Longing for the Oil Quick Guide

Nov 10, 2026

About this quick guide: this is the short, print-friendly version of the Longing for the Oil guide. Anyone is welcome to use it, including members of the Intercessor Church Community Groups. It keeps each question, the Summary, and the Deep Dive, and leaves out the commentary and catechism quotes to save paper.

The full guide is online: the full guide has the complete commentary and ICCEC Catechism quotes that each Summary and Deep Dive are drawn from. Download it free at angelstudyguides.com.

About this week's outline: the outline for this week came in a shorter format, with a sermon summary and four discussion questions. This guide covers all four, in order, and adds questions from the week's readings and sermon summary so the study keeps its usual six sections. A label under each question shows where it comes from. Questions labeled "Outline question" are the outline's own four discussion questions, in order: question 1 is A1 and A2, question 2 is C1 and C2, question 3 is D2 and E1, and question 4 is F1 and F3. Questions labeled "Added question" come from the week's readings or the outline's sermon summary, and section B comes from Amos 5:18-24, one of the week's readings.

How to read this guide: each question is labeled by section and number, so A1 is the first question in section A, A2 is the second, and so on. The questions are written for this guide. Each one covers the ground of the outline or its readings and takes it a step further. The linked passage after a question is the one the outline points to, or a verse inside the week's readings, so you can click it and read it in class. Anything after the word "also" is a wider range or an extra passage this guide adds. A Q-number in parentheses, like (Q-129), points to that question in the ICCEC Catechism. The **Summary** and **Deep Dive** are written for this guide from the sources listed at the end. Scripture quoted is from the New King James Version.

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This guide follows the Intercessor Church Community Group outline "Longing for the Oil" for November 8, 2026 (Proper 27).

A. A Simple Faith That Shapes Our Lives

A1. The early church summed up its hope in one plain line of the Apostles' Creed: Jesus "will come again to judge the living and the dead." Why does a simple confession like that shape daily life more than detailed end-time charts and timetables do? (also Acts 1:11; Matthew 24:36)

Outline question 1, first part

Summary

A simple creed keeps our eyes on a Person instead of a calendar. Every generation of Christians is called to live in light of Christ's promised return (Still). Since Jesus said no one knows the day or the hour, it is foolish for anyone to claim to know the prophetic timetable (Guzik). Jesus warned the disciples against wanting knowledge God has not given, because what He has told us about our duty is enough (Matthew Henry). Assuming the date is fixed and knowable leads some people to over-eager excitement and others to doubt and scorn (Ellicott). Not knowing the time is part of our training, because it keeps us ready every day (Pulpit Commentary). The creed simply confesses that He will come again to judge the living and the dead (Q-46), as was promised when He ascended (Q-125).

Deep Dive

The Apostles' Creed is the baptismal covenant of the Church and is used in public worship (Q-46). At the ascension the angels said, "This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). Jesus said, "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only" (Matthew 24:36). Paul calls His return "the blessed hope" (Titus 2:13). The Bible closes with the prayer, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" (Revelation 22:20). Christians around the world still confess this hope week after week (Still).

Read before class: Acts 1:6-11; Matthew 24:36-44; Titus 2:11-14

A2. We live closer to Christ's return than any generation before us. If you took that seriously this week, what would you stop putting off, what would you start, and who would you want to talk to? (also Matthew 24:42-44)

Outline question 1, second part

Summary

This is an application question. Common answers: making peace with someone, sharing faith with a friend or family member, setting aside time to pray, giving generously, and dropping habits we would not want Him to find. Watching for Christ means keeping the frame of mind we would want Him to find us in (Matthew Henry). Each generation hands the next a growing obligation to look for His coming (Jamieson-Fausset-Brown). Paul counted himself among those who might be alive when Jesus returns, setting an example of expectancy for every age (Thomas, quoted by Guzik). We should not expect to meet that day in peace if we are lazy and idle in this one (Matthew Henry). The truth of His return should have a deep and lasting effect that leads us into holy living (Barnes). Because we do not know the day or the hour, we should live always in His presence (Q-129).

Deep Dive

Just before this parable, Jesus said that "if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched" (Matthew 24:43). Then He added, "Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect" (Matthew 24:44). Peter asks, "what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness" (2 Peter 3:11). John says that "everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure" (1 John 3:3). Readiness is not panic. It is living today the way we would want Him to find us.

Read before class: Matthew 24:42-44; 2 Peter 3:8-14; 1 John 3:1-3

A3. The creed says Jesus is coming "to judge." How can that promise be both a comfort and a sobering call, and why did it give the early church such urgency to share the gospel? (also 2 Peter 3:11-14; Acts 1:8)

Added question, from the outline's opening summary about the early church

Summary

His coming is a comfort to those who belong to Him and a wake-up call to those who are drifting. When we are idle, the thought of His return should stir us, and when we are afraid, it should comfort us (Matthew Henry). His coming will be happy for those found ready and dreadful for those who are not (Matthew Henry). The hope of His return calls us to purity and godliness (Matthew Henry). The Holy Spirit makes believers witnesses for Christ on earth (Matthew Henry), and like the apostles we have a great work to do without delay (Barnes). We will all stand before Christ and be judged for our thoughts and actions toward God and our neighbor (Q-127), and every baptized believer is called to share the gospel at home, in the world, and in the Church (Q-203).

Deep Dive

Peter explains the delay: the Lord "is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). Before the ascension Jesus said, "you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me" (Acts 1:8). Grace teaches us to "live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age" while we look for His appearing (Titus 2:12). The Judge who is coming is also our Savior, which is why His return is good news for those who belong to Him. Each day of delay is another day for someone to hear the gospel.

Read before class: 2 Peter 3:8-14; Acts 1:6-8; Titus 2:11-14

B. Readiness You Can See (Amos 5:18-24)

B1. Israel longed for the day of the LORD, sure it would be a day of light for them, yet Amos warned it would be darkness. How can people look forward to God's coming while their lives are not ready for it? (Amos 5:18-20)

Added question, from Amos 5:18-24, one of the week's readings

Summary

Israel wanted the day of the LORD because they expected it to bring deliverance for them and judgment on their enemies, but Amos said it would bring the reverse (Ellicott). They kept up their religious rituals and still claimed to long for that day without knowing what they were asking for (Guzik). Their hope was sincere; they were waiting for the God who had saved them so many times before (Odell). The problem was that they treated their traditions as a reason to feel safe instead of a measure of their accountability to God (Sharp). A day of the LORD that finds people unrepentant will be a dark day for them (Matthew Henry). Longing for His coming while living as if it does not matter cannot hold together, because faith without works is dead (Q-10).

Deep Dive

Amos 5:18-24 is one of this week's readings. Amos asked, "For what good is the day of the LORD to you? It will be darkness, and not light" (Amos 5:18). He pictured a man who escaped a lion only to meet a bear, then made it home and "Leaned his hand on the wall, And a serpent bit him!" (Amos 5:19). Amos was the first prophet to speak of the day of the LORD, and he turned his hearers' hopes upside down (Sharp). The parable has the same

surprise, where some who expect to enter the feast find the door shut (Odell). Looking forward to His coming is right, but it should send us to examine our lives, not just our calendars.

Read before class: Amos 5:4-15; Amos 5:18-24; 2 Peter 3:8-14

B2. God turned away from Israel's feasts, offerings, and songs because justice and righteousness were missing. What does that say about worship that sounds right on Sunday while our dealings with people go wrong during the week? (Amos 5:21-23; also Matthew 5:23-24)

Added question, from Amos 5:18-24, one of the week's readings

Summary

This is an application question. Common answers: singing on Sunday while holding a grudge, giving at church while ignoring a neighbor in need, cutting corners at work, and treating worship as a performance. God was offended by ceremonies that were cut off from the heart and emptied by the injustice behind them (Guzik). Worship and mercy belong together, because God stands with the poor (Sharp). What God rejects is ritual without heart, not worship itself (Sharp). Without justice and righteousness there was no real relationship to begin with (Odell). Pretending to be pious only doubles the wrong (Matthew Henry). Outward forms mean little without living faith, love for God, and holiness of heart and life (Benson). True worship offers our whole being to God in honor and obedience (Q-292).

Deep Dive

God said, "I hate, I despise your feast days, And I do not savor your sacred assemblies" (Amos 5:21). He even said, "Take away from Me the noise of your songs" (Amos 5:23). Isaiah heard the same message: "Bring no more futile sacrifices," and then, "Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor" (Isaiah 1:13, 17). Jesus said to leave a gift at the altar and "First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift" (Matthew 5:24). Worship is not the problem. Worship cut off from how we treat people is.

Read before class: Amos 5:21-24; Isaiah 1:13-17; Matthew 5:21-24

B3. Amos called for justice to run down like water and righteousness like a stream that never runs dry. What would steady, everyday love, compassion, mercy, and service look like in our group as signs that we are ready for Christ? (Amos 5:24; also Micah 6:8; James 1:27)

Added question, from Amos 5:18-24, one of the week's readings

Summary

This is an application question. Common answers: checking on members who are sick or grieving, bringing a meal, giving to someone in need, welcoming newcomers, and keeping our word at home and at work. Real righteousness is steady and unfailing, not a stream that runs hard one week and dries up the next (Barnes). Justice and righteousness are meant to keep flowing like a stream that does not dry up in the summer heat (McComiskey, quoted by Guzik). Some read the oil in the parable as the deeds of love and mercy that will count when Christ returns (Boring, quoted by Wagner). Our hope in Christ, our worship, and our care for the poor are meant to fit together (Sharp). God's kingdom is made visible in the Church's service to the poor (Q-231), and our hope is already lived out as we love each other and find Christ in the poor (Q-217).

Deep Dive

In the NKJV, Amos 5:24 reads, "But let justice run down like water, And righteousness like a mighty stream." The word for "mighty" can also mean a stream that flows all year long (Barnes). Micah sums up what God asks: "To do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8). James says pure religion is "to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27). Later in the same chapter, Jesus said that whatever we do for "the least of these My brethren" we do for Him (Matthew 25:40). Steady mercy is what readiness looks like from the outside.

Read before class: Micah 6:6-8; James 1:22-27; Matthew 25:31-40

C. Going Out to Welcome Jesus (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18; Matthew 25:6-10)

C1. When Paul says believers will meet the Lord in the air, he uses the same Greek word for "meeting" (apantesis) that Matthew uses for the bridesmaids going out to meet the bridegroom. It describes a welcome party that goes out to greet an honored guest and escort him back. How does that picture change the way you imagine Christ's return? (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18; also Matthew 25:6; Acts 28:15)

Outline question 2, first part

Summary

The word Paul uses for meeting was a technical term for the official welcome of honored guests (Guzik). In Matthew 25:6 the same phrase points to a familiar custom that an English translation can hardly capture (Vincent). Picture a king arriving at a city: those in honor go out to meet him, while the condemned wait inside (Chrysostom). In this reading, believers do not go straight to heaven but return with the Lord to the earth, as Chrysostom and Augustine understood it (Expositor's Greek Testament). The meeting in the air is not a place to stay but a procession that accompanies Christ to His judgment seat on the earth (Ellicott). Christians hold different views on the order of end-time events, but this picture turns His return into a royal welcome rather than an escape. Paul's comfort rests on the bodily resurrection at His coming (Q-213).

Deep Dive

Luke uses the same kind of meeting in Acts. When believers in Rome heard Paul was coming, "they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum and Three Inns," and Paul "thanked God and took courage" (Acts 28:15). In 1 Thessalonians the Lord descends "with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God" (1 Thessalonians 4:16). Some Christians read the meeting in the air as the rapture of the Church to heaven (Guzik), while many older commentators read it as a welcome party that escorts the King back to earth (Expositor's Greek Testament). Either way, the scene ends in reunion: "And thus we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:17).

Read before class: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Acts 28:13-16; Matthew 25:1-13

C2. The bridesmaids had one job: be ready to go out, light the way, and walk with the bridegroom to the feast. What might getting ready to welcome Jesus look like in our homes, our church, and our neighborhood? (Matthew 25:6-10; also Revelation 19:7)

Outline question 2, second part

Summary

This is an application question. Common answers: opening our homes, praying for the Church as Christ's bride, serving in ways that help others meet Jesus, making peace in our families, and keeping our lamps burning through prayer and Scripture. The bridesmaids went out with lamps trimmed and burning to welcome the bridegroom and walk him to the house, and they were honored as guests at the feast (Benson). Everyone in the procession carried a torch, and anyone without one looked like an intruder (Carson, quoted by GotQuestions). Believers go out to honor and congratulate Christ when others flee (Poole). The bride is the whole Church, while the bridesmaids picture the different kinds of people within it (Ellicott). Those who are ready will go with Him and enter into His joy (Pulpit Commentary). The Church is called the bride of Christ (Q-160), and caring for her is part of getting ready.

Deep Dive

At midnight the cry went out: "Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!" (Matthew 25:6). Those who were ready "went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut" (Matthew 25:10). Paul describes Christ preparing His bride, "that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle" (Ephesians 5:27). Revelation pictures the end as a wedding: "the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready" (Revelation 19:7). The bridesmaids' job was to welcome the bridegroom and honor the bride, which is a good picture of a church that welcomes people and cares for one another.

Read before class: Matthew 25:1-13; Ephesians 5:25-27; Revelation 19:6-9

C3. Paul wrote these verses to comfort believers grieving loved ones who had died, and he told them to comfort one another with them. How does the hope of meeting the Lord together, and always being with Him, change the way Christians grieve? (1 Thessalonians 4:18; also verses 13-15)

Added question, from 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, the reading behind outline question 2

Summary

Paul wrote as a pastor, to comfort, console, and encourage people in grief and loss (Still). Grieving is allowed; we can weep for our own loss even when it is their gain (Matthew Henry). Our sorrow is like seeing someone off on a long trip, knowing we will see them again (Guzik). Paul told them to repeat these words to one another, and grieving believers have found that comfort real ever since (Ellicott). As Christ comes down, we go out to meet Him, and best of all, we will be with Him (Chrysostom). In His presence there will be no more sorrow and pain, and we will see the face of God (Q-214).

Deep Dive

Paul wrote so that believers would not "sorrow as others who have no hope" (1 Thessalonians 4:13). He did not tell them not to grieve; he told them to grieve with hope (Still). That hope rests on Easter: "if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 4:14). Early Christians called their burial places "cemeteries," a word meaning sleeping places (Guzik). Paul ends, "Therefore comfort one another with these words" (1 Thessalonians 4:18). Jesus promised, "I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:3).

Read before class: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-58

D. Looking Beyond the Flame (Matthew 25:1-13)

D1. All ten bridesmaids had lamps, all ten fell asleep, and all ten woke up and trimmed their wicks. The only difference was the reserve of oil. What do you think the oil stands for, and why could no one see the difference until midnight? (Matthew 25:1-5)

Added question, from Matthew 25:1-13 and the outline's sermon summary

Summary

From the outside, all ten looked the same. The lamp is the outward life that shines before others, and the oil is God's grace, the gift of the Holy Spirit, without which the flame fades and dies (Ellicott). Oil is often a picture of the Holy Spirit, and without Him no one is ready for Jesus' return (Guzik). All ten expected to be at the feast, and there was no visible difference until the moment came (France, quoted by Guzik). The oil can also be read as kindness and help to people in need (Chrysostom). The real difference was readiness for

a delay (Wagner). We must have the oil: the Holy Spirit living in us and producing the light of life (GotQuestions). Jesus gave parables like this one to teach the "still to come" side of His Second Coming (Q-230).

Deep Dive

Matthew 25:1-13 is this week's Gospel reading. "Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps" (Matthew 25:3-4). The lamps were probably torches, sticks wrapped with oil-soaked rags (France, quoted by Guzik). "But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept" (Matthew 25:5). The sleep itself is not the fault, since the wise slept too (Cambridge Bible). In Zechariah's vision, olive trees feed oil to a golden lampstand, and the message is, "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit" (Zechariah 4:6). Jesus also told His followers, "Let your light so shine before men" (Matthew 5:16).

Read before class: Matthew 25:1-13; Zechariah 4:1-6; Matthew 5:14-16

D2. A lamp can keep burning for a while even as its oil runs low. Where could a full calendar of serving, attending, and helping be covering up tiredness or dryness in your soul, and what early warning signs should we watch for in ourselves and each other? (Matthew 25:1-13; also Galatians 6:9)

Outline question 3, first part

Summary

This is an application question. Common answers: serving on every team while skipping prayer, going through the motions on Sunday, growing irritable, losing joy, avoiding Scripture, and hiding struggles behind a smile. Many hold a lamp of profession without the inner resources that carry them through real service and trials (Matthew Henry). Carelessness grows by small steps, so we should watch for the first signs of spiritual decline (Matthew Henry). The foolish had enough oil for a short wait but not for a long one, a warning against shallow faith that fades when the excitement passes (Cambridge Bible). From the outside we cannot tell who has enough oil, so this is a question for self-examination, not for judging others (Lange). The foolish noticed only when they saw the flame waning and flickering (Vincent). Christians often grow weary from the sheer amount of good there is to do (Barnes). The Christian life is sustained by prayer and by the virtues Jesus taught in the Beatitudes (Q-218).

Deep Dive

The foolish bridesmaids noticed the problem only when they said, "our lamps are going out" (Matthew 25:8). The wording means the flame was still flickering, not yet dead (Ellicott). Jesus praised the church in Ephesus for its labor and patience, yet told it, "you have left your first love" (Revelation 2:4). Paul encourages, "And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart" (Galatians 6:9). Isaiah promises that "those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength" (Isaiah 40:31). Busy service is good, but it cannot take the place of time with the One who fills the lamp.

Read before class: Revelation 2:1-5; Galatians 6:7-10; Isaiah 40:28-31

D3. When the foolish bridesmaids asked to borrow oil, the wise said there would not be enough for both. Why can't readiness be borrowed from someone else's faith, and what does the bridegroom's "I do not know you" teach about the relationship each of us needs with Him? (Matthew 25:8-12; also Matthew 7:21-23)

Added question, from Matthew 25:8-12

Summary

Readiness is personal. The foolish seemed to think others' merits could cover their lack, or that there was a common store of grace to draw from in place of their own preparation (Pulpit Commentary). The wise had prepared for themselves, while the foolish depended on their friends (Vincent). Everyone must live by his own faith (Bengel). Those who have the most grace have none to spare, and even the best need more from Christ (Matthew Henry). In the end no one else can protect us, not because they will not but because they cannot (Chrysostom). "I do not know you" means He does not acknowledge them as His real friends and followers (Barnes). Those found in Christ will enjoy His presence forever, and those not found in Him will be separated from God (Q-128).

Deep Dive

The wise answered, "No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves" (Matthew 25:9). In the Greek this is a gentle refusal, not a blunt no (Vincent). When the others came back they cried, "Lord, Lord, open to us!" (Matthew 25:11). The answer echoes the Sermon on the Mount: "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven" (Matthew 7:21). Friends can pray for us and walk with us, but no one can know Jesus for us.

Read before class: Matthew 25:8-13; Matthew 7:21-27; John 10:11-15

E. Trimming the Wick (Matthew 25:7)

E1. The sermon compares confession to trimming the wick, and asking for Christ's transforming presence to receiving fresh oil. What would trimming your wick look like this week, and where do you most need fresh oil from the Holy Spirit? (Matthew 25:7; also 1 John 1:9)

Outline question 3, second part

Summary

This is an application question. Common answers: naming specific sins to God, going to confession, making amends with someone, cutting out a habit that dims the flame, and asking the Spirit to fill us each morning. Trimming meant cutting away the charred part of the wick and raising it so the lamp could burn clean (Pulpit Commentary). In the same way, grace that has gone dormant needs to be revived (Pulpit Commentary). Confession has value when it names definite acts of sin and does not stop at "I am a sinner" (Pulpit Commentary). The foolish rested on a past conversion and stopped seeking daily supplies of grace, while the wise kept renewing God's grace in their hearts (Pulpit Commentary). The ones "who sell" in verse 9 may picture the Church's pastors and teachers, through whose preaching and sacraments God gives grace (Ellicott). We are forgiven through Christ as we confess our sins to God and to one another (Q-243). As for the sacrament of Confession, all can, some should, and some must (Q-190).

Deep Dive

When the cry came, "all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps" (Matthew 25:7). The Greek word means to put in order or prepare (Vincent). John promises, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). James adds, "Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed" (James 5:16). David prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10). Confession clears away what has burned out so the flame can burn clean again.

Read before class: 1 John 1:5-9; James 5:13-16; Psalm 51:10-12

E2. Picture Jesus sitting down across the table from you for coffee. What would you bring Him first: a struggle, a joy, a sin, or a longing to be more like Him? Why is honest, unhurried time with Him where the oil gets replenished? (also Revelation 3:20)

Added question, from the outline's sermon summary (coffee with Jesus)

Summary

This is an application question. Common answers: bringing worries about family or health, thanking Him for a recent answer to prayer, confessing something we have avoided, or simply asking to know Him better. Jesus knocks, asking to come in and share warm, close time with us (Guzik). He wants a deep, meaningful relationship, not a passing visit (Guzik). The meal He offers was the main meal of the day, a leisurely affair rather than a hurried snack (Morris, quoted by Guzik). He wants to sit long with us and to wait as long as we wish (Barclay, quoted by Guzik). Prayer offered in faith quiets the heart and settles it in God (Matthew Henry). Prayer includes confession, repentance, adoration, petition, and thanksgiving (Q-221), so every part of that coffee conversation is a kind of prayer.

Deep Dive

Jesus says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me" (Revelation 3:20). He spoke those words to a church that had grown lukewarm (Guzik). When Martha was distracted with much serving, Jesus said Mary had "chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her" (Luke 10:42). The psalmist invites the same honesty: "Search me, O God, and know my heart" (Psalm 139:23). Time at His table is not a reward for being ready; it is how we get ready.

Read before class: Revelation 3:14-22; Luke 10:38-42; Psalm 139:23-24

E3. The sermon says a life of devotion cannot be kept going by determination alone. Why do willpower and good intentions eventually run dry, and what does it look like to rely on the Holy Spirit instead? (also Zechariah 4:6; Ephesians 5:18)

Added question, from the outline's sermon summary (devotion takes more than determination)

Summary

Willpower runs out because it depends on us. God's work is done not by cleverness, ability, or strength, but by His Spirit (Guzik). God wants His supply to us, and our reliance on Him, to be continual (Guzik). Being filled with the Spirit is not a one-time event to live

on for years, but a constant filling that we ask for and receive by faith (Guzik). Much of our weakness and lethargy comes from not being continually filled (Guzik). Even the wise slumbered, but they had the reserve of steadfast faith and divine help to fall back on (Ellicott). Baptism in the Holy Spirit is both a moment and a lifelong process in which His life flows from us (Q-146), and He empowers us with His presence for service (Q-141).

Deep Dive

God told Zerubbabel, "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit" (Zechariah 4:6). Paul writes, "do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18), and the grammar means to keep on being filled (Guzik). The fruit of the Spirit is "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (Galatians 5:22-23), and fruit grows from life inside, not from effort alone. Paul adds, "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Galatians 5:25). Determination still matters, but it is meant to follow the Spirit, not replace Him.

Read before class: Zechariah 4:1-6; Ephesians 5:15-21; Galatians 5:22-25

F. Asking the One Who Supplies (Luke 11:9-13)

F1. The One who expects to find oil in our lamps is also the One who supplies it. How does that change the way you answer the call to be ready: with anxious striving, or with trust and asking? (Luke 11:9-10; also Philippians 1:6)

Outline question 4, first part

Summary

This is an application question. If the supply depends on us, readiness turns into anxious striving. If it comes from Him, readiness means coming back again and again to ask. Ask, seek, and knock all describe actions that keep going (Morris, quoted by Guzik). Persistence does not change God; it changes us and gives us a heart for what He wants (Guzik). Real prayer is earnest, not a wish tossed toward heaven (Guzik). We ask, we seek through the means God gives, and we keep knocking (Benson). God delights in the prayer of faith and promises to give us what we need (GotQuestions). He knows our needs before we ask, and asking reminds us that He is the source of all we have (Q-239).

Deep Dive

Luke 11:9-13 is the fourth reading on this week's outline. Jesus said, "ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you" (Luke 11:9). Just before, He told of a friend who knocked at midnight and received bread "because of his

persistence" (Luke 11:8). Paul is confident "that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6). Jesus also told a parable "that men always ought to pray and not lose heart" (Luke 18:1). The One who calls us to be ready is the One who keeps the lamp filled.

Read before class: Luke 11:5-13; Luke 18:1-8; Philippians 1:3-6

F2. Jesus says even a flawed earthly father would never hand his hungry child a snake or a scorpion. Why do we sometimes hesitate to ask God for more of His Spirit, and what does "how much more" tell us about His heart toward us? (Luke 11:11-13)

Added question, from Luke 11:11-13

Summary

This is an application question. Common reasons for hesitating: feeling unworthy, fearing what the Spirit might change, past disappointment, or thinking we should manage on our own. God loves to give the Holy Spirit to those who ask, and the problem is in our receiving, not in His desire to give (Guzik). The Father is more ready to give than a loving parent is to feed a hungry child (Matthew Henry). Since God is so ready to give, the slowness is on our side (Bengel). Jesus kept describing God's loving Fatherhood because people were thinking hard thoughts about Him (Pulpit Commentary). The disciples were taught to ask boldly for the Spirit (Ellicott). God has revealed Himself most personally as our Father (Q-224).

Deep Dive

Jesus asked, "If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone?" (Luke 11:11). Then He drew the conclusion: "how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" (Luke 11:13). In Matthew's version the promise is "good things," and Luke names the highest gift of all, the Holy Spirit (Ellicott). Paul says "the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Romans 5:5). At Pentecost Peter told the crowd, "the promise is to you and to your children" (Acts 2:39). The Father is not reluctant. He is waiting to be asked.

Read before class: Luke 11:9-13; Matthew 7:7-11; Acts 2:38-39

F3. The sermon calls each believer to live as a "little Christ." Name one specific thing you long for the Holy Spirit to grow in you so you can live that calling more fully, and how can we pray boldly for one another this week? (Luke 11:13; also Galatians 5:22-23)

Outline question 4, second part, including prayer for one another

Summary

This is an application question. Common answers: more love and patience at home, boldness to speak about Jesus, freedom from a stubborn habit, peace in anxiety, wisdom for a decision, and gifts to serve the group. The first believers were called Christians because their behavior and speech centered on Christ (GotQuestions). The Holy Spirit is the highest gift and the supreme desire of every true disciple (Expositor's Greek Testament). Even our desire for Him is His work in us, and we need Him more than our bodies need food (Bengel). Every spiritual blessing is included in asking for the Spirit (Matthew Henry), so this is a gift to pray for earnestly, constantly, and with perseverance (Benson). We pray that the Father's love be worked in us by the Spirit so that we are made into the image of Christ (Q-233), and the chief fruit is love (Q-158). Close by praying for one another by name.

Deep Dive

Jesus promised that whoever believes in Him, "out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38), and John explains, "this He spoke concerning the Spirit" (John 7:39). Paul says we "are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Corinthians 3:18). The disciples "were first called Christians in Antioch" (Acts 11:26). When we do not know how to pray, "the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses" (Romans 8:26). Being specific in prayer is not greedy. It takes Jesus at His word.

Read before class: John 7:37-39; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18; Romans 8:26-27

Sources

The Summary and Deep Dive draw on these sources. The full guide at angelstudyguides.com quotes them word for word under each question.

Source	Where to find it
ICCEC Catechism (2014), cited by Q-number	iccec.org PDF

Source	Where to find it
John Chrysostom, Homily 78 on Matthew and Homily 8 on First Thessalonians	Matthew 25, 1 Thessalonians 4
Todd Still, Working Preacher on 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (2026)	Working Preacher
Margaret Odell (2026) and Carolyn J. Sharp (2023), Working Preacher on Amos 5:18-24	Odell, Sharp
Kimberly Wagner (2023, quoting Eugene Boring) and Dirk G. Lange (2020), Working Preacher on Matthew 25:1-13	Wagner, Lange
David Guzik, Enduring Word on Matthew 25, Matthew 24, 1 Thessalonians 4, Amos 5, Luke 11, Revelation 3, Zechariah 4, Ephesians 5 (these pages quote R.T. France, Robert L. Thomas, Thomas McComiskey, Leon Morris, and William Barclay)	Matthew 25, Matthew 24, 1 Thessalonians 4, Amos 5, Luke 11, Revelation 3, Zechariah 4, Ephesians 5
GotQuestions.org: the Parable of the Ten Virgins; ask, seek, and knock; the meaning of the term Christian (the first quotes D. A. Carson)	Ten Virgins, Ask, Seek, Knock, Christian
Matthew Henry, Ellicott, Barnes, Benson, the Pulpit Commentary, the Cambridge Bible, Vincent's Word Studies, and Bengel's Gnomon on Matthew 25	25:1, 25:3, 25:5, 25:6, 25:7, 25:8, 25:9, 25:10, 25:12, 25:13
Matthew Henry, Ellicott, Barnes, Benson, Pulpit, Jamieson-Fausset-Brown, Matthew Poole, Bengel, and the Expositor's Greek Testament on other verses	Matthew 24:36, Matthew 24:42, Acts 1:11, 2 Peter 3:11, Amos 5:18, Amos 5:21, Amos 5:24, 1 Thessalonians 4:17, 1 Thessalonians 4:18, Galatians 6:9, 1 John 1:9, Luke 11:9, Luke 11:11, Luke 11:13
New King James Version (NKJV)	Bible Gateway