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Matthew 24 is our Lord's teaching on His Second Coming.

For a full coverage of this chapter, please refer to Numerical Index No. 253 on the Web Site.

After Jesus' teaching on His Second Coming in *Matthew 24*, Jesus follows this with **3 parables in *Matthew 25*, which teach us on how to prepare ourselves for His Coming.**

Five Wise and Five Foolish Virgins

Parable one of *Matthew 25* is about the five wise and the five foolish virgins, verses 1-13.

The five wise virgins were prepared for His Coming in that they took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

Verse 4. The bridegroom came at midnight and the wise virgins had sufficient oil to keep their lamps burning as they went out to meet the bridegroom.

The five foolish virgins went out at midnight to meet the Bridegroom but took no oil with them. *Verse 3.* Their lamps soon went out. They said to the wise virgins, "Give us some of your oil." But the wise virgins said, "No! There may not be enough oil for us and for you. Go and buy oil for yourselves." *Verse 8,9*

However, while the foolish virgins went to buy oil, the Bridegroom arrived, and only the wise virgins were able to go in with Him to the wedding. *Verse 10.* After this the door was shut. *Verse 10*

Later the five foolish virgins arrived, saying, "Lord, Lord, open to us!" *verse 11.* But the Lord answered and said, **"Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you."** *Verse 12.* In the light of *2Timothy 2:19*, this means that the five foolish virgins never belonged to the Lord. They were never His.

To be ready for the Lord's coming, we must know that we truly belong to the Lord and are filled with the oil of the Holy Spirit. (more below*)

The Lord's comment on this, is, **"Watch therefore, (implying be ready), for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming."** *Verse 13*

In Scripture, oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. *James 5:14, 1Samuel 16:1,13, 1Samuel 10:1 2Kings 9:3*

The Word of God commands us to be filled continually with the Holy Spirit, of which oil is a symbol.

Ephesians 5:18,19, Ecclesiastes 9:8

This is so that we can **live in the Spirit, Galatians 5:25, walk in the Spirit, Galatians 5:25, be led of the Spirit, Galatians 5:18, overcome the flesh, Galatians 5:16, get rid of sin and iniquity from our lives, Ezekiel 36:25 – 27, bring forth the fruit of the Spirit, Galatians 5:22,23, be witnesses to Jesus, in the power of the Spirit, Acts 1:8, be sons of God, Romans 8:14, be able ministers of the New Covenant, 2Corinthians 3:6, preach the Gospel in the power (dunamis) of the Spirit 1Thessalonians 1:5, cast out demons, Matthew 12:28, speak in tongues, Acts 2:4, Acts 10:44-46, Acts 19:6, prophesy, Acts 19:6, be a channel for all the manifestations of the Spirit, 1Corinthians 12:7-11, and heal the sick by the Spirit's power, Acts 10:38, care for the poor and needy, James 1:27**

Jesus said, **"It is to your benefit that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to You."** *John 16:7.* **The Helper is the Holy Spirit.** *John 14:26*

The Christian life can only be lived by the life giving presence of the Holy Spirit. *John 4:10,14, John 7:37-39, John 14:26, John 3:3,5,6, 1John 2:27*

Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. *Romans 8:9*

2Timothy 2:19 reads, Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal, **"the Lord knows those that are His,"** and **"Let everyone who names the Name of Christ depart from iniquity *.** *Nahum 1:7, Isaiah 52:11, Psalm 130, Hebrews 12:14.* **We must know that we truly belong to the Lord, are filled with the oil of the Holy Spirit, and have been diligent to depart from iniquity *.** *1John3:3, Acts 15:9, Psalm 130, Romans 6:6,11,14*

The Parable of the Talents

Parable two, *Matthew 25:14-30*, is about the “talents”. Two of the servants doubled the number of talents they were given, but the third servant buried his one talent in the ground. The master gave the talents to his servants **so that they could do business on his account and increase his property** while he was away. *Verses 21,23,27*

The master commended the first two servants and richly rewarded them. *Matthew 25:21,23*

The master said to the servant who buried his talent, **“You wicked and lazy servant”**, his talent was taken from him and given to the servant with the ten talents, and he was cast into outer darkness with weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Let us do all we can to **help those with one talent to make sure that they use it.**

Help people to recognise their talent(s), one or more.

The talent, originally a balance, then, a talent in weight, became a sum of money in gold or silver equivalent to a talent. The meaning of “talent” in the English has been extended to mean **“an ability” or a “gift.”**

Combining these two meanings of “talent” together, we can see, that to be ready to give an account to the Lord Jesus of our stewardship of what He has given us, we need to use our wealth and our abilities to do business on His account and increase His Kingdom and inheritance on the earth. Especially we are to use our wealth and abilities **to spread the Gospel, win souls, support missions, and thrust out labourers into His harvest, care for the poor and needy and build the Church.** *Luke 16:11, Luke 16:9, Luke 16:10, Matthew 9:37,38, Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15,16, 20, James 1:27, 1Tim 5:17*

The Son of Man Will Judge the Nations

Parable three, Matthew 25:31-46, is about the judgment of the nations on the basis of how they cared for the poor and needy that they had contact with. Our Lord expects us to give food to the hungry, water to the thirsty, hospitality to the stranger, (be wise and led of the Holy Spirit in these matters. Do not open your home and family to the wicked and evil), clothing to the naked, compassion and caring for the sick and those in prison.

On the basis of *verse 40*, and the use of the words **“My brethren”**, some commentators think that Jesus is especially referring to caring for the **Jewish people** or to the **believers in Jesus** who are known as “Christians.” *John 20:17.*

Galatians 6:10 is probably a good guide for us in this matter. 1Corinthians 16:1 - 4

To be ready to meet the Lord at His Coming, we need to purposefully reach out to the needy folk around us.

If we do not know anyone around us in need we can work through organizations like the Salvation Army, World Vision, Tear Fund.

You could purchase food vouchers/cards from a Supermarket Market Chain, and give these to friends who contact the poor and needy.

Churches in the poor areas of the city will have contact with families who are in desperate need. Jesus has given us a strong command to care for the poor and needy.

Our approval and acceptance by the Lord at His Coming depends upon our:

1. **Serving Him in the abundant supply of His Holy Spirit.** *Luke 11:13, Ephesians 5:18,19, Matthew 25:1-13.*
2. **Serving Him with our wealth and abilities to increase His Kingdom in the earth, to win the lost, support missions, distribute God’s Word, support discipleship of new believers and actively witness to the unsaved.**
3. **Serving Him by providing for the hungry, the thirsty, the homeless, the poorly clothed, those in sickness and those in prison.**
That is as Jesus said, **“Do unto others as you would want them to do to you.”** *Matthew 7:12.*
“And you shall love your neighbour as yourself.” *Matthew 22:39*