Preschool–Grade 6

The Ten Virgins

Sunday School Lesson for 3rd to 5th Grade, 45–60 minutes

Main point: Jesus is coming again, and no one knows the day or the hour, so be ready now and stay ready.
Bible passage: Matthew 25:1–13 (and Matthew 24:3, 24:42–44). Read them before class.
Memory verse: "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." *Matthew 25:13 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each child (or one for every two children), a whiteboard or large paper, a marker, paper and pencils, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the board. Draw two columns: "Wise" and "Foolish."

1. Opening game: Ready Right Now? (5–10 minutes)

Call out things, one at a time, and give kids only three seconds for each: "Hold up a pencil!" "Show me both shoes tied!" "Open a Bible to Matthew!" "Point to the door!" Every child who is ready in three seconds gets a point. Ask: *Which ones could you get ready in three seconds? Which ones needed you to be ready before I asked?* Say: "In Jesus' story, some people found out they could not get ready at the last minute."

2. Bible story: They That Were Ready (15 minutes)

Kids open their Bibles to Matthew 24. When you reach a **Look up** line, a child finds the verse and reads it out loud. Tell the rest in your own words.

Why Jesus told it. Look up Matthew 24:3. Jesus sat on the mount of Olives, and His disciples asked Him about the sign of His coming. Jesus answered with a long talk, and He said, "Therefore be ye also ready" (24:44). A little later He told this parable.

Ten with lamps. Look up Matthew 25:1. The kingdom of heaven is **likened**, or compared, to ten **virgins**, young women who were not married yet. They took their lamps and went out to meet the **bridegroom**, the man who was getting married. Five were wise and five were foolish (25:2). The foolish took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their **vessels**, or jars, with their lamps (25:3–4). Write it on the board under "Wise" and "Foolish."

A long wait. Look up Matthew 25:5. The bridegroom **tarried**, which means he took a long time. They all **slumbered**, or got drowsy, and slept: all ten, the wise ones too.

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The midnight cry. At midnight there was a cry: "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him" (25:6). All ten arose and **trimmed** their lamps, which means they got them ready to burn (25:7). The foolish said, "Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out" (25:8). **Look up Matthew 25:9.** The wise said, "Not so," because there might not be enough for both. They told them to go to them that sell and buy for themselves.

The door was shut. Look up Matthew 25:10. While they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and "they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut." Afterward the others came and said, "Lord, Lord, open to us," but he answered, "Verily I say unto you, I know you not" (25:11–12). **Verily** means truly.

Jesus' point. Look up Matthew 25:13. Watch, because we don't know the day or the hour that the **Son of man**, Jesus Himself, will come. Jesus promised, "I will come again" (John 14:3). Being ready can't wait until the last minute.

3. Questions to ask (10 minutes)

Thinking questions (no single right answer; let kids talk)

1. All ten fell asleep (25:5). So what made the wise ones different?
2. The wise could not give their oil away (25:9). Why can't someone else be ready for you?
3. Why do you think Jesus didn't tell us the day He will come?
4. What are some ways to live ready for Jesus every day?
5. How does it feel to know Jesus is coming again for His people?

Recall questions

1. How many were wise, and how many were foolish? *(Five and five, Matthew 25:2)*
2. What did the wise take with their lamps? *(Oil in their vessels, 25:4)*
3. Who went in with the bridegroom? *(They that were ready, 25:10)*

4. Memory verse: Erase a Word (5 minutes)

Explain the old words: **watch** means stay awake and be ready, **therefore** means so, **ye** means you, **wherein** means when, and **cometh** means comes. Read the verse on the board together. Erase two words and read it again. Keep erasing two words at a time until the board is empty and the class can say it alone. Then kids say it to a partner.

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "The wise were ready before the cry came. Jesus wants us ready for Him, and it starts with the gospel. God loves you. The Bible says: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means all of us have done wrong, and none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, which means God came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day (1 Corinthians 15:3–4). How do we obey the gospel? 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means to turn away from sin; our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are **buried with Jesus in baptism**, all the way under the water, in Jesus' name. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we come up to live a new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives the words (Acts 2:4). The Bible calls this being born again (John 3:5)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.
This week: live ready: pray every morning, and when you're tempted to do wrong, ask, "Would I want Jesus to come right now?"

6. Activity: Bible Look-Up Race (10–15 minutes)

Kids work in pairs with one Bible. Read a reference and a question. The first pair to find the verse and read the answer out loud wins the point.

1. Matthew 24:3: Where did Jesus sit? *(Upon the mount of Olives)*
2. Matthew 25:1: Whom did the ten go forth to meet? *(The bridegroom)*
3. Matthew 25:3: What did the foolish not take? *(Oil)*
4. Matthew 25:5: What did they all do while the bridegroom tarried? *(They slumbered and slept)*
5. Matthew 25:6: At what time was the cry made? *(At midnight)*
6. Matthew 25:8: What did the foolish say about their lamps? *(Our lamps are gone out)*
7. Matthew 24:44: What should we be? *(Ready)*
8. John 14:3: What did Jesus promise? *(I will come again)*

For more, use the **word search, crossword, maze or worksheet** (vbshq.com/bible-stories/ten-virgins).

7. Prayer

"Dear Jesus, thank You for promising to come again. Help us be ready now and stay ready every day. Thank You for loving us and showing us how to be saved. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child is worried about the shut door: answer gently. Jesus told this parable so we would be ready, not afraid. The Lord is "not willing that any should perish" (2 Peter 3:9), and He shows us how to be ready.

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