

An Overview of the Process of Conversion (Go to Meeting)

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Happy Sabbath to everyone, wherever you may be.

Today we're going to look at one chapter in the Bible. It's really very pivotal and critical in the teachings of Jesus Christ. This one chapter gives us an overview of the process of conversion, and it really is something fascinating when we start to see what it is behind not only the words, but also the order of those words.

Another amazing thing was that this was really the last teaching of Jesus Christ, at least in public recorded before the other events. There was a lot of other private teaching during the events of the last night before Christ was crucified. The night of the Passover there was a lot instruction, a prayer to the Father and there were a lot of other things.

But as far as a public teaching, where Jesus taught in parables, this was the last one. I'm talking about Matt. 25. That's the chapter that we're going to be studying today, and to really understand all of the things that are in here, we're going to hopefully unpack all of these things in here. God has a lot of things in this message for us, in this last public teaching through these parables.

We're going to see, hopefully, the process of conversion, the whole process is encapsulated in this chapter. We know that Matt. 24 is the Olivet prophecy and this is where Christ is talking about the events of the time of the end. This is really what is going to happen, and toward the end of the chapter He is talking about what we should do about all these things.

We know all these prophecies are going to happen, and there is really nothing that we can do to intervene in the big picture, as far as the world and what's going to happen. But Jesus did say several times:

Matthew 24:42: "Watch, therefore, because you do not know in what hour your Lord is coming."

He continues to give this instruction. He talks about the thief in the night. That is really how it goes into Matthew 25, which is a continuation of that, how that instruction is watching for our Lord, because He's coming back. This is how He sets the stage for this whole chapter.

Part I: Parable of the Ten Virgins

Matthew 25:1: "Then shall the Kingdom of Heaven be compared to ten virgins, who took their

lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom."

Jesus is talking about Himself. He already that He is coming as thief comes in the night when nobody is expecting Him. Here it says that Kingdom of Heaven, obviously a parable.

Verse 2: "And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. The ones who were foolish took their lamps, *but* they did not take oil with them; **but the wise took oil in their vessels along with their lamps**" (vs 2-4).

- all ten virgins had vessels
- all ten virgins had lamps
- all ten virgins had oil in them

But the ones who were foolish did not take any additional oil. They had lamps, and we will see later how we know that they really had vessels and had some oil in them. "...**but the wise took oil in their vessels along with their lamps.**"

It was not just the lamp, and it was not just the oil that they had in the lamp.

Verse 5: "Now, when the bridegroom was gone a long time, they **all** became drowsy and slept"—**all ten of them!** It wasn't that the wise ones didn't sleep; they **all slept!**

Verse 6: "**But in the middle of the night...**" [a long time, and this can be compared to the time since Jesus has been gone, approximately 2,000 years since He was here. So, He was gone a long time and they all became drowsy and slept.

Verse 6: "But in *the* middle of *the* night there was a cry: 'Look, the bridegroom is coming! Go out to meet him.'" *That cry woke them up!* All those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps;

Verse 7: "Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps....]let's get ready] ...And **the foolish** said to the wise, '**Give us some of your oil, because our lamps are going out**'" (vs 7-8).

This is implying that they did have some oil in there. They would not be *going out* if there were not any oil in their lamps. But they didn't have the extra portion. They didn't have the additional oil to keep their lamps going.

Verse 9: "But **the wise** answered, saying, 'No, lest there not be enough for us and for you....'" *Meaning this is a personal thing!*

We would like to give you some, but then there's not enough for any of us.

“...But instead, go to those who sell, and buy for yourselves” (v 9).

You can go and buy it, this is what we did. So go to those who sell and buy for yourselves.

It was at that time when the bridegroom was coming; obviously it was too late, and we know what happens. It is very interesting that this is what happens with the wise virgins telling them to ‘go and buy; this is what we did.’

Verse 10: “And while **they went to buy, the bridegroom came**; and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast, **and the door was shut**.”

The door being shut is very important, because they were not there when the time came to go in.

- it was not that they didn’t want to be there
- it’s not that they didn’t desire it
- it’s not that they were not called
- it’s not that they were not virgins
- it’s not that they didn’t have oil, because it was running out in their lamps

Maybe they didn’t have it at that point, but they had it before!

- it’s not that they were not given oil originally

They did, and we understand that the oil really represents the Holy Spirit! But having that Holy Spirit in us that makes us qualified to be able to see and to go in with the bridegroom. *But the door was shut!* So, what the other virgins:

- who were also called
- who also at one time had oil in their lamps
- who also slept just like the wise ones

they went to buy!

Verse 11: “And afterwards the other virgins also came, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us.’ But He answered *and* said, ‘Truly I say to you, I do not know you’” (vs 11-12).

This is very interesting, because if we stop and think about the words that He said—this is Jesus Christ, obviously, coming as the Bridegroom—having shut the door. The other virgins came and we don’t know if they actually got the oil or did not, or just found the door and they came knocking. But it was in the middle of the night when this happened, because it says:

Verse 6: “But in *the* middle of *the* night there was a cry...” *So, it was dark!*

One of the things that is very interesting

here is that they did not have oil in their lamps.

- it doesn’t say that they actually went and bought
- it doesn’t say that they actually got oil
- it doesn’t say that they came to the door

in either case the answer is:

Verse 12: “...‘Truly I say to you, **I do not know you**.’”

One of the reasons why it’s lamps and oil is because it’s light so they can see the appearance of the person. So, we can assume that the five wise virgins had oil because it says that the oil in their lamps was on and when they were going to come in the bridegroom could see their faces in the light of their lamp. They presented themselves before the bridegroom and the he could see that, ‘Yes, you are so and so’ to the five virgins. He knew them and identified them and let them in.

But then to the others, he says, “...‘**Truly I say to you, I do not know you**.’”

Then the warning, v 13: “**Watch, therefore, for you do not know the day nor the hour in which the Son of man is coming**.”

You don’t know when He’s coming, *but you have to ready so that He may know you!* This is the key point about **knowing the Bridegroom, knowing our Lord!** That’s the important thing here!

The first part of the process of conversion that we’re going to talk about here is that it has to start with Him, because we cannot get that oil ourselves. We have to go where they sell it. He says, ‘Come and buy without price.’

He gives this oil! He gives to those whom He’s called! God can give us this oil! He can give us more of His Holy Spirit as we continue to develop our relationship with Him. This is the very beginning of the process of conversion! It has to start with Him!

John 6:44: “No one can come to Me... Jesus Christ, the Bridegroom] ...unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

It’s a joint operation, we cannot come to the Father except through Christ. We cannot come to Christ unless the Father draws us. But it says here that “...no one can come to Me...”; *no one can come in the door when I come as a Bridegroom unless the Father draws him!*

It’s interesting that the ‘wise ones’ brought oil in their vessels so that when the bridegroom showed up they knew that they could be seen and identified. That’s exactly what He says to the foolish

ones:

I do not know you! I do not have a relationship with you! You have not been with me; I do not know who you are, I cannot see you.

- **IF** there's no oil in our lamps
- **IF** there's not that fire of the Spirit burning in us
- **IF** it's not reflecting who we are, what we do and how we live

THEN He's not going to know us, because He's not dwelling in us!

But it's the beginning of the process of conversion and it has to start with Him! It has to start with the calling from the Father, when He calls us into repentance for the forgiveness of our sins. We make a commitment and are baptized, **then** we receive the Holy Spirit. If not, we're not of the virgins and we don't have the oil!

But if we do that and we are called and have repented, and we have this oil and the laying on of hands on us and have the Holy Spirit, that can grow. Our relationship with God grows, and He expects that, He expects that we continue to buy and have that oil handy so that He may know us. And whenever He comes He will recognize us! We know that we are His! We can come! And this is the very first part of this parable.

Matthew 25:13: "Watch, therefore, for you do not know the day nor the hour in which the Son of man is coming."

This is the first part, *the beginning of the process of conversion!* Then he moves on to the second thing, apparently unrelated. But it's totally related, because once he's given that Holy Spirit, then there's the next part.

Part Two: Parable of the Talents

Verse 14: "For *the Kingdom of Heaven* is like a man leaving the country, who called his own servants and delivered to them his property." *This is a different scene!*

He's a man leaving the country, but He's also the Bridegroom; He's our Lord and Master! He is the One Who owns everything, and who servants we are. Who call His own servants and deliver to them His property. He has given us everything!

- He created the world
- He created everything that is

It's was God the Father, through Him—through this man or like a man, because we know that He's talking about Himself, God in the flesh Who is speaking here.

Verse 15: "Now, to one he gave five talents, and to another two, and to another one; he *gave* to each one according to his own ability..."

This reflects what kind of Lord and Master He is, that He gives us talents according to our ability, but they also carry responsibility to do something with them. He doesn't give any more that he can handle. That's why he said:

"...according to his own ability and immediately left the country. Then the one who had received five talents went and traded with them, and made an additional five talents. In the same way also, the one who had *received* two *talents* also gained two others. But the one who had received the single *talent* went and dug in the earth, and hid his lord's money" (vs 15-18).

It's very interesting what happens with these three. He gave according to their own ability, but what He's going to show is really what each one of them did. He already says what they did, and now the judgment is from the Lord and Master of the goods.

Verse 19: "Now, after a long time..."

The same analogy, the same lord, the same bridegroom. The same person, and you're the servants, the virgins. It's all together.

"...the lord of those servants came to take account with them. Then the one who had received five talents came to *him and* brought an additional five talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered five talents to me; see, I have gained five other talents besides them'" (vs 19-20).

Here's ten! I did something with what you gave me! Here's ten! I put forth my effort!

Verse 21: "And his lord said to him, 'Well *done*, good and faithful servant! *Because* you were faithful over a few things... [even five, which was the most; still a few things in the eyes of the Lord and Master] ...I will set you over many things....'"

It was a test! This is not the real thing! This is just a tiny little bit of what I want you to do, but I have to test you; I have to prove you; I have to train you!

And that's exactly what He did!

"...*Because* you were faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord" (v 21).

Verse 22: "And the one who had received two talents also came to him *and* said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; see, I have gained two other talents besides them.'"

It's interesting because they both come and say the same exact wording, and they both knew the exact same thing. They did 100%! He tells them:

Verse 23: "His lord said to him, 'Well *done*, good and faithful servant!... [the same exact wording] ...*Because* you were faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'"

It doesn't say it was many, the same that had five. He could certainly do it, because He is the Lord and in the end He's going to give the rewards to whomever, in whatever measure. But the point here is that they both had talents and they both 100% with that. To the one who had five, he gave 100%, another five. The other one had two, and he gave 100%; another two.

They were both "...good and faithful servants!..." There was no difference. It was according to their ability, and they both developed according to their ability. They both rendered to the Master the same amount, 100%!

It's interesting that He doesn't say He gave them five and he gained two or three. That would have been good, but He said 100% for a reason. He puts five and five; two and two! Because *it's* your maximum potential; ***it's our maximum potential!*** This is what God expects of us, 100% effort!

Verse 24: "Then the one who had received the single talent also came to *him and* said, 'Lord, I knew that you are a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter. And *because I was afraid*, I went and hid your talent in the earth. *Now* look, you have your own'" (vs 24-25).

Here's the one talent that You gave me; I did nothing with it! But it's protected; I didn't lose anything!

Verse 26: "His lord answered *and* said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant! ***You knew*** that I reap where I did not sow, and gather what I did not scatter. Because ***you knew this***, you were duty-bound to take my talent to the money exchangers, *so that* when I came, I could have received my own with interest'" (vs 26-27).

What investment, maybe in the history of man, has given us interest of 100%? But He said, 'At least you could have done that.' The others were unafraid, and they put it to work. They didn't just invest passively in something. That's what He says: *Give it to the moneychangers and even if you didn't do anything with it, fine, at least do something with it!*

He didn't do anything with it; he didn't even

touch it! He just hid his talent. This is the sentence that He gives:

Verse 28: "Therefore, take the talent from him, and give *it* to the one who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, *more* shall be given, and *he* shall have abundance; on the other hand, *as for* the one who does not have, **even that which he has shall be taken from him.**"

This is the second part of the process of conversion; v 30: "And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness.' There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The second part of this process of conversion we can see here is that once we have been drawn, once we have been called—and it's all because of God; not because of anything we've done—and He has given us the most precious thing we could ever receive, which is His Holy Spirit. Our relationship with God:

- so that He may know us
- so that He may be able to see our face
- so that we may see that He lives in us

That was the promise that He would come and dwell in us! Christ and the Father both come and dwell in us! There's nothing more fantastic and important than that! Once we have received all of that then we also have a responsibility to do something with this.

We have a responsibility to do something with what we have been given. We can also summarize this:

Matthew 6:33: "But *as for* you, **seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness**, and all these things shall be added to you."

That's what it implies; that's what we are to be doing. It implies action! It's so interesting, because what He wants is for us to develop 100% of our potential; that's what He wants to do. We know that it's Him, that we cannot do it from our own selves. We know that God has to dwell in us, He has to live in us. ***But we have to be willing!*** We have to be cooperating. He wants our full cooperation, 100% to do this! This is what He expects from us: *To do something with what we have been given! To take these talents, take the abilities, to take everything that we are*—we're all created different, but He has given all of us talents.

There are different things, different abilities, different inclinations, different things that He has given us. He's make us all different, but He expects us to go and use them, trade with them, develop them in an active relationship of knowing Him. It builds upon the first part of the process of conversion, builds upon having the Holy Spirit,

having a relationship. That's a foundation and relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

But what do we do with that? *We do have a responsibility to Them to be good and faithful servants!*

We're not only children, but we are also servants and in training! Those are the things that They want to see in us. Then He says that *to the one who has, more shall be given!* He wants to increase it, increase all the things that They're working in us. He wants to see all these things.

It's very interesting because this is the second part of the process of conversion. Now we're going to go into the third part, and then we'll talk a little bit more about how we put all these together.

Part Three: Bearing Fruit

John 15 talks about trading and producing, not hiding that talent, whether individually or collectively, we cannot hide that talent. We have so much to learn and so much to grow in grace and knowledge and understanding and in the depth of the Word of God. That's of God because Jesus said, 'My words are Spirit and they are Life.' We have:

- a lot to learn
- a lot to grow
- a lot to really do with the things that we've been given

but it has to active!

Maybe some time in the past with God it was all on us, and we perhaps have been accused of trying to *earn* our salvation. We know that's not the Truth. We know we're trying to please the Father, and we're living in an active relationship where *They are the workmen!*

John 15:1: "I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman." *We are the branches!*

Verse 4: "Dwell in Me, and I in you. **As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself...** [talents producing] ...**but only if it remains in the vine...**"

It remains in that relationship with that Holy Spirit, if it remains with that oil, with that fire burning bright,

"...**only if it remains in the vine,** neither can you *bear fruit* unless you are dwelling in Me" (v 4).

You can try to keep the commandments all the best that you can, but:

Verse 5: "I am the vine, *and you are* the branches. The one who is dwelling in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; **because apart from Me you**

can do nothing."

This is the second part of conversion that it's talking about, *bearing fruit!* He's telling us here that

- ***unless*** we dwell in Him
- ***unless*** we have that Holy Spirit
- ***unless*** we are known by Him
- ***unless*** He knows us through:
 - ✓ prayer
 - ✓ study
 - ✓ that relationship living and active all day long

That's exactly the relationship that Jesus Christ had with the Father, in constant communication through the Spirit. That understanding that in relationship cannot be in a vacuum, cannot be separate.

- there's nothing that we can do on our own to earn salvation
- there's nothing that we can do to deserve this

But if we try to do it apart from Them, we can do nothing! It's going to profit nothing!

We can keep all the commandments of God as perfect as we are able to and still be told 'I do not know you! You don't have that Holy Spirit.'

- ***IF*** we're not doing it from the heart,
- ***IF*** we're not doing it in context of a relationship
- ***IF*** we're not doing it out of love for Him, the Bridegroom
- ***IF*** we're not doing it with the Holy Spirit that He gives us

This comes from Him; that's what He says to dwell in Me and I in you!

- ***IF*** we're not doing it in that context

We're not going to produce! We cannot hide that one talent; we have to be growing in grace and knowledge, and understanding and bearing fruit.

The fruit is what is seen; the fruit is not just what we know, it's not an intellectual thing, it's how those intellectual things reflect in our lives, and how God can form our mind and heart.

Verse 8: "In this is My Father glorified, **that you bear much fruit...**" *That's what They want!* They want us to reach 100% of the things that they have given us; that we develop that character, the They develop that character to our maximum potential! *That's exactly what They want!*

"...so shall you be My disciples" (v 8). *We're not His disciples if we're not bearing fruit!*

We will be His disciples of staying close to

Him and coming close to Him! We try! That's the other important thing to remember, that He is the Judge, *not us! And not others!*

He did tell us all that you shall know them by their fruits! But as long as we're growing and overcoming, as long as there's progress—even if it's a little bit—like the interest that He said, at least the interest. It seems like a little bit in our eyes, but He will make it grow if we come to Him. ***IF*** we seek that relationship and seek Him and love Him with all our heart, mind, soul and strength, He's going to make this happen!

Verse 16: “You yourselves did not choose Me, but **I have personally chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go forth and bear fruit**, and that your fruit should remain; so that whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He may give you.”

This is a very, very important key here; that we have to ask the Father to grow and produce these fruits in us! He says, ‘Apart from Me, you can do nothing!’ Maybe in the past, if we were learning the letter of the Law, that was important, that was a foundation, but now we're coming to understand how that all ties together. How that all fits and understand that the Laws and commandments of God are foundation of His strength!

But we have to continue to grow from there, not leaving them behind, but grow in them! Grow in spiritual understanding and maturity of what those laws and commandments mean personally in our lives for the development of our mind and heart in the image of Jesus Christ, the Son of God!

We're going to get back to Matt. 25 to see the last part of this chapter, the third section. We've seen ***the first part***: the Holy Spirit and the calling and relationship and Christ telling us whether He knows us or not—depending how He views us—if we are being the wise virgins or we're being the foolish virgins. If we we're developing that relationship so that He may give us more of His Spirit.

The second part is something we have to do, we have to be willing, we have to come to Them; apart from Them we can do nothing! But we have a responsibility to do a:

- 100% effort
- 100% cooperation
- 100% growth

That's what They expect of us! That's exactly what *They* are going to tell us if w stay strong, endure to the end! *They're* going to say, **'Well done, good and faithful servant!'**

What we've see as far as growth and what They want and the development of the character in the very image of the Son Jesus Christ; this ties straight into the third part:

Matthew 25:31: “Now, **when** the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the Holy angels with Him, **then** shall He sit upon *the* Throne of His glory.”

It's very important that we take a little bit of context in this third part, because the first two parts are parables. They are things that He is comparing the Kingdom of God to. This part is not! This part is actual:

- “...**when** the Son of man **shall come**...”—*it will happen!*
- “...**then** shall He sit upon *the* Throne of His glory”

It will happen!

Verse 32: “And He shall gather before Him all the nations; and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.” *He uses sheep and goats, but this is actually going to take place!*

Verse 33: “And He shall set the sheep at His right hand, but the goats at *His* left. Then shall the King say to those at His right hand, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from *the* foundation of *the* world” (vs 33-34).

Then He explains why! This is going to happen! He's going to tell them to come! He's going to invite them and welcome them! It's amazing when we think about it!

- we have been blessed of His Father
- He has called us and given us that Spirit
- He has worked in us and teaching us
- He's working the character of His Son Jesus Christ in us

This is the blessing from the Father! And this is the end result, to inherit the Kingdom! Then He says why:

Verse 35: “For I was hungry, and you gave Me *something* to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me *something* to drink; I was a stranger, and you took Me in; *I was* naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me” (vs 35-36).

These are actions! These are literally fruits! Then notice the response from those whom He invites to come to His Kingdom!

Verse 37: “Then shall the righteous answer

Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, and fed *You*? Or thirsty, and gave *You* a drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and took *You in*? Or naked, and clothed *You*?’ (vs 37-38).

They’re puzzled; they don’t know what He’s talking about, what He’s referring to.

Verse 39: “‘And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and came to You?’ And answering, the King shall say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, inasmuch as you have done *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you have done *it* to Me’” (vs 39-40).

These are fruits! He’s telling them that you did it! ‘You may not know that you have done it, but I was there, and these are the fruits.’ The interesting part is that these are fruits that can be seen. Many people in mainstream Christianity—that are sincere and searching for Christ—jump straight to this part—and they say that this is what Christ wants, that we feed the poor, visit the sick, take in the stranger. ‘Let’s do those things.’ God says:

NO! That’s not what I’m talking about! This is the end result of the other two things that I already told you. This is the end result:

- *if* you have the Holy Spirit
- *if* you’re called from Me
- *if* you really know Me
- *if* you really know Who I am

and you have that relationship and you’re doing what you’re supposed to be doing

- *if* you keep the commandments
- *if* you dwell in Me
- *if* you study
- *if* you live these things out
- *if* you meditate
- *if* you take a pause and take stock of what you’re doing
- *if* I’m working in you

This is the end result! You’re going to do this by nature so much so that you’re not even going to know that you did it! ***This is your nature, your heart converted and changed!***

This is what He’s saying!

You did it to Me because you were like Me!
You became like Me! ***Not only did I:***

- call you
- favor you
- give you the calling
- give you the oil
- give you the Holy Spirit
- have a relationship and you knew Me

- give you My Word; the Spirit and the Life

You listened to Me and you obeyed!
You were transformed and your heart was changed!

- you have a merciful, loving heart!
- you have heart that has compassion upon the sick, the poor and the needy

Not just on them, but on everybody! First, those around your house, maybe that’s what He means! Maybe it’s how we treat those within our own house *first*.

When did we see you naked, hungry and thirsty? The ones in our own house sometimes are the most hungry and thirsty and sick! ***Sometimes those can be the ones we most neglect!***

But when He starts to show us that, then it’s a different heart, a different mind, ***it’s the mind of Christ!*** That’s is exactly what God wants in us! ***He wants to transform us!*** We cannot be like the rest of Christianity who jumps straight to here and starts setting up all these things. These are good things, but the don’t convert the heart. There has to be the actual fruit.

Then He says, v 41: “‘Then shall He also say to those on *the left*, ‘Depart from Me, *you* cursed ones, into the eternal fire, which has been prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry, and you did not give Me *anything* to eat; I was thirsty, and you did not give Me *anything* to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not take Me in; *I was* naked, and you did not clothe Me; *I was* sick, and in prison, and you did not *come to visit Me*’” (vs 41-43).

Verse 44: “‘Then they also shall answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and we did not minister to You?’”

Where were You? We would have done it if we would have seen You.

- Is this real conversion?
- Is this real conversion of the heart and mind?
- Is this really with the Holy Spirit?
- Is this really taking the effort to produce fruit?

The fruit is what can be seen!

- it’s not what we know in our head
- it’s not how many sermons we listen to
- it’s not how many things we learn from the Bible

That’s important, but it’s not what it is. Fruits are

different! Fruits are exposed! Fruits are the things that everybody can see! That's why Jesus Christ said, 'You shall know them by their fruits.'

If we don't know the word, we would have done it! In fact we tired. In fact we tried; we setup all these charitable organizations, we did all these works of good.

*There's nothing wrong with those, **but it doesn't come from a converted heart and mind that has the Spirit of God!***

- **IF** it doesn't come from a willing mind and willing body to do the will of God
- **IF** it doesn't come from us really striving to use the talents and abilities that He has given us:
 - ✓ to obey His voice
 - ✓ to keep all His commandments to the best of our ability
 - ✓ to understand those commandments as we develop that relationship
 - ✓ to grow in the grace and knowledge of God
 - ✓ to grow in understanding of Who He is
- **IF** we don't those things

THEN He's not going to do what He says.

Verse 45: "Then shall He answer them, saying, 'Truly I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these... [it has to come from the heart] ...neither did you do it to Me.'"

Sometimes "...one of the least of these..." might be the ones right next to you! Right next to your own house! Or in your congregation! Or where you work! People that you talk to the most day in and day out.

Verse 46: "And they shall go away into eternal punishment, **but the righteous into eternal life.**"

This is the process of conversion! We cannot short circuit it and get to the end of Matt. 25 and talk about the things that we need to be doing. Those are important, but those are the result!

It's almost like He's telling us not to focus on those things purposely, because He says of those who will enter, they don't even know or notice that they do it. But it's result of having done the first two parts, already having a relationship with God in Truth with the foundation on the Rock and then continue striving with all of our might, like Jesus Christ instructed us.

He was asked if there would be 'few' or 'many' who would go in to the Kingdom of God. He didn't say that it's going to be few or many, He just

said to strive with all your being, because many will want to and not be able to. But if we do it, if we are striving in that relationship, in that context of relationship, striving with all of our heart and doing 100%, giving our 100%... It might be just two talents, but that's okay. It doesn't have to be five if He didn't give us five, but He does expect maximum effort! **He does expect 100%**, because what's He's doing is absolutely wonderful!

Eph. 4 is the goal; this is what He wants us to do, to get to. It's **Their work of Their hands; They take credit; they're the Authors and Finishers of our faith—God the Father and Jesus Christ!** We are Their workmanship! It's not for us to do, but we have to cooperate and have to want to.

We have to buy that oil, and right now is the time to buy that oil! There's no tomorrow! This is the time to buy the oil while we still can! When the oppression is so great that there's nowhere to go, there's not going to be enough time to buy that oil. When Christ is returning, there's not going to be time to buy that oil. He's already come! Right now is the time to do this!

Ephesians 4:11: "And He gave some as apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers **for the perfecting of the saints...**" (vs 11-12).

This is what They're doing; They're **using** the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers **as instruments of righteousness**, only as 'tools' in Their hands; tools in the hands of Christ and God the Father "**...for the perfecting of the saints...**"—*all of us!*

"...for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ until we all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God..." (vs 12-13).

Exactly what Christ said, 'I do not know you' to those foolish virgins, but the wise ones He knew! That's why He let them in, because He could see their faces in the fire, with the oil. "**...until we all come to the knowledge of the Son of God...**"—*until we really know Him!*

Anybody that we see on the street or in their house, wherever, we do those things that are the end result of the process of conversion. But we have to have this first; He has to convert us:

"...unto a perfect man..." (v 13).

In the measure that we're being converted, we start doing those things more and more every time.

"**...unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ**" (v 13).

That is the goal! Until we are just like Him, because what does He do? *He wasn't going out just seeking who was sick; He didn't do that!* He lived His life obeying the Father, but when He saw a sick person, or somebody came to Him—or demon possessed—He took care of that! He healed them! He wasn't just trying to show off; He wasn't doing that. He was living about His life and *whenever He saw an opportunity to help*, or somebody came and asked Him for help, *He did it, because that was His nature!* He's our example!

We are to live our lives, and as we come in contact with people, *as we continue to grow and develop our relationship with Christ and God the Father*—through prayer and study—*that these things change our mind:*

- change the way that we think
- change the way that we view people
- change the way that we view circumstances
- change the way we do certain things

Verse 14: “So that we no longer be children, tossed and carried about with every wind of doctrine...”

Why? *Because we know Him; we know the One Who is giving the doctrine! We know the Word of God!*

“...by the sleight of men in *cunning* craftiness, with a view to the systematizing of the error” (v 14).

- we *know* our Lord and Master
- we *know* the Bridegroom

His Word is living and active! We're no longer children because we're growing!

Yes, we start with the basics like when we were learning the ABCs and then words and then sentences. *It's the same way in our walk with God!*

- we learn the commandments of God in the letter
- then we learn them in the Spirit of the Law
- then we have them written in our heart and mind
- then those change our way of thinking

then they change

- our vision
- our works
- our words
- our attitudes

Then we continue to grow *unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ!* But we have to do this:

Verse 15: “But holding the Truth in love...”—*and Jesus Christ is the Truth!* Holding Jesus Christ—the Word of God—living by every word that comes out of the mouth of God.

“...may in all things grow up into Him Who is the Head, *even Christ*” (v 15)—*because it's Who He is!*

- He is the Head, the Head of the Church
- He is the Head of the Body, the Church
- He is our Lord and Master

We all—each and every one—*have direct relationship with Him! We have been given grace, this access to the very Throne of God the Father, through Jesus Christ, and to His Word every day! So that we may grow up into Him, having the Spirit of God the Father and Jesus Christ!* The begetting from the Father and the Spirit of Christ to have the mind of Christ. Having that we will “...grow up into Him Who is the Head...”

Then doing the things that He commands us to do, with love and understanding as we grow and develop. We don't do it always the same way. But

- we grow in that understanding
- we grow in that love
- we grow in that relationship

until we become just the what that He is! It becomes our nature; our nature is finally changed and we can do those works of the sheep, not of the goats! We can do those things without thinking about it. We are purposely looking for them, opportunities. There will be plenty throughout the rest of our life:

- to help others
- to help the needy
- to help the sick

And we will do so without thinking, without noticing that that's what we're doing! We don't seek reward, because it's the converted mind and heart, that nature of God. God doesn't give us things because He expects something in return. He gives us things *because He's good!* He takes care of us *because He loves us!* *That's the nature that he wants us to develop, and to change and grow into!*

John 17 ties everything together. *This is the desire of God the Father and Jesus Christ*, that we go through this process of conversion. But as we have seen, it has to start with Them and the Spirit, even in that we do have a responsibility to go buy that oil while we still have time. It progresses to working with those talents and the things that He has given us. To grow and develop in that relationship as children and as servants. In understanding from our example from Christ so that all these end results

come about. All of these fruits are produced, as He said, ‘Growing in Him, and Him in us.’

John 17:13—*Christ praying to the Father:* “But now I am coming to You; and these things I am speaking *while yet* in the world, **that they may have My joy fulfilled in them.**” *These things from Matt. 25!* So that we can have that hope, to hear those words:

Good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord. Come to the Kingdom that has been prepared for you before the foundation of the Earth.

Verse 16: “**They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.**”

That’s exactly why They want us to go through this process, in His footsteps; this whole process of conversion and converting the heart and mind, to go into the depths of the Word of God.

He asked for a very special favor; v 17: “Sanctify them in Your Truth; Your Word is the Truth.”

Christ asks the Father that we—you and I, brethren—be sanctified in Him! Just like He said in John 15, ‘Dwell in Me.’ That God the Father would sanctify us in Christ, in His Word.

- that we would *know* that we know Him with that oil
- that we *know* that we are being faithful servants
 - ✓ because we are trading
 - ✓ because we are actively seeking to please Him
 - ✓ because we know He’s coming back
 - ✓ because we know He has a reward
 - ✓ because we know that He’s going to give us the greatest gift ever, *eternal life*

Verse 20—a *prayer specifically for us:* “I do not pray for these only... [His disciples] ...but also for those who shall believe in Me through their word.” *That’s us! That’s you personally!*

Verse 21: “That **they all may be one,** even as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they **also may be one in Us...**”

- They want us to be *one with one another*
- They want us to be *one with Them*

Not apart from Them!

“...in order that the world may believe that You did send Me” (v 21).

How? *Because we are feeding the hungry,*

taking care of the needy and visiting the sick! Not in an outward manner, but because that’s our nature! It’s our mind, who we are! We’re not doing it to get a reward; ***we’re doing it because we love Him, because of that relationship with Him!***

That’s the way He was, and because we believe in Him and believe that He is good. We believe that He is making us, transforming us into the very image of Himself. God the Father is forming us into the image of His Son, ***that the world may believe that You did send Me,*** because of how we are! Not just because of what we do, that’s just the end result.

Verse 22: “And I have given them the glory that You gave *to Me...* [first part of conversion; the Holy Spirit, that glory] ...**in order that they may be one...** [in that Spirit] ...in the same way *that We are one:* I in them, and You in Me, **that they may be perfected into one...** [the whole process of conversion is that we will become perfect into one, into God] ...and that the world may know that You did send Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me” (vs 22-23).

With that love that the world may know the love of the Father and Christ in us, and through us! That we received Their love and love Them back, but also that that love would flow outward. That’s the difference between the sheep and the goats. They’re transformed and have it in them! They’re different people!

Verse 24: “Father, I desire that those whom You have given Me may also be with Me where I am... [the Bridegroom] ...so that they may behold My glory, which You have given Me; **because You did love Me before the foundation of the world.**”

As we have seen in Matt. 25, this encompasses the entire process of conversion. These three segments are not unrelated; they’re totally related and they’re sequential! There’s so much more in there.

I encourage us all to study these and put it together with other Scriptures to understand, to know and understand, what it is that God wants to do with us. To have that and:

- ask Them for that
- ask Them for more of the Holy Spirit.
- ask Them for understanding
- ask Them to help us to see our potential
- ask Them to help us to see the talents and gifts that They have given us
- ask them to help us to develop those
- ask Them to open our mind to really form it on our heart:
 - ✓ to really know Him

- ✓ to really love Him
- ✓ to really be with Him
- ✓ to really have that relationship
- ✓ to really develop that potential 100%

*so that our nature is changed and that we hear those words: **Well done, good and faithful servant!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 24:42
- 2) Matthew 25:1-12, 6, 12-13
- 3) John 6:44
- 4) Matthew 25:13-30
- 5) Matthew 6:33
- 6) John 15:1, 4-5, 8, 16
- 7) Matthew 25:31-46
- 8) Ephesians 4:11-15
- 9) John 17:13, 16-24

EE:bo
Transcribed: 8-16-21

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