

PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

1.0 Introduction - Matt.25:14-30

- Illustrates the characteristics of two different kinds of servants – Church and Great Co
- Very appropriate pre-memorial lesson – Jesus gave this lesson to disciples 3 days before he died

2.0 The servants of this parable are stewards (R1972:3) and would be modern-day fiduciaries

- Modern day examples: trustee, power of attorney, executor, investment account manager
- Responsibilities: high duty of loyalty & faithfulness to the principal; absence of all self-interest

3.0 Parable details. This story is divided into six scenes

3.1 Scene 1: Verses 14-15 – General setting, identification of actors in the “cast”, and definitions.

- This parable is an intensification of the previous parable – wise and foolish virgins
- Talent defined: Counterweight stone used to value a variety of similar precious metals
Rev.16:21 “the weight of a talent”
Represents a variety of natural & spiritual qualities used to serve God
Spiritual: fruit of the spirit, meekness, patience, agape, etc Gal.5:22
Natural: IQ, education, speaking ability, time, money, etc R3870:4-6
A talent is not limited to high level, rare, or special skills
- A single talent represents not just a single quality, but a variety of qualities used to serve God
- Each talent reps a combination of natural and spiritual qualities R3870:4-6
- Multiple talents represent breath of variety of qualities and degree of development of qualities
- This parable applies from AD 33 until the completion of the Little Flock and Great Co.

3.2 Scene 2: Verses 16-18 – what each of the three servants did with their talents (qualities)

- Five and two talent servants invested (used) their talents in Lord’s service. 100% return.
- The talent gains represent mainly spiritual growth – character growth – fruit of the spirit
- One talent servant did not invest (use) his talent in Lord’s service. 0% return. R3696:2
- Rather, he allowed his qualities to be consumed (covered up, burdened) by earthly activities.
- Great Co attribute revealed: allowing natural & spiritual qualities to be consumed, buried, or used up in unnecessary earthly activities

3.3 Scene 3: Verses 19-23 - Lord returns, two servants give their account, and obtain their reward

- Lord returned in 1874 and began reckoning with his servants in 1878. R3871:1
- Both servants had been given broad liberty as to how to use their qualities to serve the Lord
- Two-part reward: Rulership – sharing the royal throne with Jesus, Rev.3:21
Joys of the Lord – using our rulership to restore the world of mankind
Gen.12:3; Gal.3:16,29
- Five talent servant and two talent servant get the exact same reward
- Lesson: the unequally talented can be equally faithful. R2765:5
- Faithfulness is not judged on how much we have, but on how we use what we have R2764:1

3.4 Scene 4: Verses 24-27 – One talent servant gives report and gets his “reward”

- Servant first accuses Lord of being too hard on him. “You expected too much of me”.
- Great Co attributes revealed: Lack of full love for and trust in the Lord. R2766:1
Fear of sacrificial life – more interested in self-preservation;
Ashamed of the Lord Heb 2:15; 13:6; Matt.10:39; Mk.8:38
Prefer to live a nice, respectable, and honorable earthly life
- Great Co characterized as culpable and lazy because they breach their covenant of sacrifice
- Lord rightfully expects to harvest where he has not sown & reap where he has not winnowed

- Lord cannot carry out our consecrations for us. Lord cannot develop our character by himself
- Each original talent given by the Lord continued to be the Lord's property, not the servant's
- Each servant's return (gain) on his investment belongs to the Lord, not to the servants
- Our part as servants is not just about us as individuals and our personal spiritual growth.
- Each servant must do his/her part to contribute to the Lord's building – the New Creation
- A bank investment is a very small, a very conservative investment. It does not gain much.
- If we want the Lord's approval, a conservative use of our qualities to serve the Lord is far better than using them for unnecessary earthly activities
- If our best effort to serve is only in some very small way, we will likely gain Lord's approval.

3.5 SCENE 5: Verse 28 – Lord gives one talent servant his just “reward”

- The unfaithful servant loses his talent which represents the loss of two things:
- First, the Lord takes him out of the running for the Little Flock SM513:3
- Second, he loses the opportunity to develop the superlative character of the Little Flock
- Great Co eventually develops acceptable character as a bride's maid, but not as the bride.
- Psa. 45:14

3.6 SCENE 6: Verses 29,30 Jesus summarizes the difference between Church and Great Co

- Every Church member uses their qualities faithfully and will superabound in spiritual growth
- Every member of the Great Co will be experience three losses (penalties)
- First, their talent is taken away – no longer a candidate for the Bride or Bridelike character
- Second, they are cast into outer darkness. They are outside of God's special favor
 - They may be “in the dark” (unaware) relative to their own deficient condition R3696:3
 - They lose appreciation of spiritual things & thus diminish spiritually R2766:4; SM514:1
- Third, they experience weeping and gnashing of teeth – disciplinary experiences R3871:3-4
 - Sorrow from realizing at some point they have been rejected from the Little Flock
 - Will receive a measure of wrath and opposition from others. Acts 7:54; Job 16:9
- These experiences will cause them to make a decision to finish their sacrifice Rev.7:15 or continue to live an earthly life and lose all. Rev.7:15; R4401:1
- Lesson: Never lose contact with our personal enemy – our Great Co attitudes & tendencies. Fight to overcome them. R3696:3
- 1 Tim.6:12

END