

An rfour.org Children's Time Message

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Written for November 12, 2023

Twenty-fourth 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? (*Possible responses: Try again! You're doing it wrong! The batteries are dead!*)
- Batteries? What are batteries? (*they 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! Look at that!
- 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 used oil to keep the wick of their lamp 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: If there was no oil, then there was no light.
- So in the story, Jesus says that some of the people who were waiting for their friend had their lamps run 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 - they missed their friend!
- Not only did they miss their friend, but because their friend had all these other friends with them and everyone had a lamp, it was like a parade of light passing by!.

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.
- Sometimes, though, we think we are supposed to find our own batteries (or oil) to make our own light.
- Then, 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 actually need to shine God's love.
- But when we follow Jesus, this is one of the things he teaches and reminds us: That we are to receive God's love, hope, and care and how we can do it!
- Then, when we are filled with God's love, hope, and care, we have the fuel that is needed to share and shine with God's light, helping those around us better know and see God's love.
- That's the good news for today.
- Let's pray. This is a repeat-after-me prayer.

CLOSING Prayer

Dear God,

Dear God,

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.

Thank you and Amen