

## Unfaithful Phony Exposed

In the parable of the talents (Mt. 25:14-30) genuine believers are portrayed as faithfully serving their Lord while unfaithful professors do not serve the Master and are shown to in truth be unbelievers who are not saved. Matthew 25:26-30 exposes the unfaithful servant for what he truly is.

### **Matthew 25:26–27 (NKJV)**

**26** “But his lord answered and said to him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed.

**27** So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest.

The lord’s response was to identify this supposed servant as being “**wicked and lazy**”.

The word “**wicked**” (Gk. poneros) emphasizes something being morally reprehensible. “**Lazy**” (Gk. okneros) emphasizes not being willing to do even the least little thing to further the master’s best interests. He was totally unwilling to serve or exert himself for the advancement of the master. He was all about self – and self only. He had no excuse because he supposedly knew what the master was demanding.

In repeating the slave’s deprecation of him the master was not affirming it, but rather simply reasoning that if he really thought this about him, then at the very least he should have deposited it in the bank so that it might have gained some interest money.

This suggests that the man was not even consistent in his excuse. If this slave really BELIEVED his master was coming back and that he would have to give an account to a harsh master then at the very least he would put it in the bank so there could be some return. He lacked faith that would even motivate him on this level. Behind his wicked laziness was a total lack of faith.

If he didn’t really believe the master was coming back or doubted it, then burying his talent in the ground made more sense in terms of a self-serving agenda. He didn’t have to lift a finger. And if he put it in the bank there would be an official record that it belonged to the master. But if it was

simply buried no one would know – and if the master failed to show up then the wicked servant could just dig it up and claim it as his own. This servant was wicked and lazy and illustrates a total lack of faith!

Judas was all excited about the kingdom and the prospects that were in it for him until Jesus started talking about dying. Then he changed gears and decided he would try and get out of it what he could. It was all about SELF! The wicked lazy servant was really all about SELF!

**Matthew 25:28–29 (NKJV)**

**28** So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents.

**29** 'For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away.

This reflects a fixed law in the spiritual realm. Christ applied this same principle in relation to kingdom insight as seen in His ministry of the parables in Matthew 13.

**Matthew 13:12 (NKJV)**

**12** For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.

This is simply saying that all those who are faithful will be given even more and those who were unfaithful with what they had will have even that taken from them.

Losers live for self. Losers are lazy. Losers are wicked. These are the eternal losers. The winners live for God and seek to advance His interests. The winners actively serve. The winners are good and faithful servants. These are the eternal winners. Are you an eternal loser or an eternal winner?

The master then said...

**Matthew 25:30 (NKJV)**

**30** And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

This language is consistently a metaphor of judgment on the lost in the gospel of Matthew (cf. Mt. 8:12; 13:42; 13:50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; also cf. Lk. 13:28). This language definitely shows that this person represents those who are not saved. Everywhere else in Matthew, this language is descriptive of the eternal fate of the lost. The description all the way through is indicative of an unsaved person.

He is called “**wicked and lazy**”. He is “**unprofitable**” He will be cast into “**outer darkness**” where there is “**weeping and gnashing of teeth**.” It is very inconsistent to apply such severe language to a child of God because in Scripture it is consistently descriptive of eternal punishment in hell.

Yet, some reason that because he is called a “slave” he must therefore be representative of a true believer. But we should remember this is a parable that is making one main general point. And we should remember that in the earlier parable of the two servants the evil servant is also called a “slave” in the Greek and that wicked slave was also appointed “**his portion with the hypocrites**” where there shall be “**weeping and gnashing of teeth**” (cf. Mt. 24:48-51).

The point in all these parables is that there are true servants of the Lord and there are phony ones who have never truly been saved.

“He is a counterfeit disciple, one who never actually knew Him. In Matthew’s gospel one finds true and false prophets, sheep and wolves in sheep’s clothing, houses built on sand and houses built on rock, wheat and tares, wise and foolish virgins, righteous and unrighteous servants; not all who are associated with Jesus are true disciples.” – **The Moody Bible Commentary**

It’s like Jesus runs to the end of the story as to what will happen to the unfaithful at the end of the day if they don’t get right with God. If people don’t get saved and hold out in rebellion against the Lord the final end for them is what Jesus describes here in Matthew 25:30.

Outer darkness is a common description of hell in the New Testament. God is light (1 Jn. 1:5) and to be cast into outer darkness is to be completely banished from God’s presence. Hell is a place of eternal darkness, but also a place of eternal pain and misery.

Weeping speaks of sorrow (the emotional agony of those in hell) while the gnashing or grinding of teeth speaks of pain (physical agony in hell). The picture painted is one of eternal misery.

The problem with the wicked man in the parable is that he brought forth zero fruit. He had absolutely NOTHING to show for his life. This is the picture of the unbeliever. In the end, they have NOTHING to show. Their life was a total waste. Truly they are completely “unprofitable” servants no matter how much they professed to be a Christian. This person represents those who have no saving faith, no saving relationship, and consequently absolutely no fruit.

Without faith it is impossible to please God but all true believers have come to please God in the act of saving faith (Heb. 11:6). All true believers share in this God-pleasing reality. Thus, “each one’s praise will come from God.” (1 Cor. 4:5)

You know what you have to do to go to hell? NOTHING, nothing at all. Hebrews 2:3 says, “**how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?**” Exactly! This is the point of the unfaithful slave in the parable of the talents.

There is an old poem that says, “**For all sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these: ‘It might have been!’**” (John Greenleaf Whittier in Maud Muller)

“[In] the last three parables...[t]he principle which underlies each is the same... The fruit of faithfulness and preparedness would indicate the character of those living in the days before His coming. In each parable, character is manifested by works. This thought forms the key to the [next] passage which deals with the judgment of the nations (Matthew 25:31-46).” – **Stanley Toussaint**

It's not that we are saved by works – we are not (Eph. 2:8-9). We are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. However, as the Reformers were known to say, “**We are saved by faith alone, but the faith that saves does not remain alone.**” That is sound doctrine!

It is only to the faithful that the Lord will say, “Well done, good and faithful servant”. In order for Him to say “Well done” it has to be DONE!

Perhaps there are so many that are merely spectators because in truth many of them have never truly been saved. The warning about the unprofitable servant in the parable is to them! The warning of the parable is shocking and intended to jar mere professors out of their selfish state of apathy!

Those that truly know the Lord are expected to serve Him while waiting. And if there is no fruit in the life that is evidence that the person doesn't really know Him.

While we are "fruit inspectors" (Christ said "You will know them by their fruits" – Mt. 7:16), we must leave off final judgment to God for in the end God alone is the final JUDGE Who knows those who are His (2 Tim. 2:19).

But the Bible does say, "Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves." (2 Cor. 13:5).

Are you in the serving category of "Well done good and faithful servant" or are you in the unprofitable category of "wicked and lazy servant"? As Jesus said in Matthew 13, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" (Mt. 13:43).

God help us to be true servants who serve the Master well!

God help us to live ready!

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