

## RECAP

As you reflect on last week's easter celebration, what are one or two highlights from Holy Week?

## IDEA 1

Rob, after sharing about his daughter's birth, said: "Sometimes, even with *great anticipation* and *excitement* about what is to come - we can get worn down and lose focus because active waiting can be exhausting! But we will see today - that this is what we are called to. This is our response as we are made alive in Christ."

Describe a moment or even season that you were actively waiting for something or someone. What did that look like for you?

What are some ways, as believers, we can become apathetic or inattentive to His future return?

How do we remain ready, prepared, and actively watchful for Jesus' return?

## IDEA 2

The first thing I notice in those that are ready is: *They practice communal rhythms but understand individual responsibility.* And though there is this communal aspect, here in this parable also is a stark reminder - that personal responsibility is vital - you see, the five foolish bridesmaids ask the others to share some oil, and they refuse.

What is your initial reaction to Jesus' response to the bridesmaids who were unprepared?

How would you describe the important balance of *communal rhythms* along with your own *individual responsibility*?

At this point in your faith pilgrimage, would you describe yourself as prepared for Jesus' return?

## SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

The second characteristic I see here in those that wait well is: *They engage and actively advance the cause of the King.* We see that active waiting means that we diligently advancing the cause of the King - the purposes of the Lord. Jesus, in each of these parables is warning that God's gifts and resources must never be passively possessed. They aren't given for our personal indulgence or to be hoarded. Our spiritual gifts and passions and resources are to be put to work, invested to release peace, and to expand the King's purposes - His agenda.

As a group, consider thinking specifically about how you, collectively and individually, can actively advance the cause of the King:

**What are the places God is asking us as a group to actively advance His cause in our community?**

**What are the places God is asking me to actively advance His cause in my sphere of influence?**

Take the next 10 minutes to commit to listening prayer to see if God prompts anything collectively and individually.

## NEXT STEPS

This is why we want you to engage with your Gifts, Passion, and Story - so that you see how you have been created to bring the peace, power, and presence of Jesus everywhere you step. As the apostle Paul makes clear in his letter to the church in Corinth - we are co-laborers with Jesus.

*Engagement in the now prepares us for flourishing in the Kingdom that is coming.*

**What are ways your engagement in the now could be strengthened or supported?**

**How am I actively waiting with expectation for Jesus' return?**