

# The Work of the Church

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## 2018 Camp Season

### A Study of the Parable of the Talents and Pounds

Matthew 25:14-30 and Luke 10:11-26

(Friday's Lesson)

Matthew 25:14-30 (NKJV) "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. {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. {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. {19} "After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. {20} "So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' {21} "His lord said to him, 'Well <done>, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' {22} "He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' {23} "His lord said to him, 'Well <done>, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' {24} "Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. {25} "And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, <there> you have <what is> yours.' {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. {28} 'Therefore 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. {30} 'And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer

darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Luke 19:11-27 (NKJV) Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. {12} Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. {13} "So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.' {14} "But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this <man> to reign over us.' {15} "And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. {16} "Then came the first, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas.' {17} "And he said to him, 'Well <done>, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.' {18} "And the second came, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned five minas.' {19} "Likewise he said to him, 'You also be over five cities.' {20} "Then another came, saying, 'Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. {21} 'For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.' {22} "And he said to him, 'Out of your own mouth I will judge you, <you> wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. {23} 'Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?' {24} "And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the mina from him, and give <it> to him who has ten minas.' {25} ("But they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas.') {26} 'For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. {27} 'But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay <them> before me.' "

## INTRODUCTION

### I. WE HAVE TWO DIFFERENT PARABLES WITH THE SAME MESSAGE.

- A. There are four major categories of parables.
  - 1. There are some parables which deal with the nature and scope of the kingdom.
  - 2. There are a group of parables which deal with the subject of discipleship.
  - 3. The third group deal with the growth of the Christian.
  - 4. The last group deal with warnings concerning a lack of growth or judgment to come.

- B. Some parables may serve more than one purpose
- C. Today's study is a good example of the idea.
- D. The parables which we are studying today deal with the need to grow as we use the blessing and talents which God has given us.

## II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- A. The emphasis of both parables is that God has given each of us ability which He expects us to use or He will take it away.
- B. Both parable were given near the end of our Lord's life on earth.
  - 1. Luke records the fact that Jesus was nearing Jerusalem.
  - 2. The disciples were convinced that the kingdom was about to appear immediately.
  - 3. This was just prior to His triumphal entry.
  - 4. The parable of the pounds (Minas) was delivered to a larger group of people.
- C. On the other hand Matthew records the parable of the Talents as part of His final studies with the Disciples probably the day before His arrest and trial.
  - 1. This parable was given only to the twelve.
  - 2. Evidently the disciples needed a second look at the gifts which had been and were continually given by God.
- D. There are other differences in the content of the two parables.
  - 1. First:
    - a. In the Talents we have a householder leaving home for a time.
    - b. In the pounds we have a nobleman going in quest for a crown.
  - 2. Secondly,
    - a. In the Talents the gifts were unequally distributed.
    - b. In the Pounds they gifts were distributed equally.
  - 3. Thirdly,
    - a. The sums entrusted to the various servants differ enormously in the size and amount.
    - b. In the pounds again they were equal.
  - 4. Fourthly,
    - a. In the Talents rewards receive for faithful service was more talents.
    - b. In the pounds the rewards were expressed in authority over cities.
  - 5. Fifthly,
    - a. In the Talents the unprofitable servant was severely punished and cast into outer darkness.

- b. In the parable of the pound of the person who did not use them as he should simply lost the gift.
- E. While the details of the parables vary somewhat and it is evident that the Lord did not deliver the parable at the same time, the emphasis remains the same.

### III. EXPLAINING THE TEXT

- A. There is no evidence that both of these parables were based upon actual events.
- B. Each parable is in total keeping with the customs of the time.
- C. A talent of weight varying in size from about 50 to 80 pounds.
  - 1. If we are talking about a unit of coinage.
  - 2. The value is nearly a thousand dollars.
- D. The value of the mina was about \$20.00.
- E. In both parable Jesus limits the activities to servants.
  - 1. This has reference to slaves owned by a master.
  - 2. I am sure that Jesus had something very special in mind in his reference to the slaves.
- F. In each parable the master trusted his estate to the actions of the servants.
  - 1. He could have hired specialist to do the work.
  - 2. He could have taken care of the money by several other means.
  - 3. It is interesting that he did not leave his property to the care of a single person.

## DISCUSSION

### I. PURPOSE AND APPLICATION

- A. As we have mentioned before, the messages of each of the parables are the same.
- B. The lessons are fourfold.
  - 1. God expects no more of us than is reasonably expected of us.
    - a. Jesus emphasized that each was given Talents or pound according to their ability.
    - b. God has done the same for us.
    - c. This may be in the form of opportunities.
    - d. It may be in the form of challenges.
    - e. Maybe the blessings are of various kinds.
    - f. God only expects us to operate within our ability.

2. Each one of us receives something.
  - a. The old song applies:  
"I may not be able to sing like angels; I may not be able to preach like Paul; but I can tell the love of Jesus..."
  - b. Each of us has unique abilities.
  - c. These gifts have been given us freely and without our request.
  - c. We can use what we have for the glory of God.
  - d. IT is a fact – we must use every gift to the glory of God and not for self.
  
3. Success and failure are judged on the basis of how we use what God gives us.
  - a. Thank God we are not judged by our peers.
  - b. We are only required to use what God has given us.
  - c. If we use the gifts God has given us, we will be given others.
  - d. If we fail to use the gifts, we will lose them.
  - e. We do not have to be terribly sinful before God will judge us unworthy.
  - f. Just a failure to use what God has freely given us is enough to receive the judgment of God.
  
4. There will be a final reckoning on the way we have used what God has given us.
  - a. Throughout the New Testament there are warnings about the coming judgment.  
Acts 17:31  

***"because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead."***
  - b. It is appointed to all men to die and next comes the judgment. (Hebrews 9:27)
  - c. Christ's first appearance on this earth was to provide salvation.
  - d. His second appearance will to bring judgment.  
Hebrews 9:28  

***so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.***
  - e. It is true that we will be saved by the grace of God, but this in no way negates obedience.

2 Thessalonians 1:7-9

*and to <give> you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, {8} in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. {9} These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,*

## **II. LEARNING TO LIVE FROM THE PARABLES.**

- A. It may be wiser to fail than not to make an effort.
1. The one-talent man as well as the individual in the Parable of the pounds who did not try were rebuked.
  2. It is interesting that neither were given a second chance.
  3. Neither were justified for their clean life.
  4. They were judged solely upon the basis of how they responded to the gifts of God.
  5. You will also notice that they were not judged because they did not produce an equal amount with the others.
  6. They were rejected because they did not try.
- B. We must have the courage to "launch out" if we expect to succeed.
1. Each of us can witness to this truth.
  2. I knew a young man in Florida who had an IQ of a genius.
    - a. He could have been anything he wanted to be.
    - b. In fact he had received a free ride to a fine university.
    - c. He talked about becoming a doctor.
    - d. Yet, within four months he had not only flunked out of college, he was expelled.
    - e. Simply because he was unwilling to use what God had given him.
  3. In our church planning meetings we do not need grandiose plans.
  4. We do not need great programs which will raise millions of dollars.
  5. We need people who have the courage and faith in God to use what He has given us as we have the opportunity.
  6. The one-talent man was just as valuable to the Master as the ten talent man.
  7. The church is made up of one-talent people like you and me.
- C. We often fail because we do not put enough faith in our Lord.
1. A few people can do magnificent things for the Lord.
  2. A few athletes can win the gold medal.

3. Yet, through faith each of us can be successful.
4. Paul was able to do great thing for the Lord because of his faith.  
2 Timothy 1:12

***For this reason I also suffer these things;  
nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have  
believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what  
I have committed to Him until that Day.***

5. If we have the faith of a grain of mustard seed we can too move mountains.  
Matthew 17:20

***So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief;  
for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard  
seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to  
there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible  
for you.***

- D. We must learn to "use it or lose it"
1. Every one who has developed a skill understands that without practice, the skill will soon be gone.
  2. Leave a piece a machinery in the field without using it and it will rust and ruin.
  3. An athlete will never be able to compete without constant practice.
  4. This is a universal law, "Use it or Lose it".
  5. This principle is taught in the scripture.  
Hebrews 5:14

***But solid food belongs to those who are of  
full age, <that is>, those who by reason of use have their  
senses exercised to discern both good and evil.***

## CONCLUSION

### I. THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS IS ONE OF THE MOST PRACTICAL OF ALL THE MESSAGES OF JESUS.

### II. IF THIS IS TRUE CONCERNING OUR TALENTS, WOULD IT NOT ALSO BE TRUE WITH OUR SALVATION.

- A. Paul warns us about neglecting our salvation.  
Hebrews 2:2-3

***For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast,  
and every transgression and disobedience received a just  
reward, {3} how shall we escape if we neglect so great a  
salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord,***

***and was confirmed to us by those who heard <Him>,***

- B. People neglect their salvation in various ways.
  - 1. By getting so busy that they have no time for God.
  - 2. By diverting our attention to other things.
  - 3. By having no interest
  - 4. By being negligent.
  - 5. By simply being worldly minded.

### **III. THE CHURCH NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT, NO MATTER WHAT YOU TALENT MAY BE.**

- A. God could do His work very well without any of us.
- B. Yet, He has chosen to leave His work in earthen vessels.  
2 Corinthians 4:7

***But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.***

- C. This began with the Apostles and remains in our hands.
- D. The church will soon be lost without our support.

### **III. THERE ARE SOME TALENTS WHICH ARE COMMON TO ALL**

- A. Jude talks about the common salvation.  
Jude 1:3

***Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.***

- B. The great commission was not given to the few.  
Matthew 28:18-20

***And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. {19} "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, {20} "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, <even> to the end of the age." Amen.***