

The Rev. Jay Lawlor “Awaken to God” sermon for the 23rd Sunday After Pentecost St. John’s, Speedway, IN

The Rev. Jay Lawlor continued as visiting priest at St. John's Episcopal Church in Speedway, IN on Nov. 12, 2017.

INDIANAPOLIS, IN, US, February 28, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [The Rev. Jay Lawlor](#) preached a



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The Rev. Jay Lawlor

[sermon](#) on the parable of the bridesmaids from Matthew's Gospel (Matthew 25:1-13) as an invitation to "Awaken to God" to "to lead us into right relationship with God and our neighbor."

Gospel parables can be tricky. There can be a tendency to read them as doctrine or allegories in which we assign certain roles. Who are the wise bridesmaids? And who are the fools? But can that cause us to get bogged down? Is it possible we could miss the point Jesus is trying to make?

The parables are instructive to us as Christians because Jesus is offering us teachings on how to live as disciples. Our brains are wired for stories/narrative and visuals. So Jesus told stories. He presented narratives, and created visuals for people to picture in their minds.

In today's parable from Matthew, Jesus paints a picture of ten bridesmaids with their lamps. Five who brought extra oil with them to keep the lamps burning, five who did not. Even if we had never read this passage before, we can see where this is going. At some point, the lamp oil is going to become a factor. We just know it. And it does.

The five bridesmaids who brought extra oil are ready to go with the bridegroom when he arrives. They were prepared. They were ready when awakened. And what does Jesus say to the five bridesmaids who did not have enough oil – who had to go a buy more? “Keep awake!” Keep awake.

This parable is less about who were wise and who were foolish, and more about how we are all to live as disciples of Jesus. It isn't particularly instructive to tease out who might be wise and who might be foolish. For such effort distracts us from Jesus' concluding message: Keep awake. Jesus wants us all to awaken to God.

Throughout scripture God calls God's people into relationship with God and others to live according to God's principles; to work for God's justice, peace, and righteousness. The common thread throughout all of Jesus' teachings is that he has come to offer life to all according to God's vision for the world. As followers of Jesus we are to awaken to God's presence in our lives. As followers of Jesus we are to awaken to God's mission for us. [...]

The full transcript of the Rev. Jay Lawlor's sermon is available at

<https://www.therevjaylawlor.com/awaken-god-sermon-rev-jay-lawlor-23-pentecost-year-nov-12-2017/>

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