**Matthew 25:1-13**

[Jesus said to the disciples:] 1“Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. 2Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. 3When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; 4but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. 5As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. 6But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ 7Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. 8The foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ 9But 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.’ 10And 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. 11Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ 12But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I do not know you.’ 13Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”

 Central to our faith is the Jesus died for us and Jesus will return at the end times. When we are baptized we are baptized into his death while at the same time we are baptized in Jesus resurrection and trust that faith in Christ opens us up to God’s grace and we will be righteous before God when Jesus comes again. So far so good, many Christians spend time talking about the Second Coming of Christ while their Pastors, who have written many an article and sermon and sold many books about the end times continue to scare folks and people in their they depict the end times using the images in the Book of Revelation. I have seen elderly people, spending a lot of time contemplating their death scared Viewing this parable allegorically, when the bridegroom, Jesus, would not let those who came late into the banquet, God’s kingdom, were shut out that is a scary thought. None of us do not want to left out. Certainly not an eternal exile. Keep in mind the parables to compare and reveal. These short narratives engage our imagination and challenge the way we think about things. Stories drawn from everyday situations give insight into the countercultural nature of God’s kingdom. They make us uncomfortable, especially when we understand the rejection of God’s kingdom is not the responsibility of God or Jesus. It comes for our human nature and the sinfulness that comes from the devil. Yes, we should be prepared for the return of Jesus. But that doesn’t mean we shouldn’t get any sleep or spend every moment waiting for the imminent return of Jesus. Please notice that all the bridesmaids, both the wise and the foolish are sleeping when the coming of the bridegroom is announced. I remember our motto in Boy Scouts was “be prepared.” How do we prepare for a future relationship with someone we are always trying to figure out?

the word focused Human beings are relational creatures. We are created to be in relationship with one another and with God. No one, no matter how independent or disconnected they may feel they are, functions completely outside the context of relationships. From the moment we are born we are thrust into relationship with people around us—the people who delivered us, the people who will be taking care of us in a hospital nursery, our family, and God. When we enter this world we do so forming relationships right from the start.

Relationships, healthy relationships, require a lot of work and care to continue. In particular, relationships require trust to grow and become mature. Relationships rooted in trust can bring out the best in us. Relationships rooted in anything else can bring out the worst.

Today’s readings give us the chance to consider the trust required in the relationship between God and God’s people. Moreover, we are invited to give thought to the consequences of replacing trust with something else: hubris stemming from trust in one’s identity or work (in Amos), or hubris stemming from trust in others to sustain us rather than God (in Matthew). Paul reminds us that our relationship with God is cause for joy, even in the midst of sorrow, since we believe (trust) God’s promise of eternal life through the living Lord Jesus.