

The Prattmont Church of Christ is just what the name suggests, a church that belongs to Christ. We are not a denomination; we are simply a group of Christians trying very hard to practice the teachings of our Head, Jesus Christ. The New Testament offers a complete pattern for what each local church should be like—its organization, its worship, its work, etc. We are committed to following that pattern. We cordially invite you to attend our services. We would also welcome any comments or questions about this bulletin.

TIMES OF SERVICES:

Sunday
 Bible Classes.....9 A.M.
 Worship 10:00 A.M.
 Worship/Bible Study..5 P.M.

Wednesday:
 Bible Study 7:00 P.M.



Weekly Bulletin
 January 29, 2023

Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30)

by Bryan Gibson

FIRST, read what Jesus says in the text of the parable—it will make this article clearer and much more profitable.

Let’s start with a few observations from the text, with some spiritual applications of each one.

This parable illustrates how Christ will deal “with his own servants” (v. 14), so for any of us who are Christians, the message of this parable is primarily for us. And the “servant” analogy fits perfectly in our case, because despite the freedom we have in Christ, we belong to Him. “You are not your own... you were bought at a price” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

“Talents” refers to varying sums of money (v. 27), but they can certainly represent other gifts given to us by the Lord. These talents were given “to each according to his ability” (v. 15). So not only did these servants receive varying amounts of money (5 talents, 2 talents, 1 talent), they had varying levels of ability, too (the same is true of Christians). It’s also important to see that even the one talent man was given a LOT. One talent was

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equal to 6000 denarii, and one denarius was typically considered a day's wage (so about 16 ½ years of wages). Let no one ever think they've been shortchanged by the Lord.

Each servant did acknowledge these talents came from their lord (vv. 20, 22, 25). “You delivered to me” (vv. 20, 22)—words from both the five talent man and the two talent man. The one talent man said to his lord, “I...went and hid YOUR talent... you have what is YOURS (v. 25). Nothing of what we have is OURS, it comes from God (James 1:17), and therefore should be used for Him.

More on this later, but looking at verses 24-27, this lord doesn't necessarily agree with his servant's assessment, i.e., that he is a “hard man.” He simply meets him with his own argument and says that if that's the case, why didn't you at least deposit my money in the bank? He simply had no excuse for his laziness.

“You **wicked** and lazy servant” (v. 26)—we may need to change our understanding of what makes one “wicked.” Are we ready to admit that neglect of our God given gifts is no less wicked than immorality?

A few other lessons we can glean from this parable:

Mirroring what happens in the parable, following His death, burial, and resurrection, Jesus did return to heaven (“far country”—v. 14), but He is coming back to “settle accounts” (v. 19). Will we enter into the joy of our Lord (vv. 21, 23), or be cast into outer darkness (v. 30)? As the hymn asks, “How are we using God's golden moments, shall we reap glory, or shall we reap tears?”

It's the profitable servants, those “faithful over a few things,” who enter into joy, and this reward includes being “ruler over many things” (vv. 21, 23). We know how that works on an earthly plane (think Joseph moving up the ladder), but it's also

true in a spiritual sense. “To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne” (Revelation 3:21). “And they shall reign forever and ever” (Revelation 22:5). From sinners unworthy of His grace to reigning with Him—from the outhouse to the penthouse, we might say.

This reward is very much within our reach, because no matter how you view the lord in this parable, **our Lord** is NOT hard—not too difficult to please, not unreasonable in His demands, not asking for more than we're able to give. “It is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what one does not have” (2 Corinthians 8:12). Our varying gifts and abilities—our Lord most surely takes those into account. Remember the Parable of the Sower? Even among the Lord's faithful servants, some produce “a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty” (Matthew 13:23).

The important question, then, is what are we doing with what the Lord has given us, whether it be time/opportunities for good, money/possessions, abilities, etc.? Are we being good stewards of what the Lord has entrusted to us? (1 Corinthians 4:2).

And when we make the most of what God gives us, He gives us even more opportunities to do the same! “Take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. 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” (Matthew 25:28-29). Think about the opportunities God continually gave to men like Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, etc. When you do good with what God gives you, as these men did, God just keeps giving you more and more (see 2 Corinthians 9:8, 10-11).

