

Expecting the Expected



Theme: Be prepared to meet Jesus - Proper 27 (32)

Object: Some of the items to be included in a survival kit.

Scripture: Matthew 25:1-13 **Key Verse:** Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour. Matthew 25:13 (NIV)

In the past year, we have seen many natural disasters in our world. Things such as floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes, and even forest fires. One thing that we are hearing over and over again these days is that it is very important for us to be prepared in case of an emergency. Here are a few of the things we are told that we should do to make sure we are prepared.

BE INFORMED

Knowing what to do during an emergency is an important part of being prepared.

HAVE A PLAN

Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so plan how you will contact one another and review what you will do in different situations.

HAVE A SURVIVAL KIT

Your survival kit should include things like water, food, medicine, a first aid kit, blankets, candles and matches, flashlights, and batteries.

These are all good things for us to remember. It is wise to be prepared, isn't it?

Jesus once told a story to teach us the importance of being prepared. In Jesus' story, ten bridesmaids took their oil lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Jesus said that five of them were foolish because they had their lamps, but they didn't bring any extra oil to put in their lamps. When it was time to go out and meet the bridegroom, they were out of oil. The other five were very wise and well-prepared. They had brought plenty of oil for their lamps. When it was time to go out and meet the bridegroom, they were ready.

In this story, the bridegroom is Jesus and you and I are the bridesmaids. The story is teaching us that one day we are going to go to meet Jesus. It teaches us that we must be prepared because we don't know exactly when that time is coming. Do you know what we must do to be prepared? We must invite Jesus to come into our hearts. When we do that, we are ready!

Heavenly Father, one day we are going to meet you face to face. We pray that we will all be ready. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

JAR RELAY: Divide the children into teams. Have 10 small jars (jam or olive jars, etc) available for each team. See how long it will take each team to run back and forth while taking turns, to fill the 10 jars with water. The teams can use a small paper dixie cup to do the filling of the jars.

BE PREPARED MARCHING: Let the class march around the church and to other classrooms and knocking on the doors of each room. When entering as a class group, the class will say in unison, "BE PREPARED. THEREFORE KEEP WATCH, BECAUSE YOU DO NOT KNOW THE DAY OR THE HOUR. MATTHEW 25:13. Then the class will leave that room and go to another classroom as time allows.

HOPSCOTCH: Make a hopscotch game and write ways to be prepared on each square. Let children play hopscotch, reading what is in each square that they hop on. The children will take turns until each one trips or steps on or out of a line.

PREPARE RELAY: The children will be divided into two teams. The teacher will have ways to prepare for Jesus' coming, written on slips of paper for each team. Each team member will run to the table or basket to get ONE slip of paper and tape it to their clothing. Then the next team player will do the same until all the slips of paper have been taped on each child. Children can sit in a circle and listen to today's Bible story!

TELLING OTHERS: Give the children supplies to make a "telephone" to tell others to be ready for Jesus' coming -- to invite JESUS into their hearts. The children will each be given a styrofoam cup and put a small hole in the bottom of the cup. Put a string through the hole and tie a knot and then string it to another styrofoam cup and use around a circle as a telephone to TELL OTHERS.

BE PREPARED DOOR BANNER: Give the class a large neon colored poster board and markers and stickers to make the door banner. Write today's Bible verse as well as BE PREPARED, etc on the board. Hole punch the top of the poster board and hang on the classroom door to remind children to BE PREPARED for Jesus' coming!

PREPARATION KITS: Give each child two pieces of construction paper to tape together - leaving the top of one sheet higher than the other, so it can be folded down over the other sheet to form an envelope. Give the children various sizes of paper cut outs to write ways to be PREPARED for Christ's coming and then after coloring each one and discussing the idea, that piece of paper can be slipped into the PREPARATION KIT envelope to take home. Write today's Bible verse on the outside of the PREPARATION KIT or other words from today's lesson.

FLAG PARADE: Let the children cut out and decorate a BE PREPARED FLAG and tape a small dowel rod to the edge of the rectangle flag. Children will enjoy a MARCH around a designated area to display their flags. Adding music for the marching will be fun. When the teacher says, HALT! the children will stop and recite the Bible verse together. Then continue to march. The teacher may want to add some variation and have the girls recite the verse one time and the boys recite the Bible verse another time, or all the children wearing red, or blue, or brown hair, etc.

PREPARATION BOOKLETS: Give the children small pieces of paper to staple together to form a booklet. Tie the papers together with yarn or staple them together. Each page can be colored and decorated and the children can write words from today's lesson on each page! The children can share the words that they have written in their booklet with the other children in the class after everyone has completed their pages.

OIL LAMPS: Give each child a cut out of the different parts of an oil lamp - such as the base, the wick, the globe, the flame, etc. Children can tape or glue the parts of the oil lamp onto a piece of construction paper. Children can write words from today's lesson such as SOME DAY WE WILL GO TO MEET JESUS -- BE PREPARED, or today's Bible verse, etc.

Give Me Oil in My Lamp



Theme: Be prepared for Christ's return. Proper 27 (32) Year A

Object: A flashlight and some extra batteries

Scripture: "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour." Matthew 25:13 (NIV)

We always keep a flashlight in our house. We keep the flashlight so that if the lights go out, we will be able to find our way around in the dark. The flashlight is always kept in the same place so that we will know where to find it when we need it. Do you know what else we have to do? We have to check the batteries regularly to make sure they are still working and we have to make sure there are always extra batteries on hand. When the lights go out, this flashlight will be no help if the batteries are dead and there aren't any fresh batteries to replace them.

In the time that Jesus lived, people didn't have flashlights or batteries. Instead, they used oil lamps, and just as it is important for us to have a good supply of batteries for our flashlight, it was important for the people of Jesus' day to have a good supply of oil on hand for their lamps.

One day, Jesus told a story using oil lamps to teach his disciples how important it was for them to be prepared for the day when he would return. In Jesus' story, a wedding was about to take place. The bride had ten bridesmaids and they were waiting for the bridegroom to come and take them to his house where the wedding would take place. Weddings in those days were almost always at night and the bridesmaids would light their lamps and lead the bride to the house of the bridegroom. Jesus said that while they were waiting for the bridegroom, the bridesmaids became tired and fell asleep.

Suddenly, everyone was awakened by someone shouting. "Look, the bridegroom is coming! Come out and meet him!" The bridesmaids jumped up and began to prepare their lamps. Five of the bridesmaids had not brought any extra oil, so they didn't have enough oil to light their lamps. The other five had very wisely brought extra oil, so they were well-prepared and lit their lamps. The foolish ones asked to borrow some oil, but the wise ones were afraid there was not enough for them, so they told them to go buy some more oil. While they were gone, the bridegroom came and the five who were ready went with him to the wedding feast. When the foolish ones bought more oil and went to the groom's house, it was too late. The door had already been closed locked. Jesus told his followers, "So you must be ready, because you don't know when I will return."

In this story, the bridegroom is Jesus and you and I are the bridesmaids. Do you think we are the wise ones or the foolish ones? Well, Jesus told us that he was going to come again, and that if we were wise, we would be ready for his return. What can we do to make sure we are ready? We can read his Word, do what it says, and put our trust in him. If we will do that, we will be ready. We will have oil in our lamp and our light will be shining brightly to show others the way to him.

Heavenly Father, we want to be ready when Jesus comes again. Help us to trust in him and follow his teachings. Amen.

FLASHLIGHT LEADING: A "flashlight leader" will shine the flashlight on a designated floor space and the children (all at once or one at a time) will FOLLOW wherever the light goes! The children will have to WATCH CAREFULLY because the light will continually move in different directions! If time allows, let all the children have an opportunity to use the flashlight to lead their classmates in various places! Let children sit in a circle at the end of this game as you tell today's story!

FLASHLIGHT SPOTLIGHT: After telling today's Bible story, have answers to questions about the story taped to the walls in a large designated area. Let the children shine their flashlights on the answers on the wall as the teacher asks questions about today's lesson! If there are not enough flashlights for all the children to have one for this game, then one or two children, at a time, could flash the lights on the Bible answers and take turns! The children could also be divided into two teams and a child from each team could answer a question and then go to the next team member.

FLASHLIGHT BATTERY RELAY: Divide the children into two teams ,or more. depending on how many children you have. The children will run to a line and place the batteries in the flashlight in the correct way and shine the light on their team mates. After succeeding in getting the batteries in the correct way and shining the light, they will take the batteries OUT of the flashlight and run back to their team. Each team player will take their turn until everyone has had a turn to SHINE the light. The children will have to WATCH to make sure the batteries are in correctly in order to SHINE!

FLASHLIGHT DARKROOM FUN: If it is possible to darken the room, let the children hunt for pennies or even words on slips of paper from our Bible verse while the teacher uses a flashlight to shine in various places on the floor. If there are enough flashlights available for each child to have one, that is fun as well.

TRUST AND FOLLOW BOOK MARKER: Give the children supplies to make and decorate a Bible book marker for TRUST and FOLLOW, or WATCH AND BE READY. The children can draw little "feet" for the "trust and follow" or could draw "eyes" for the Watch and Be Ready bookmaker.

BE READY!: This game is similar to "Green Light, Red Light." The children will stand on a line. The teacher will say, "BE READY!" Then, when she says, "GO!" the children will walk quickly until the teacher says, "Stop!" When the teacher again says, "BE READY!" and "GO!" the children will walk quickly again! When all the children have reached the "finish line" the game is over.

BE READY WALL HANGING: Let the children decorate a long wall hanging with BE READY and add words for READ GOD'S WORD, DO WHAT IT SAYS AND PUT OUR TRUST IN HIM! Children can add a border, and use string or yarn to hang the banner.

FLASHLIGHT or OIL LAMP PICTURE VERSE: Let the children draw or cut out a picture of a flashlight or an oil lamp and write today's Bible verse on the light. Children can hang this around their neck by a piece of yarn!

OIL LAMP LIGHTING: IF oil lamps are available, the teacher could have these on the table or around the room to light the classroom today during the lesson, rather than the normal lights that are usually used. Ask the children why we are using oil lamps today and discuss the story once again!