

The Stewardship of Life

The parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30) underscores that when the Lord comes some will be found as true disciples and some as false disciples. The warning is strong throughout all the parables in Matthew 24-25 that there are phony professors who don't really know the Lord and when He comes, they will be exposed for what they truly are.

Matthew 25:14 (NKJV)

14 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them.

Verse 14 begins with the connector word "**For**" (Gk. *gar*). This conjunction closely links this parable of the talents to the preceding parable of the ten virgins. The meaning of this parable is very similar to the previous with a slightly different emphasis.

"The point of the parable of the 10 virgins and the parable of the talents is the same. The difference is a matter of emphasis. The emphasis of the first one is the importance of spiritual preparation whereas the emphasis of the second is the importance of spiritual service." – **Thomas Constable**

Thus, the parable of the talents amounts to an expansion on the emphasis of "readiness" being developed since Matthew 24:36.

The phrase "**the kingdom of heaven is**" is not found in the older manuscripts. The text simply says, "**For like a man traveling to a far country...**" This man in taking his leave called his servants and delivered his goods to them as a matter of stewardship.

Again, we should note this is a parable and in parables, there is ONE main point being made. Once again, the emphasis is on living ready in light of the Lord's return with the emphasis here being that living ready is displayed in faithful service.

The word "servant" is more literally "**slave**". The three in view in this parable all claim to belong to the master. But the latter of the three shows that his identification with the master is ultimately superficial and not authentic as is clearly brought out at the end of the parable (v. 30).

Matthew 25:15 (NKJV)

15 And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey.

A talent was the largest denomination of money in the Roman world. It is thought to have been worth about 6000 days' wages or about 20 years' worth of wages for the average wage earner. So even one talent was worth a fortune.

This wealthy man gave one servant 5 talents, another 2, and another 1 as a matter of stewardship before he left on his journey.

By way of application, the talents in the parable represent our God-allotted resources in life including such things as time, money, abilities, opportunities, and position in life. It is whatever God in common grace has given.

By way of application, we see that before God our life's resources are valuable and precious before Him. We ourselves are valuable because we are made in the image of God, and then what God has allotted to us as a stewardship has great value in the eyes of God. Everything about human life is important before God because it's all of God and is to be used for God. Every aspect of life is ultimately all about God!

Note that the stewardship in view for each individual was "according to his own ability". We are not all given the same stewardship. Everyone is different – with differing abilities and a different life stewardship. The issue before us is not how much we have, but how well we use what we have been given.

"We should be careful to recognize that in this parable the mere possession of a talent is not evidence of salvation. The one-talent slave is clearly not saved; he is condemned to hell. ...From the parable of the talents we seem to be informed that unbelievers are entrusted with certain things, and that they will also give account for their stewardship. I believe that there are other texts of Scripture which indicate that God has entrusted (by common grace, in some cases) certain assets to all men, and that all men are accountable to God for how they use (or do not use) these resources which God has entrusted to them." - **Bob Deffinbaugh**

Matthew 25:16–18 (NKJV)

16 Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents.

17 And likewise he who had received two gained two more also.

18 But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money.

Remember the talents did not ultimately belong to the slaves. They were simply on loan from the master. The servants/slaves were simply stewards of what belonged to the master. Verse 14 says that the master “delivered HIS goods to them”.

So the issue becomes what is the slave doing with the master's talents to serve the purpose and good of the master. It's all about the master and his interests. As I often say, “It's all about Jesus!”

The first two used their God-given abilities to double what the master had entrusted to them. The third servant simply buried his lord's money yielding absolutely NO increase or gain for the master.

God didn't give us life and talents for nothing. He expects us to use them for His glory.

“Only one life, 'Twill soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last.”

And pleasing God begins with FAITH. Hebrews 11:6 says, “without faith it is impossible to please Him”. And a true saving faith believes “the testimony that God has given of His Son.” (1 John 5:10). The testimony of God is that eternal life is found in His Son and that all who believe in Him have eternal life (1 Jn. 5:11-13).

The whole of life is a stewardship and the GREAT ISSUE in life is what we do with the truth of the Lord Jesus Christ. Of all the things in life we are accountable for this is the most important reality.

1 John 5:12 (NKJV)

12 He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.