

## Matthew Chapter 25 Continued

Verses 14-23: The parable of the talents further emphasizes the need for personal preparation and faithful service to the Master (see also Luke 19:11-28). The “talents” represent large units of money and are distributed according to “ability” (verse 15). “Far country” indicates the time during which Jesus is in heaven, between His first coming and His final return.

The three “servants” are typical of three types who are entrusted with various tasks in accordance with their own ability. Not all are expected to produce the same results, but all are to be faithful with what they have had entrusted to them. Thus, the first two double their money, while the last one hides the “one ... in the earth.”

The phrase “after a long time” gives a veiled indication of the length of Christ’s session in heaven during the present age. Each of those producing results is commended by the Master. “Well done ... good and faithful servant”, and is promised to be a “ruler over many things,” with a view to continued service in the millennial kingdom.

Verses 14-30: The parable of the talents illustrates the tragedy of wasted opportunity. The man who goes on the journey represents Christ, and the slaves represent professing believers given different levels of responsibility. Faithfulness is what he demands of them, but the parable suggests that all who are faithful will be fruitful to some degree. The fruitless person is unmasked as a hypocrite and utterly destroyed (verse 30).

**Matthew 25:14 "For [the kingdom of heaven is] as a man travelling into a far country, [who] called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods."**

“For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling”: Our Lord adds another parable to illustrate the Gospel dispensation, or its visible church state; or the state of things respecting the church of Christ, before and at his second coming. And during the interval between his ascension and that the man here, is meant Christ.

Who in the everlasting covenant agreed to become man, was prophesied of as such, frequently appeared in human form, under the Old Testament dispensation; and in the fullness of time, really became man. Though he was not a mere man, but was God as well as man; having all the perfections and fullness of the Godhead dwelling bodily in him.

This man is said to travel into a far country; by which heaven is designed, and is so called, not only because of its great distance from the earth, and which is very great indeed; but because the better country and land afar off, is out of sight. And what views we have of it, are very distant ones. And is far off, in respect of our state of pilgrimage in this world, in which, whilst Christ was here.

He was a pilgrim and a stranger too; who might be said to be as a "man travelling", whilst he was in it, and when going out of it, and ascending to heaven. He came from thence, and stayed here a while, walking up and down, and doing good. And when he had finished what he came for, He ascended on high, went to His God and Father and entered into heaven, where he is received until the times of the restitution of all things.

Who called his own servants before he took his journey, to entrust them with Talents. These were not wicked, slothful, graceless, which is not true of anyone of the elect: but ministers of the word are here meant. Who are eminently the servants of Christ, his own, whom he has called, qualified, commissioned, and sent forth.

For the ministers of the word, whether faithful or slothful, good or bad, are in a very lively manner described in this parable, which is a distinct one from the former.

“And delivered unto them his goods”: The Gospel, that rich treasure of divine truths, the dispensation of it, and gifts to preach it; all which are Christ's goods and his gifts, and not man's. Which in a very eminent manner was done; when Christ ascended on high and received gifts and gave them unto men.

Just before He was ready to go, He gathered his disciples together; and renewed and enlarged their commission to preach the Gospel. And quickly after that, gave them greater and larger gifts of the Spirit than before; and has been ever since giving ministerial gifts to men, to some more, others less, and which are signified by the talents following.

Here, the master is going on a trip and He had called his servants together to take care of the kingdom until he returned. You see, Jesus has gone away into heaven, and is now sitting at the right hand of God. He has left His church in the care of His ministers (servants), until He returns.

**Matthew 25:15 "And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey."**

“Talents”: A talent was a measure of weight, not a specific coin, so that a talent of gold was more valuable than a talent of silver. A talent of silver (the word translated “money” in verse 18, is literally silver), was a considerable sum of money. The modern meaning of the word “talent,” denoting a natural ability, stems from the fact that this parable is erroneously applied to the stewardship of one’s natural gifts.

The very first thing that we must note about this is that they were given talents according to their ability to handle money. Some people cannot handle large sums of money. God cannot trust some people with money. God knows where their ability lies.

The problem is not to have money; the problem lies in what you do with it. This Scripture is not only in having money, but in the spiritual sense, is speaking of the congregations of the people God entrusts to the pastors. Some have large congregations, some medium, some have very few.

**Matthew 25:16 "Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made [them] other five talents."**

"Then he that had received the five talents": the largest measure of gifts. An account is first given of him, how he behaved, and conducted in his Lord's absence, and what use he made of the gifts bestowed upon him. This must be understood, not of a single man, but of that sort of the servants of Christ, who have the greatest ministerial gifts.

He went, denotes immediate application to business, and signifies that such servants went according to their commission, preached the Gospel to every creature, and administered the ordinances to proper subjects. They went directly, as soon as they had their talents; they did not stay to consult with flesh and blood.

Whether it would be for their interest and credit or not; they were not stuck at any difficulties and discouragements; nor were they deterred by the cross, reproaches, and persecutions. But went forth with courage and boldness, not in their own name and strength, but in the name and strength of Christ, who sent them, and promised them his presence and assistance, on which they depended.

The ministers of the Gospel are traders; not in their own name, nor on their own stock, and for themselves, but for Christ, and for the good of immortal souls that they closely attend unto, and worked at. By constant reading and diligent search into the word of God.

And by studious meditation on it; by frequent prayer; and continual preaching the Gospel, and administering ordinances; and their success.

"And made them other five talents": that is, increased in spiritual knowledge; gifts were improved and enlarged. A greater stock of divine things were laid in; and many souls gained to Christ: such are they whom Christ has ordained to go forth, and bear and bring forth fruit in their ministry, and whose fruit remain.

**Matthew 25:17 "And likewise he that [had received] two, he also gained other two."**

"And likewise he that received two": Talents, or a lesser measure of ministerial gifts: he also gained other two; he worked and labored, and traded, in proportion to the gifts he had received; and his improvements and success, under a divine blessing, were answerable.

**Matthew 25:18 "But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money."**

"But he that received one": Talent, or the least degree of gifts, for the ministry of the word.

"Went and digged in the earth, and hid his Lord's money": He buried it; that is, he neglected the gift that was in him, he made no use of it, either to his own advantage, or to the good of others, and the interest of his Lord.

He either never went into the ministry, or if he did, he left it as Demas did, having too great affection for the world, and the things of it. He minded earth and earthly things, and employed himself in them, and not in his master's work and service.

The phrase seems to point out the earthly mindedness of the man, his worldly disposition, and his eager pursuit after the things of life; which were the reason why he disregarded his talent, and made no use of his ministerial gifts. He could not deny worldly self, nor leave all to follow Christ; but rather than drop the world, he chose to bury his talent in it.

It was his Lord's money and not his own, and he was accountable to him for it, and should have used it in another manner.

The fellow who received the five talents had enough faith, that he went and made another five talents to go with the five that he had been entrusted with. The same happened to the one who had received two. He doubled his, also. Any master in the world would be pleased with these two servants.

They were not fearful. Fear is not of God. They had faith, and did what they had, probably, already been doing when their master was handling the money; and so, they increased what the master had entrusted them with. The servant, who received just one talent, had probably already shown his master that he was fearful and had no faith.

This money hidden in the ground was of no use to anyone, just as it is today. For God to be pleased about our finances, we must be using them to gain for Him. We must not hoard them up just for ourselves. Riches are to be used not abused. If you are blessed of God and have a little more than your neighbor, you must be quick to distribute as we read in Timothy.

1 Timothy 6:17-19 "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;" "That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;" "Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life".

You see, it is not the riches that are evil. It is our attitude toward the riches and what we do with them.

**Matthew 25:19 "After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them."**

"After a long time": By the return of the lord of those servants to reckon with them is denoted the return of Christ to call people to an account for the manner in which they have improved their talents (See Romans 14:12; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Acts 1:11; Acts 17:31).

"Reckoneth with them" To reckon is to settle accounts. Here it means to inquire into their faithfulness, and to reward or punish them accordingly.

**Matthew 25:20 "And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more."**

"And so he that had received five talents": Or the greatest gifts: as this man is the first to whom his Lord gave any talents, and the first that went and traded with them. He is also the first that is reckoned with. Who came and brought five more talents. He came freely and cheerfully, with a holy confidence and intrepidity of mind, and gave in his account, both of what he had received, and of what he had gained.

"Saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents, behold I have gained besides them five talents more": True ministers of the Gospel frankly own, that what gifts they have are delivered to them by Christ; and such are willing that he should have all returned to him, principal and increase.

It is not to be imagined that this will be said in so many words by them, nor will there be any need thereof; for Christ will not be ignorant of what they have been doing. And of what use they have been of; but the sense is, that as all will be manifest to Christ the searcher of hearts, with whom they have to do.

So the account will stand fair and open; and it will be seen and known by all, that such and such faithful ministers of Christ have behaved in this agreeable manner, and have been thus and thus serviceable in his interest.

**Matthew 25:21 "His lord said unto him, Well done, [thou] good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."**

"Ruler over many things": I will promote thee to greater honors and to more important trusts.

"Joy of thy lord": In the meantime, share the pleasures and enjoyments of his palace; be his companion, and receive the rewards which he has promised thee. "The joy of thy lord" may mean either the festivals or rejoicings at his return, or the rewards which his lord had prepared for his faithful servants.

Applied to Christians, it means that they who rightly improve their talents will, at the return of Christ, be promoted to great honors in heaven, and be partakers of the joys of their Lord in the world of glory (see Matthew 25:34; also 1 John 2:28).

You see, we all know it has been a long time since our Master came and checked on us, close to 2,000 years. There is going to be a day of reckoning. A day will come when we and our works will be judged of Jesus. Just the fact that we belong to Him will get us into heaven.

Our faithfulness to the task that He has left us to do will determine what we will do when we reign with Him here on earth.

Life is pretty much like a monopoly game. Some people get Baltic and Mediterranean, and others get Boardwalk and Park Place. You can be a winner just as easily with Baltic, as you can with Boardwalk. It is how you play the game that is important.

These men trusted God and worked, and tried, and they were rewarded for their faithfulness and hard work. God is a rewarder of those who seek to please Him.

**Matthew 25:22 "He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them."**

“He also that had received two talents”: A lesser degree of ministerial gifts; and who as he received next to the other, and was the next, who in proportion to what he had received, had traded and gained, he is mentioned next.

“Giving his account; he came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents, behold I have gained two other talents besides them”: his account, abating the sum and gains is given in, in the same form as the other.

**Matthew 25:23 "His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."**

“The joy of thy Lord”: Both the man with five talents and the man with two received exactly the same reward, indicating that the reward is based on faithfulness, not results.

Notice here, that his lord was just as pleased with his four as he was with the other servants ten. To whom much is given, much is required. His faith was just as great as the other servant; he just had less to work with. The reward was the same, because he had worked hard and was faithful and did what he could do with what he had been entrusted with.

You see, again this servant was not concerned with the fact that the other servant had more than he did. He just did his best with what he had. His Lord was pleased the same as God will be pleased with us; if we do the very best we can with what we have to work with (through faith).

Verses 24-25: The great mistake of the unfaithful servant is in misjudging the character of his Master: “thou art a hard man.” He could not have known the Master well to assume him to be severe and merciless. He fails to understand the real generosity of his Master, who wanted him to experience the joys of service.

Whereas the parable of the 10 virgins emphasizes personal preparation for the coming of Christ, the parable of the talents stresses the importance of faithful service during His present absence.

**Matthew 25:24 "Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed:"**

“A hard man”: His characterization of the master maligns the man as a cruel and ruthless opportunist, “reaping and gathering” what he had no right to claim as his own. This slothful servant does not represent a genuine believer, for it is obvious that this man had no true knowledge of the master.

**Matthew 25:25 "And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, [there] thou hast [that is] thine."**

“I was afraid”: I feared lest, by some accident, thy talent would be lost if I put it out to trade, and that I should be severely punished by a hard master. I therefore kept it laid up safely, and hid it where it could not be lost.

“That is thine”: There is what properly belongs to thee. There is the original talent that thou gave me, and that is all that can be reasonably required. Observe here:

1. This expresses exactly the feelings of all sinners. God, in their view, is hard, cruel, and unjust.
2. All the excuses of sinners are excuses for indolence and sin, and the effect is to cheat themselves out of heaven. The effect of this excuse was that the reward was lost, and such will always be the result of the excuses of sinners for not doing their duty.
3. Sinners grudge everything to God. They are never willing to be liberal toward him but are stinted and close; and if they give, they do it with hard feelings, and say that that is all that he can claim.

Verses 26-30: The fact that the latter Man is called “wicked and slothful” and an “unprofitable servant” (verse 30), who is cast into “outer darkness,” indicates that he is not a true disciple of the Master.

**Matthew 25:26 "His lord answered and said unto him, [Thou] wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strewed:"**

“Thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not”: In repeating the servant’s charge against him, the master was not acknowledging that it was true. He was allowing the man’s own words to condemn him.

If the servant really believed the master to be the kind of man he portrayed, that was all the more reason for him not to be slothful. His accusation against the master, even if it had been true, did not justify his own laziness.

**Matthew 25:27 "Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and [then] at my coming I should have received mine own with usury."**

“The exchangers”: Were persons who were in the habit of borrowing money, or receiving it on deposit at a low rate of interest, to be loaned to others at higher interest. They commonly sat by "tables" in the temple, with money ready to exchange or loan (see Matthew 21:12).

This money was left with the servant, not to exchange, nor to increase it by any such idle means, but by honest industry and merchandise. But since he was too indolent for that, he ought at least to have loaned it to the exchangers, that his master might have received some benefit from it.

“With usury”: With interest, increase, or gain. The word "usury," in our language, has a bad signification, meaning unlawful or exorbitant interest. This was contrary to the law (Exodus 22:25; Leviticus 25:36). The original means "gain," increase, or lawful interest.

**Matthew 25:28 "Take therefore the talent from him, and give [it] unto him which hath ten talents."**

"Take therefore the talent from him": This shows it was not special grace, which is intended by the talent; for the gift and calling of special grace are without repentance, and are that good part which shall not be taken away. But gifts may fail, cease, and vanish; they may be taken away from men and men from them.

And he said give it unto him “which hath ten talents”: For to diligent and laborious ministers of the word, more spiritual light and knowledge is given. But this is not to be understood, as though other men's gifts are, properly speaking, taken away from them, and bestowed on them. But that their gifts appear the more illustrious through the slothfulness of others.

The Lord of this servant was very angry with him. He called him just what he was, wicked and lazy. When the Lord comes back, He wants to find us working for him. These people that say God has told them not to do anything are in for a rude awakening. The Bible says no work no eat (2 Thess. 3:10).

Hebrews 6:12 "That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

Work never hurt anyone. When Jesus comes back, we must be found working, not sitting around wringing our hands in fear. Some are so afraid they will do something wrong, that they are not doing anything at all. FEAR IS NOT OF GOD.

In the story above, this man's lord told him that it did no good hidden in the ground. If nothing else, he could have drawn interest on it at the bank. The man was not trustworthy, so his lord took this talent from him and gave it to someone who put it to use. Now, the five talent man had eleven, because of his faithfulness.



**Matthew 25:29 "For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath."**

“For unto every one that hath shall be given” (see 13:12). The recipients of divine grace inherit immeasurable blessings in addition to eternal life and the favor of God (Rom. 8:32).

But those who despise the riches of God’s goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering (Rom. 2:4), burying them in the ground and clinging instead to the paltry and transient goods of this world, will ultimately lose everything they have (6:19; John 12:25).

**Matthew 25:30 "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."**

“Outer darkness ... weeping and gnashing of teeth”: This would describe the darkness farthest from the light, i.e., outer darkness.

“Weeping and gnashing of teeth”: This speaks of inconsolable grief and unremitting torment. Jesus commonly used the phrases in this verse to describe hell (13:42, 50; 24:51).

You see, poverty does not insure you that you will go to heaven. Neither does the fact that you have money insure you that you will go to hell. Many believe just this. The parable of the talents proves how much in error this is. It is not how much you have that counts; it’s what you do with what you have.

God has no respect for the faithless. Faith in Jesus Christ is what saves us. Without faith, it is impossible to please God. You can easily see what happens to those who have no faith in the 30th verse above. They are cast into hell; the place of torment.

What can we retain from all of this?

1. Have faith in God.
2. Use whatever God has entrusted to you to the very best of your ability. Do whatever you do in His will.
3. Do not be lazy. Do what you can.
4. There will be great rewards for those who have faith in God and work to bring others into the kingdom of God.

### **Matthew Chapter 25 Continued Questions**

1. In this parable, what is the kingdom of heaven likened unto?
2. When the man left, who did he leave his goods with?
3. How many talents did he give each servant?

4. Why did he give them different amounts?
5. The problem with money is not having it, but in what?
6. From a spiritual standpoint, what is another message here?
7. What did the servant do that had five talents?
8. What did the servant that had two do?
9. What does "talent" mean?
10. Why would their master be pleased?
11. For God to be pleased with our finances (whatever they are), what must we be doing with them?
12. What is a requirement, if we have been blessed with money, if we intend to please God? Four things.
13. What makes having money evil?
14. What did the lord of these servants say to the one with the five talents and to the one with two talents?
15. Just our faith in Jesus will get us to heaven, but what will determine what we will do when we reign with Him?
16. What game is life very similar to?
17. What difference was made between the man with ten and the man with four talents?
18. What description of the lord did the man with one talent give?
19. What did the man with one talent do with it?
20. What description did his lord have of him? Two things.
21. What did his lord say the least thing he could have done was?
22. What did his lord do with his one talent?
23. Where did he cast this unfaithful servant?
24. What mistaken information do many have about poverty? About being rich?
25. It is not how much you have, but what you \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_.
26. Without what, it is impossible to please God?

27. What four things should we retain from all of this?