"Faithful With What God Has Given Us" (Part 1)
Matthew 25:14-30

Introduction:

- **Theme:** God has entrusted every believer with opportunities, abilities, resources, and responsibilities. He expects us to faithfully use what He has given us for His glory.

- **Key Verse:** "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." — Matthew 25:21

- **Background:**

  - Matthew 25:14–30 is the **Parable of the Talents**. Jesus tells this parable in the context of His teaching about His **second coming and the importance of being ready**. The emphasis is not on how much each servant received, but on what each servant **did with what he received**.

  - A "talent" in this passage was a significant amount of money. Some commentators have suggested that the amount could be compared to hundreds of thousands of dollars in today's market. **Personal Note:** I have never thought about this before. In a spiritual sense, every gift, big or small is **huge** in God's eyes! It just depends on what we do with what God has given to us.

  - Jesus uses it to illustrate a broader spiritual principle: **God entrusts different responsibilities and opportunities to His servants, and He expects faithfulness.**

I. The Master Entrusted His Servants

Matthew 25:14–15 - *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. 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. The Master Entrusted His Possessions.

- The servants did not own the money—they were **stewards** of it.
- Everything we have ultimately belongs to God.
- Our time, abilities, finances, opportunities, relationships, and spiritual gifts are entrusted to us.

Study Note: The Christian life is not primarily about ownership; it is about **stewardship**. **Psalm 24:1** reminds us: "The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof."

B. The Master Gave Different Amounts.

- One received **five talents**.
- One received **two talents**.
- One received **one talent**.

Study Note: God does not give everyone the same abilities, opportunities, or responsibilities. **God does not expect equal results, because the results are not up to us in the first place…God does expect faithful service.**

C. The Master Knew His Servants.

- The Master understood what each servant was capable of handling.
- The Master gave according to "ability," not favoritism.
- **Galatians 6:4 -** *[4] But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.*
    - **NLT Translation**: *[4] Pay careful attention to your own work, for then you will get the satisfaction of a job well done, and you won't need to compare yourself to anyone else.*

II. The Servants And Their Work

Matthew 25:16–18 - *[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.*

A. Two Servants Immediately Went To Work.

- The five-talent servant and two-talent servant understood that their responsibility was to **use what they had been given**.

B. The First Two Were Productive.

- The first servant gained five additional talents.
- The second gained two additional talents.
- Both produced a **100% increase**.

C. One Servant Buried His Talent.

- The third servant did nothing productive with what he had received.
- His failure was not that he had only one talent. **His failure was that he did nothing with it.**

Study Note: The danger of doing nothing. Sometimes we think:

- "I don't have much to offer."
- "Someone else can do it better."
- "I'm too old."
- "I'm too young."
- "I don't have the ability."

- “I'm just one person.”
- But God can use **one talent faithfully surrendered to Him**.

III. The Master Returned And Required An Account

Matthew 25:19 - ***19*** *After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.*

- This verse is especially important in light of the larger context of Matthew 24–25. → Christ Returning!

A. The Master Was Gone—But He Was Coming Back.

- Jesus is teaching His disciples to live in expectation of His return.
- **Christ has gone away, but Christ is coming again.**

B. The Servants Knew They Would Give An Account.

- **Romans 14:12** says: “So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”

C. The Delay Did Not Cancel The Responsibility.

- The Master was gone “a long time,” but the servants were still responsible.
- The fact that Christ has not returned yet does not mean we should become careless.
- We should remain:
  - Faithful
  - Watchful
  - Working
  - Witnessing

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IV. The Faithful Servants Were Commended

Matthew 25:20–23 - *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.’*

A. They Recognized Where Their Blessings Came From.

- The first two servants understood that their talents were blessings given to them from their master.
- They were able to serve with joy, knowing their master would be pleased with them for being faithful.

B. They Were Faithful With What They Received.

- The master did not say: “Well done, **successful** servant.
- He said: “Well done, good and **faithful** servant.”
- We sometimes base our relationship and reward with the Lord on success instead of faith.
- God rewards faith!

C. Their Reward Was Based On Faithfulness.

- Notice something remarkable:
  - The servant who gained five additional talents and the servant who gained two received essentially **the same commendation**.
  - Why?: Because God measures faithfulness, not merely visible results.

D. Faithfulness Leads To Greater Responsibility.

- God often prepares us for greater opportunities by teaching us to be faithful in smaller ones.
- **Luke 16:10 -** “He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much.”

V. The Unfaithful Servant Made Excuses

Matthew 25:24–25 - *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.'*

- The third servant said: "*Lord, I knew you to be a hard man* …"
- Notice that instead of accepting responsibility, he **blamed the master**.

A. He Had A Wrong View Of His Master.

- His excuse revealed what he believed about the master.
- We sometimes "blame" God when things do not go our way.
- We sometimes believe God is punishing us, when indeed He is shaping us.

B. Fear Became An Excuse For Inactivity.

- Fear can keep us from doing what God has called us to do.
- Fear of:
  - Failure
  - Criticism
  - Rejection
  - Change
  - Inadequacy
- Fear can cause us to bury what God has entrusted to us.
- **LOVE THIS** → We make **excuses** for our lack of ministry, our lack of faithfulness, instead of attempting to **execute** what gifts, talents, and opportunities that God has given to us.

C. He Had An Excuse (No Execution) - No Fruit.

- His problem was not lack of opportunity. His problem was **unwillingness**.

Study Note:
An excuse may explain why we did not serve, give, sacrifice, fellowship, love, care, or witness, but it does not remove our responsibility to do these things.

VI. The Master Rebuked His Unfaithfulness

Matthew 25:26–27 - *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 master identified two problems:

A. He Was Wicked.

- His attitude toward his master's property and his responsibility was wrong.

B. He Was Slothful.

- He was lazy and inactive.
- This is a sobering reminder that **doing nothing for Christ is not spiritually neutral**.
- We can be busy with many things and still be unproductive in the things that matter eternally.

VII. What We Have Been Given Must Be Used

Matthew 25:28–29 - *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.

A. God Expects Obedience.

- The servants were expected to take what they had received and put it to work.
- Making disciples, witnessing, serving, giving, and church fellowship are not just recommendations or suggestions. These are commands.
- While the term, "commands," might give a person a negative impression, these are the things that allow us to fellowship with God!!
- **Illustration:** When our children, **"obey,"** there is harmony, peace, and great fellowship at home. When they disobey, there is heartache, grief, and sorrow.

B. Unused Opportunities Can Be Lost.

- The third servant's talent was taken from him.
- Opportunities to serve God should not continually be postponed.
- The ministry opportunity you have today may not be the opportunity you have tomorrow.

C. Faithfulness Produces Greater Opportunity.

- The first servant received the "one talent" that had been buried. He received more opportunities to serve.
- This happens in ministry all of the time, those who are faithful to serve, seem to get more and more opportunities.
- They do not see the opportunities and drudgery, they see the opportunities as delights to serve.

VIII. Faithfulness Has Eternal Consequences

Matthew 25:30 - *30 And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

- The parable ends with a serious warning.
- This reminds us that Jesus is not merely teaching about money or productivity. He is teaching about **spiritual readiness and accountability**.
- The question is not simply: **"Did I receive something?"**
- The question is: **"What did I do with what I received?"**