

2nd & 3rd Quarter 2021 Bible Study Outline



THE PARABLES OF JESUS CHRIST - STUDY 17

The Talents - Matt.25:14-30

INTRODUCTION:

1. Immediately following the parable of "The Wise And Foolish Virgins" (Matt.25:1-13), we find Jesus telling the parable of "The Talents" (Matt.25:14-30)
 2. While both parables relate to the kingdom of heaven, and especially in anticipation of the Lord's return, note the key difference:
 - a. The first stresses the need to be "**prepared**"; the latter, the need to be "**productive**"
 - b. The first emphasizes "**watching**" for the Lord; the latter, "**working**" for the Lord
 3. In both parables we learn what should characterize those who eagerly WAIT for the coming of the Lord
- How can we best apply what Jesus is teaching in this parable? Let's begin by examining...

I. THE PARABLE AND ITS LESSONS:

A. The Parable Analyzed...

1. A man, about to travel to a far country, distributes his goods ("talents") among his servants - **Matt.25:14-15**
 - a. A "talent" here is a monetary measure, amounting to 6000 denarii, which would take an ordinary labourer twenty years to earn (a denarius being a day's wage)
 - b. The number of "talents" was given "to each according to his own ability"
2. The use made of the talents is described - **Matt.25:16-18**
 - a. Two of the servants doubled their talents
 - b. One servant simply hid the money
3. The lord of the servants returns, and a reckoning is made - **Matt.25:19-30**
 - a. His return was after "a long time"
 - b. The first two servants describe how they doubled their amount...
 - i) They stand before the lord with excitement (implied in the word "look")
 - ii) Their lord was pleased
 - a) He praises them for their work, saying "**Well done**"
 - b) He commends them both as "**good and faithful servant**"
 - c) He rewards them by promoting them: "**you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things**"

- d) He invites them to share in his happiness: **"Enter into the joy of your lord"**
- c. The servant who hid his money then faces his lord...
 - 1) He begins by making excuses
 - a) **"Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown..."**
 - b) **"I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground."**
 - 2) He seeks to appease the lord by returning what he had been given: **"Look, there you have what is yours."**
- d. The lord's response...
 - i) He calls him a **"wicked and lazy servant"**
 - ii) He tells him what was the least he should have done: **"you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers..."**
 - 3) He takes away what he had, and gave it to the servant with ten talents, with this explanation:
 - a) **"For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance"**
 - b) **"But from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away"**
 - 4) He has the **"unprofitable servant"** cast **"into the outer darkness"**, where **"there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth"**

B. The Parable Applied...

1. Main points of the parable:
 - a. Be faithful in using the opportunities for service which the Lord has given us
 - b. Diligence is rewarded; negligence is punished
2. Other points to be noted (adapted from Hendricksen's commentary):
 - a. Whatever we have, whether opportunities or abilities, belongs to God; we may possess, but God owns; we are simply stewards - **Matt.25:14**
 - b. The Lord grants opportunities for service in keeping with our ability to make use of them - **Matt.25:15**
 - i) In the day of judgment, the number of "talents" will not matter
 - ii) The question will be, "Have you been faithful in your use of the talents?"
 - c. Jesus did not expect to return immediately - **Matt.25:19; 25:5**
 - d. Everything should be done with a view of the day of reckoning which is coming! - **2Cor.5:10**
 - e. Our responsibilities here and now are important, but they will be surpassed by those in the life hereafter - **Matt.25: 21; Rev.22:3-5**
 - f. To share in the Master's own joy is part of the glory of the life hereafter - **Matt.25:21; 2Thess.1:10-12** (where we are told we will share in His glory)
 - g. Those who make excuses are "wicked and lazy" servants - **Matt.25:25-26**
 - h. A place of punishment is reserved for the unprofitable servants! - **Matt.25:30; 13:41-42**
 - i. The sin of OMISSION is just as bad as the sin of COMMISSION
 - i) Those who do evil will experience "wailing and gnashing of teeth" - **Matt.13:41-42**
 - ii) But also those who do nothing! - **Matt.25:30**

Many are the lessons that can be gleaned from this parable of "The Talents". The main lesson is simple: **Be productive where the Lord has given you ability and opportunity!**

But this often raises a question: **What are my "talents?"** (used here not as a measure of money, but of ability and opportunity). Here are some thoughts in an attempt to address this issue...

II. DETERMINING OUR "TALENTS":

A. Remember That Not All Have The Same "Talents" ...

1. The NUMBER of the talents may be different

- a. Some may have only "one" talent
- b. Some may have "five" talents
 - Remember, the Lord gives "to each one according to his own ability"

2. The NATURE of the talents may be different

- a. Paul made this clear in **Rom.12:3-8**
- b. Some teach, others serve; some may do more than one
 - But everyone has **"gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us"**

B. Some "Talents" Are Easier To Determine Than Others...

1. In some cases our abilities are evident

- a. For example, inherited or gained wealth
- b. For example, positions of influence

2. But some abilities might at first be "hidden"

- a. For example, teaching and preaching
- b. For example, some preachers would never have thought that they could teach or preach, in view of their childhood speech impediment
 - Some talents may therefore lie dormant, awaiting awakening

C. Determining One's Talents...

1. Through trial and error

- a. Try different areas of service, to see which ones might come naturally
- b. Try them again and again, for some talents may only develop through hard work

2. Through seeking counsel from others

- a. Others can often see our strengths and weaknesses better than we ourselves
- b. Solomon praised the value of receiving counsel - **Prov.11:14; 12:15; 15:22; 19:20**
 - Through such personal diligence and advice from others, one can gain insight into the abilities and opportunities that the Lord has given him or her

CONCLUSION:

1. If we are in the kingdom, the Lord has given us all some ability with which to serve Him
 - a. One day, He is coming again and there will be a reckoning.
 - b. If we are going to be **"prepared"**, we need to be **"productive"**
2. Are you productive? Or are you like the "wicked and lazy servant"?
 - a. Will the Lord say to you: **"Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of your lord."**?
 - b. Or will he say: **"You wicked and lazy servant"**, and consign you to the place of torment?
What He will say THEN depends upon your service in the kingdom NOW...