**Be Ready**

**TEXT**: **Matthew 25:10-13 (ESV)** 10  And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. 11  Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ 12  But he answered, ‘Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.’ 13  Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

If you have ever gone to the airport to catch a flight to somewhere, there are two things of which you can be sure:

* The airline will make a number of announcements about flight, gate and boarding status, and
* Because of your location, the quality of the speakers used, ambient noise and a host of other reasons, you will not be able to understand any of those announcements.

The end result is… if you don’t want to miss your plane…you will go to the desk or one of the ever-changing big-boards to find the latest news concerning your flight’s gate and time. Not to do so is a foolish thing, and one which can lead to missing your plane.

I don’t know what caused the man in Dublin, Ireland to show up late at his gate last month.  I do know that by the time he arrived boarding had finished and the plane’s doors were closed. Vehemently the unnamed man tried to convince the folks behind the Ryanair boarding station to stop the plane and let him get on. When his pleas fell on deaf ears the man began pounding on an airport window in hopes the ground crew might see him and hold the plane. Once again the man’s efforts were spectacularly unsuccessful.

Knowing he was running out of time and options, the man did what any distraught, distracted and disturbed individual might do. He broke through a security door, made his way to the tarmac and tried to flag down the plane which had already begun to taxi toward the runway. It was then the man’s efforts got him arrested. The truth is: the unnamed man hadn’t been ready for his flight and as a result, he didn’t get to go.

Now if you’re wondering why the man’s story is featured so prominently in today’s devotion, I’ll tell you. As near as I can see, this man is a modern example of a story Jesus told about people getting into heaven In the Savior’s parable He shared how some people who had been invited to the wedding never got in. They were left out in the cold because they simply hadn’t been ready. They figured they could show up on their timetable and get into the wedding just the way they were. They were wrong.

That’s almost as wrong as trying to get into heaven just “the way you are.” It is the Host of the wedding reception Who sets the criterion for entrance, and it is the Lord Who has laid down the parameters for souls to be admitted to heaven. In His parable, the Savior shares two of those parameters:

* You need to have the light of faith it the Redeemer Who has offered Himself for our forgiveness and salvation.
* You need to have that faith when He throws open heaven’s doors. On that day “too late” is going to be, well, it’s going to be too late.

Thankfully, neither of those just mentioned rulings has to be a concern. Jesus has already done all which was necessary to redeem us and the Holy Spirit is ready, willing and able to give us the faith we need. It’s all free and it’s all here and now.

**THE PRAYER**: Dear Lord, grant that unbelievers may be given the faith they need for that unknown hour when Jesus comes. And for those of us who have already been given faith, may we be equipped with grateful hearts. In the Savior’s Name I ask it. Amen.