

THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

Text: Matthew 25:14-30

Key Word: Talents

Key Thought: We Have an Individual Responsibility with What God Has Entrusted into Our Care

Here we have the continuation of thought from our Lord's answer to His disciples about the signs of the End Times. This parable is not to be confused with the one recorded in Luke 19:11-27. Both are very important parables for the End Times but they view life from two different perspectives.

The Parable of the Ten Minas or Pounds (Luke 19:11-27) places a stress upon equal opportunity [each of the ten servants were given a mina {NOTE: 1 talent = 60 minas}]. The Parable of the Talents places a stress upon individual responsibility. The apostle Paul also kept his teaching in balance even though he knew that some would think he was judging them unfairly.

"In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us.

7. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you,

8. Nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you.

9. We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow.

10. For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: 'If a man will not work, he shall not eat.'

11. We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies.

12. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat.

13. And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right.

14. If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of him. Do not associate with him, in order that he may feel ashamed.

15. Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother."

II Thessalonians 3:6-15

“Now we urge you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you . . .

14. And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle . . .

I Thessalonians 5:12,14

** A pastor who worked very hard on his sermon preparation was often rewarded through the customary support of gifts like produce, homemade butter, baked goods and even manure for his garden.

One day after the morning service, the minister was speaking to each one who had attended as they made their way out of the sanctuary. The following conversation was overheard.

“And thank you so very much for the load of manure for my garden,” John, said the minister to one of the local farmers.

“You welcome, pastor,” came the reply. *“In fact, that sermon you preached this morning was worth TWO loads of manure.”* **

It is often that Jesus would tell different stories or parables to supply another truth that had been omitted from the previous story. Jesus wanted to offer His people the beauty of beholding diamonds of truth from its many lovely angles. Our Lord was careful not to come across as being one-sided in His teaching. He guarded His hearers from thinking that all they needed was **change of heart** without the **change of action**. He required of His followers to make good use of their **time, treasure and talents**.

As we continue in our 3-part parable of Matthew 24, we find a very well-rounded teaching by our Lord.

“While the Virgins were represented as *waiting* for their Lord, we have here the servants *working* for Him”

R. C. Trench
“The Parables of the Lord”

God IS interested in developing disciples who are balanced in their Christian life. He works both on the **inward spiritual life** but also on the **external activities of life**.

I. The Nature and Number of Talents (Matthew 25:14-15)

II. The Use and Abuse of Talents (Matthew 25:16-18)

III. The Return and Reward of the Talents (Matthew 25:19-30)

I. The Nature and Number of Talents (Matthew 25:14-15)

We use the word “*talent*” quite a bit different than it was used in ancient times. We say that a person has talents when they are able to do something quite well. They have an outstanding natural ability.

The word used here though is “*talantos*” which is a noun that is used to describe a “*quantity*” rather than a “*quality*.” It is not something that we possess as much as something that our Lord possesses and loans to us for a purpose.

A talent represented about 350 pounds. A Jewish talent represented about 3,000 shekels of the sanctuary or 75 US lbs. or 34 metric kg. **One talent was equal to about 6,000 denari. A denari was what a common laborer was paid for a day of work.** Therefore, each talent represented about 20 years of wages. Taking an average wage of just \$40,000.00/yr., we would see that one servant was given \$4,000,000.00 while the other was given \$1,600,000.00 and the final servant was given \$800,000. There is no doubt that they had a very generous master who has richly given to each servant a great amount.

I find it interesting how the Lord values what we would consider being an extravagant amount.

“You have been faithful with a few things; . . . “

Matthew 25:21,23

“Spiritual wealth, secured at the infinite cost of Calvary, is what is offered us to enrich the World. Such wealth beyond compare is committed to our hands to invest.”

Herbert Lockyer
“*All the Parables of the Bible*”
p. 243

It seems very clear to me that these “*talents*” REPRESENT the spiritual truths, blessings and gifts of the Lord while our “*ability*” refers to our own natural talents, physical ability, and personality.

II. The Use and Abuse of Talents (Matthew 25:16-18)

The two faithful servants went at once (Matthew 25:16) and put **“his”** money to work. We must realize that are entrusted with the spiritual blessings of heaven not to **accumulate** them but rather to **administer** them. God is careful to give us according to our **ability** (Matthew 25:15). God doesn't attempt to place the ocean in a bucket. He adequately prepares each vessel for its proper use. God gives us what we can handle. He knows our limitations better than we do. We often think of ourselves too highly. If we would bury one talent - we will also bury five. **Don't be deceived in believing that you can do better with more.**

Father: Son, do you realize that when Lincoln was your age he was already studying hard to be a lawyer?

Son: “Right, dad, and when he was your age, he was already the president of the United States.”

Bob Phillips

“The World's Greatest Collection of Clean Jokes”

p. 111

*“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good . . .
All these are the work of one and the same Spirit,
and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.”*

I Corinthians 12:7,11

Few of us are five talent servants. Some are two talent servants. Most are one talent servants. These are the ones that God is most concerned about. **We must always remember that we will never lose what we use.** What we give out we will get back. God doesn't attempt to keep filling a full cup. Once we empty ourselves, He is able to pour Himself and His blessings through us. If we don't give out, we will become stagnant. **Faithful service opens the door for further service.**

It is much more worthy to use one talent well than to act foolishly with five. The cedar trees may reach lofty heights, but they bear no fruit in comparison with the dwarf pear tree which can often have more fruit laden upon it than it can bear.

III. The Return and Reward of the Talents (Matthew 25:19-30)

The phrase “*after a long time*” indicates that the Master always gives ample opportunity for us to receive His approval. He is not so much interested in **short fame** as He is in **continued faithfulness**. While the Parable of the Ten Virgins shouted “*Watch!*” this one shouts “*Work!*” **We must be careful that we don’t lose what we have kept hidden.** Don’t become like King Saul who lost his crown to King David.

This idle/lazy servant made statements about his Master that were not true. Our Lord is ALWAYS fair and just in His dealings with us. The master’s judgement toward this servant was correct.

“You wicked, lazy servant!”

Matthew 25:26

Even if this servant had placed the money in a bank, he could have at least gained some interest. This would not have taken any of his time or effort to do so. In the long period of time that the master waited to return there could have been a substantial gain.

5087 Interest on Widow’s Mite

*** It is estimated that if the widow’s mite had been deposited at the “*First National Bank of Jerusalem*” to draw only four percent interest semiannually, the fund today would total 4.8×10^{20} . If a bank on earth could multiply the widow’s mite to such an astronomical figure, think what treasures this dedicated woman will have in heaven where ***“moth and rust doth not corrupt.”*** ***

Paul Lee Tan

“Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations”

p. 1156

God is NOT interested in exposing the shame in our lives. He is a God who loves to bless His children. He wants to pour out His loving kindness upon us. God does not take pleasure in the punishment of a sinner. It should be clear to all of us that our Lord is soon returning. Some of us need to make a number of adjustments to prepare for His return. The fact is, that some are not ready for His return. Jesus knew this would be the case and that is why He chose to give us these parables. Some need to heed His warning while there is still time to change.

III. The Return and Reward of the Talents (Matthew 25:19-30)

“The great use of a life is to spend it for something that outlasts it”

William James
Recorded by Paul Lee Tan
“*Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations*”
5117 Epigram, p. 1162

*** Henry C. Morrison, after serving for forty years on the African mission field, headed home by boat. On that same boat rode Theodore Roosevelt. Morrison was quite dejected when, on entering New York Harbor, President Roosevelt received a great fanfare as he arrived home. Morrison thought he should get some recognition for forty years in the Lord’s service. ***

Then a small voice came to Morrison and said, “Henry. You’re not home yet.”

Michael Green
“*Illustrations for Biblical Preaching*”
#1144; p. 306

“Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done.”

Revelation 22:12

C:\My Documents\WPWin(X9)\Sermons.2019\Parables\Matthew 25_1.13.wpd

Date: Sept 14,21/19

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: All He Wants - C
All of Me - G

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