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An rfour.org Children's Time Message

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Written for Sunday, November 12, 2017

23rd Sunday after Pentecost

Lectionary Year A

Scripture: [Matthew 25:1-13](#) [**Summary:** *Parable of the Bridesmaids*]

Supplies Needed: A working flashlight with the batteries taken out of it (but have the batteries with you)

ASK (a.k.a. *The On-Ramp*)

- Good morning!
- [*Hold up flashlight*] Can you tell me what this is? (flashlight!)
- And what does it do? (provides portable, focused light when it's dark)
- How do I use it? (turn it on and it makes light)
- [*Click button and nothing should happen because you have no batteries in it*]
- I think I'm doing it wrong – it's not making any light – what's going on? (You're doing it wrong! The batteries are dead!)
- Batteries? What are batteries? (they are the energy that make the light shine)
- Ah! You mean these things? [*hold up batteries*] (yes!)
- So I put them in here and then...ah...you're right, there IS light!
- Thank you for helping me understand how batteries help a flashlight shine. That was very helpful.

TELL (a.k.a. *The Freeway*)

- In today's scripture story, Jesus tells a story about some folks who are in the dark waiting for their friend.
- It was a big day for their friend, because the friend had just gotten married.
- Once the wedding was done, the friend and spouse were coming home...at nighttime.

- Now remember, in Jesus' time, nighttime was *really* dark, because there weren't electric street lights.
- In fact, there weren't ANY street lights or flashlights or cell phones to light the way.
- Instead, people had little lamps or lanterns that needed oil for the fire/light of the lamp to keep burning.
- The oil in a lamp worked a lot like batteries work in a flashlight. If there were no batteries, then there was no light. Same with lamps: No oil, no light.
- So in the story, Jesus says that some of the people who were waiting for their friend had their lamps ran out of oil.
- When that happened, they left to get more oil.
- But while they were getting more oil, that's when their friend walked by.
- Which was too bad for them, because their friend had all these other friends with them and everyone had a lamp and it was like a parade of light passing by!
- Those friends who left missed their friend and the parade of light because they thought they had to provide their own oil and light.

SHARE the Good News (a.k.a. *The Destination*)

- In a lot of ways, we are like this flashlight [*hold up the flashlight again*].
- We are meant to shine with God's light and love and care.
- But sometimes we think we are supposed to provide our own batteries and our own oil to make our own light.
- And while we are busy trying to make that light on our own, we miss Jesus' invitation to gather together to receive from God what we need to shine God's love.
- When we follow Jesus and learn from him how to be filled with God's light, love, and care, we can then shine brightly like a parade of lights, helping those around us better know and see God and God's love.
- That's the Good News for today. Let's pray...

CLOSING Prayer

Dear God,
Dear God,

Thank you for your love.
Thank you for your love.

Please help us to receive your light...
Please help us to receive your light...

...so we can shine with your love and care...
...so we can shine with your love and care...

...and be your parade of light...
...and be your parade of light...

...for those around us.
...for those around us.

Amen