



# Discipleship Guide

*Sermon: Are You Ready For Christ's Return? | Cultivating Oil*

*Speaker: Pastor JohnEric Zayas*

Date: July 20, 2025

## Small Group Guide: Cultivating Oil

Opening Prayer: Begin the session with a prayer, asking God to open hearts and minds to His Word and guide the discussion.

### Key Takeaways

- The importance of being spiritually prepared and "filled with oil" for Christ's return
- Oil represents the Holy Spirit and a life of active faith and obedience
- Cultivating oil requires daily dependence on God and consistent spiritual practices
- Transformation often comes through "crushing" experiences that produce spiritual growth
- We cannot rely on past revelations or experiences - we need fresh oil daily

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### Discussion Questions

1. What stood out to you most from the sermon? Why?
2. The pastor used the analogy of olives being pressed to produce oil. How have you experienced "crushing" moments in your life that ultimately led to spiritual growth?

3. How would you describe the difference between someone who is "filled with oil" versus someone who is spiritually dry? What are some signs of each?
  4. The sermon emphasized daily dependence on God. What does this look like practically in your life? What challenges do you face in maintaining this daily connection?
  5. How do you balance the idea of God's unconditional love and salvation with the call to active obedience and "cultivating oil"?
  6. The pastor mentioned that we can't live off past revelations. How have you experienced the need for fresh encounters with God?
  7. What areas of your life do you feel God is calling you to surrender or be obedient in right now?
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## **Practical Applications:**

1. Daily Oil Check: Commit to a daily "oil check" - a brief time of prayer asking God to fill you afresh with His Spirit and guide your day.
2. Obedience Journal: Keep a journal this week, noting promptings from the Holy Spirit and how you responded. Reflect on the outcomes of your obedience or disobedience.
3. Fruit of the Spirit Assessment: Review the fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23. Rate yourself on each one and choose one area to focus on improving this week.
4. Community Oil Exchange: Share with the group one way someone else has been "oil" to you recently - encouraging or strengthening your faith. Then, commit to being "oil" to someone else this week through an act of service or encouragement.
5. Preparation Meditation: Spend time meditating on Matthew 25:1-13 (the parable of the ten virgins). Reflect on what it means to be spiritually prepared in your current season of life.

## 5-Day Devotionals

### Day 1: Cultivating Spiritual Oil

Reading: Matthew 25:1-13

Devotional: The parable of the ten virgins teaches us about spiritual preparedness. Just as the wise virgins had extra oil for their lamps, we too must cultivate spiritual "oil" - a deep, abiding relationship with God through the Holy Spirit. This oil isn't something we can borrow or buy at others; it's personal and must be cultivated daily. Today, reflect on your spiritual reserves. Are you consistently seeking God, studying His Word, and living in obedience? Or are you running on empty, relying on past experiences? Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you anew and commit to daily practices that will keep your spiritual lamp burning bright.

### Day 2: Transformed Fruit of the Spirit

Reading: Galatians 5:16-26

Devotional: Paul contrasts the works of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit. This fruit - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control - is evidence of the Holy Spirit's work in our lives. It's not about perfection, but progression. As we yield to the Spirit, He produces this in us from the inside out. Today, examine your life. Which fruits are evident? Which areas need growth? Ask God to help you surrender fully to His Spirit, allowing Him to crush your fleshly desires and produce His fruit in you. Remember, this is a lifelong process of sanctification, requiring daily submission and obedience.

### Day 3: Abiding in Christ

Reading: John 15:1-17

Devotional: Jesus uses the metaphor of a vine and branches to illustrate our need to abide in Him. Just as branches can't bear fruit unless they remain connected to the vine, we can't produce spiritual fruit apart from Christ. Abiding isn't passive; it involves actively staying connected through prayer, worship, and God's Word, and obedience. Today, consider how well you're abiding in Christ. Are you trying to produce fruit

through your own efforts? Or are you drawing your strength and nourishment from Him? Commit to deepening your connection with Jesus, allowing His life to flow through you and produce abundant fruit.

#### Day 4: The Refining Process

Reading: 1 Peter 1:3-9

Devotional: Peter compares our faith to gold refined by fire. Just as intense heat purifies gold, trials and challenges can purify and strengthen our faith. The crushing and pressing we experience in life, while painful, can produce something beautiful - a faith that is genuine God and draws others to Him. Today, reflect on the challenges you're facing. How might God be using these to refine your faith? Instead of resisting the process, surrender to God's work in your life. Ask Him for the strength to endure and the wisdom to learn and grow through your trials.

#### Day 5: Being Filled for Christ's Return

Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Devotional: Paul reminds us to be alert and ready for Christ's return. This readiness isn't about predicting dates, but about living each day in light of eternity. It involves pursuing holiness, encouraging fellow believers, and sharing the gospel. Today, examine your life. If Christ returned today, would you be ready? Are you living with eternal perspective? Ask? Ask God to help you live each day as if it could be your last on earth. Commit to making choices that reflect your heavenly citizenship and trust in God's promise of salvation through Jesus Christ.