Edwards on the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins (Matt. 25:1-12)

Events in Northampton and beyond:

Dec. 1734-Mar. 1735: Connecticut Valley Revival

June 1, 1735: Joseph Hawley commits suicide

Sept. 1736: new meetinghouse raised

Nov. 1736: first version of “Faithful Narrative” published; begins Sermon Series on Matt. 25:1-12


April-Oct. 1738: preaches Charity and Its Fruits

New Meetinghouse
General Sermon Structure

Sermons 1-3: Marriage theme (Covenant, Union, Family etc.)

- Canticles allegory
  - family structure, marriage patterns, meetinghouse seating
  - religious declension
- addresses local, particular context

Sermons 4-19: Wise & Foolish Virgins (True Saints vs. Hypocrites)

- Christ’s parable
  - signs of grace
  - means of assurance
- addresses long-term preaching tradition on
  “Science of the Soul”
“For Edwards, Northampton itself was the company of virgins that had eagerly gone forth together, with lamps blazing, to meet the bridegroom, but that had also together fallen asleep while waiting for the bridegroom to arrive.”

-Ava Chamberlain