

Youth Worship Lesson – November 8, 2020

TENDING THE LIGHT

Focus Scripture: Matthew 25:1-13

Purpose: To explore what it means to “tend the light” of God’s Shalom.

Youth issue:
My relationship
with God

Preparation

Worship Table – green cloth

Pictures for Bible story and activity materials at the end of the lesson.

Opening Prayer

O God, we often struggle with relationships.

Help us to build a better relationship with you, as we work to spread the light of your love.

Amen.

Song – God’s Great Dance Floor: Chris Tomlin on YouTube

Introducing the Theme – Issues that Concern Me

Our theme for this unit is “Making a Difference,” and we’ve been talking for the past few weeks about ways that we can make a difference in the world, in our community and in other people’s lives. The first thing we have to do when we think about how to make positive change is to identify the problems that need to be fixed. What are some of those problems – locally, nationally, and internationally – that you think need to be fixed? **(List their points on poster/chart paper.)**

How does it make you feel when you look at this list? **(sad, challenged, inspired to act, overwhelmed, worried, angry)**

Two weeks ago, we talked about the Great Commandment. **(Optional: Point to the Great Commandment poster)** The Great Commandment tells us that we are to love God, ourselves, and others. It’s all about relationships. Look again at our list of problems. How many of these issues would be improved by having better relationships – with God, with ourselves and with others? **(Encourage discussion.)** Yes, many of the world’s problems could be alleviated if we all focused on building better relationships. Today, we’re going to focus on our relationship with God.

Exploring the Theme – Bible Story

Our reading this week is a parable – a story based on a familiar situation from life that teaches a spiritual truth. In other words, an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. We’re going to act out the parable. Let’s assign the roles. I need volunteers to be a narrator, wise girls **(the story**

has five, but it could be played by any number), foolish girls, a lookout servant, and a bridegroom. (Hand out the Bibles.)

Read Matthew 25:1–13.

Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. However, at midnight there was a shout, "Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him." Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, "Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out." Nevertheless, the wise replied, "No! There will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves. In addition, while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, "Lord, lord, open to us. "However," he replied, "Truly I tell you, I do not know you. Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

What was the bridesmaids' responsibility? **(to be there to meet the bridegroom as part of the wedding party)** Have any of you been part of a wedding party? What were your responsibilities?

What went wrong at the wedding in this parable? **(the bridegroom was late)** Have any of you ever been at a wedding when something went wrong?

How were some of the attendants unprepared? **(they ran out of oil for their lamps)** What did they do to try to solve the problem? **(they ran home to get more oil)** What were the consequences? **(they weren't there when the bridegroom arrived)**

Add details about Palestinian oil lamps and wedding customs, as necessary to help the students fully understand the story. **(Youth Resource Sheet)**

What is this parable really about? What is the spiritual truth or heavenly meaning behind it? **(We need to be prepared for the kingdom of God, because we don't know when it will come, vs. 1 & 13)** In fact, the early Christian church referred to Jesus as a bridegroom and the church as his bride. In the book of **Revelation (19:5–9)**, the arrival of God's reign of shalom is described with the image of a wedding feast.

Each of us is called to share in God's work here on earth, in the building of God's shalom. To do that, we have to be prepared. The girls in the parable ran out of fuel, so their lights burned out. Likewise, our faith needs fuel or we will burn out. What can we do to keep our lamps burning, so that each time God gives us something important to do we'll be

prepared to do it? (talk about our faith with friends, family, and other church members; come to church to worship and learn; pray; read and reflect on the Bible)

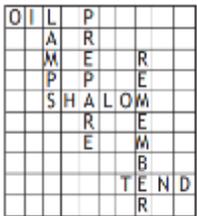
When we nurture our relationship with God, we are showing love for ourselves and for God. And when we are at peace with God, we are at peace with ourselves, which improves our relationships with others. Our relationship with God is the core of the Great Commandment. It is so very important for us to tend our lights!

Unit 2 Theme and Logo

Let's look again at the logo for our unit. What does it say about "tending the light"? (**the candle represents our light, our faith, that we must tend; the clouds represent God's shalom, which is what we work towards**) And our theme is "Making a Difference."

Memory Verse *Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.*
Matthew 25:13

Integrating the Theme – Floor-Sized Scrabble



**Materials: poster/chart paper
tape and markers**

Tape the paper on the floor. Write the word "SHALOM" in the center, in large letters (approximately 5cm/2in high).

We're going to work as a team to build words. All of the words that we use must relate to our lesson today and we can't use any words more than once. We have to build on the letters in the words that are on the board, kind of like in the game Scrabble. Let's see how many words we can make.

Optional: Divide the class into two teams and have each create a "scrabble."

Optional, if your congregation is observing Remembrance Sunday/Veterans' Sunday: Use the word "Remember" as the opening word for the game. This coming Wednesday is Remembrance Day/Veterans' Day. It is a day set aside for us to remember the sacrifices and hardships of war, and how important it is that we work for peace. Let's include words related to Remembrance Day/Veterans' Day in our game.

Closing Prayer

Leader: O God, we love you and thank you for all the gifts that you have given us. Help us to show our love by sharing what we have with others.

All: Help us to spread your light, O God.

Leader: O God, we love you and thank you for Jesus who came to show us how deeply you love us, and how to love one another. Help us to share our love with those who are lonely or afraid.

All: Help us to spread your light, O God.

Leader: O God, we love you and thank you for our church which helps us understand your vision of shalom, and feel you close to each of us. May we always do your will.

All: Help us to spread your light, O God.

Leader: Now silently in our imaginations, let us take the light inside ourselves, holding it and tending it. Recognizing that the light still burns inside of us, we will extinguish the candles in our hands.

All: Help us to spread your light, O God. Amen.

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Unit 2

Making a Difference

October 18 to November 22, 2020