they had lamps without oil – like a light bulb w/out electricity)**

1. **While we wait - churches will be filled with the powerless**

**They consider themselves part of the wedding party – but they lack the power of God necessary fulfill the point of their position**

**Churches filled w/ powerless preachers & people – who on the outside look good – but they lack the power of God in their life – they have empty worship and consume self-help sermons**

**2 Timothy 3:5 They have a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people.**

**They believe he’s coming, but are not prepared. They fit right in… but their foolishness is thinking that they only need the form of a lamp to be sufficient.**

**Matt 25:5 The bridegroom was a long time in coming, (Jesus gave us a heads up – it will be delayed – 2 Peter 3:3-9) and they all became drowsy and fell asleep.**

**What, all ten fell asleep? Sleeping is not foolish, it’s part of life**

1. **While we wait – live life!**

**Sleeping is part of the job – It represents the ordinary activities of life.**

**We are not to sell everything - stock pile - huddle in communes – go up on a mountain - gaze into the sky –until he comes**

**For the wise bridesmaids – Life continued but they lived prepared & ready**

**Matthew 24:45 - Blessed is the servant whom the master finds doing his work when he comes**

**We are called to live life, do our work. Then rest. Then do some more work. Sleeping represents the normal rhythm of life that we should follow as we wait for the return of the groom.**

**Matthew 25:6 “At midnight (an unexpected time) the cry rang out: ‘Here’s the bridegroom! (He’s here!) Come out to meet him!’ 7 “Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. (to light the way for the king, but…) 8 The foolish ones said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.’ (It’s foolish to think the power could simply be borrowed at the last minute. In fact, it can’t be borrowed at all.) 9 “‘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.’**

1. **On that day – you can’t buy or borrow the faith of another**

**The fact that the wise virgins won’t give them oil is not meant to teach selfishness. It’s meant to teach the impossibility of borrowing faith.**

**Verse 9, “There won’t be enough both of us, go buy your own oil,” is - We can’t have faith for you and for us – you must have your own**

**If you neglect Him in this life, I can’t give it to you when we all face the groom on the wedding day. Each one bears his own load – we are not, “saved by association”**

**Your spouse – parent – pastor – friend – can’t give it to you – we will all stand before God alone…**

**Matt 25:10 “But while they were on their way to buy the oil, (In desperation the foolish bridesmaids, who wasted their lives, run for the impossible - it’s too late) the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut. (Those caught unprepared are denied entry.) 11 “Later the others also came. ‘Lord, Lord,’ they said, ‘open the door for us!’ 12 “But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I don’t know you.’ (terrifying words!!)**

1. **On that day – those without the oil will not be at the wedding**

**Bridesmaids represent people in church, who lived good lives, have a shiny lamp - others might have assumed they had life & faith –**

**In reality, some only have is the empty lamp of religion**

**Almost every parable ends with a day of separation. Some who enter the kingdom and others who will not. The prepared & the unprepared.**

**Matthew 24:42 “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. 43 But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. 44 So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.**

**2 Eternal destinations await us all: The eternal kingdom of Heaven or an eternal judgment in Hell - Hell is not a place where the devil torments sinners; hell is a place where the devil is tormented alongside sinners. On that day those w/out the oil are exposed.**

**The bridesmaid parable ends with them wanting in – 25:12 “But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I don’t know you.’ (this could be any of us. But you don’t have to hear those words) 13 “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour. (Keep watch = Be spiritually aware – “be filled with oil”)**

1. **While we wait – Seek Jesus and the Holy Spirit’s power**

**Luke 21:34-36, 2 Peter 3:17-18, 2 Peter 1:3-8**

**Use all the means God has given to know him and trust him. Be filled with the oil of faith, joy and hope – in the Holy Spirit**

**Jesus the King came to betroth a people to himself with the price of his shed blood – He will return for that bride – to marry and live forever.**

**It’s stamped in the heart of every person, echoed thru the pages of every fairy tale and super hero story, only this one is for real**

**This Parable reminds us: His delay will be long – His return will be sudden - His judgment will be irreversible – And our hearts will be exposed – and our sentence may be surprising**

**Are you ready? Until then shine!**

**TWO STORIES: Parable 2 – THE GUEST LIST**

**This is a parable about the invitation list to the wedding.**

**Luke 14:15 When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, “Blessed is the one who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God.” (Jesus at a dinner) 16 Jesus replied: “A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. (right now, groom is preparing a celebration) 17 At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.’ (I'm ready - I have something great! Are they ready? It is time!) 18 “But they all alike began to make excuses.**

**This verse reminds of the excuses we make to God**

**18b The first said, ‘I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.’ (things to see)**

* + **I have things I want to see first**

**I'm not interested in this right now – maybe later**

**I've got work - I just started something - it will need to wait**

**19 “Another said, ‘I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I’m on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.’ (things to try)**

* **I have things I want to try first**

**I have other pursuits to live first - I just paid for it**

**There are material possessions I want to pursue**

**20 “Still another said, ‘I just got married, so I can’t come.’ (things to feel)**

* **I have things I want to feel first**

**They use family and other relationships as an excuse**

**Ironically - marriage not centered on Jesus is destined for disorder**

**What we see in this parable are three big excuses:**

**I have other things – to see – to try – to feel first. It is inconvenient.**

**I'm not ready - I can do it later - I don't see the big deal**

**Know this – to accept the invitation is to accept change**

**The invitation is to come – leave your old life – true life waits**

**Luke 14:21 “The servant came back and reported this to his master. (they gave excuses at to why they will not be at the wedding) Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.’ (God is inviting the neglected and forgotten to come - in their culture = unclean)**

**22 “‘Sir,’ the servant said, ‘what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.’ 23 “Then the master told his servant, ‘Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be full.**

1. **While we wait – we are to go and compel them to come**

**The great mission of every follower of Jesus – go and make disciples**

**With the lamp of God – we seek out - search – to the ends of the earth**

1. **One that day – the wedding party will be made up of the least likely and unexpected**

**God is inviting anyone who will come - plenty of room for you – everyone is welcome! No one is too broken, abused, mistreated, forgotten, neglected, or sinful… come to the wedding!**

**I – you – should have never been on that list! But here we are – with our lamps filled and waiting for the return.**

**Luke 14: 24 I tell you, not one of those who were first invited (the ones who gave excuses) will get a taste of my banquet.’” (those who make the excuses will never sit at my table with me)**

**The indifferent, opposed, & unchanged all suffer the same fate.**

**Where will you be? You can get your name on the list – today!**