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In Matthew 25:1-13, Jesus spoke of ten virgins. Notice that none of them were harlots (See James. 4:4 for a definition of spiritual harlotry). They were all virgins. In other words, they had a good testimony before men. Their lights were all burning (Matt. 5:16). Their good works were seen by others. Yet among all these virgins, only five were wise. But this was not obvious to everyone at the beginning. Only five had taken oil with them in their flasks (Matt. 25:4).

That oil in the flask was not visible in the night, like the light was, and speaks of our hidden life before God that men can not see in the darkness of this world. All of us have a flask. The question is whether we have any oil in it or not.

Oil is used throughout the Scriptures as a symbol of the Holy Spirit and refers here to that life of God that the Holy Spirit communicates to our spirit. The outward manifestation of that life is the light (John. 1:4). The inner content is the oil. Many are taken up with their outward testimony alone. This is their folly. It is in times of trial and testing that we find that the outward light alone is insufficient. One needs an inner content of the divine life to carry us through triumphantly.

"If you are weak in a crisis, you are weak in reality" (Prov. 24:10). The crises of life show us how strong or weak we are. In this parable, the crisis was that the bridegroom delayed his coming. It is time that proves the reality of our spirituality.

He who has faith endures until the end and is saved. It is time also that proves who has an inner content in his life and who does not. Many are like the seed that sprouted up immediately, but have no inner life. There is no depth of soil in their hearts (Mark. 4:5).

This is why it is difficult to assess new believers concerning their spirituality, or their wholeheartedness. Time will reveal everything, if we have the patience to wait. The way to be ready for Christ's coming, then, is to have an inner life of purity and faithfulness before God's face - in our thoughts, attitudes and motives that people around us cannot see. If we do not have this, we are deceiving ourselves if we think we are ready for Christ's coming.