

THE SERVANTS AND THE MASTER'S TALENTS (Mt. 25:14-30)

We all like getting ... and if it costs nothing ... it's all the better. But the reality is nothing in this life is worth getting unless you work for it.

Out of all creation, God's crowning glory was the man and the woman, [Gen. 1:28 God blessed them](#). ... Only *they* did He create in His own image, and He enjoyed a special relationship with them. Even after their disobedience, He had a plan which would ultimately restore them to Himself. That plan centred round sending His Son to Calvary ... and that is how He has invested more in His children than any other part of His creation.

A rich man was travelling to a far country and he made preparation for his business to continue in his absence. ... Out of all his many servants, **HE CALLED** three to carry on the more important aspects of his business. He noticed one of his servants had great potential so the master decided to give him the heaviest responsibility, - he gave him five talents.

Another of the servants had also shown potential ... not just as capable as the first servant ... but the master reckoned he could cope well with being given two talents. In no way did the man who had been given two talents become envious of the man who had been given five for it was a real privilege to be trusted by the master to receive anything.

The third servant the master called was given one talent. This was a wise master, so he knew the one talent for this man was sufficient. Altogether, the master **called** these three servants ... three individuals, different characters, [Mt. 25:15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability](#).

Also, **HE CREDITED** them with the talents *he* had earned ... He was passing to them the work he had previously been engaged in. ... The talents the three men were given did not come easily for the master worked hard to acquire them. And the master had a responsibility to be fair so that he regarded each of the three servants the same, and by how he could ascertain their management of his business. ... He had put his all into the work, and that's what he expected from them too. ... By the way, the word Matthew uses here for 'servant' is the word for a slave, δούλος, ... and a slave, - unlike a servant, - has no rights, no privileges or no favours. A slave works for nothing!

And yet the master went against the norm and gifted each of these three servants with talents ... and he had a right to expect them to work hard. It was *his* money,

his business, and but for *him*, they would not have been in that privileged position ... **He called them ... He credited them ... and He CHARGED them.**

In the meantime, the servants began to serve while their master was away in a foreign country. After a certain period, as expected, he returned. Now they did not know exactly when he would return, but they knew he *would*. Eventually, ¹⁹ *After a long time ... he arrived unannounced. It wasn't their business to know ... it was only their business to get on with the task of increasing what he had given them ... On his return he met and called them one by one to account for their work.*

... The first servant came with the original five talents ... and five talents more, 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. ... The servant did not say another word ... but he would have been well-pleased with how the master had received his work. After all, he had nothing before the master gave to him, so all he had was due to the master.*

The second servant came next before the master. He too brought his original two talents and two more in addition. He also recognised the goodness of the master in giving him the opportunity to serve, 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.*

The third servant was called to appear before the master too, but all he brought was the one talent he had originally been entrusted with. His attitude was different, - it was nothing like the previous two conversations for he told the master, "You're a hard man to work for, you have us out running about after you, so I went and hid that talent you gave me ... and here you are ... here's it back again!" ... The third servant had judged the master, to whom he was beholden!

With all three of his servants, the master **RECOGNISED** what each of them had done with what he had given them.

RECOMPENSED ... It must have been so good for the first and second servants to have stood there, and listened to their master's words of commendation ... To the first servant, 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. To the second servant, 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. ... Their faithfulness was faultless. They gave him their very best. ... They had nothing of their own before*

he had given them those talents, and they brought back to him double, and received their rewards! ... **Recognised** ... **Recompensed** ...

REWARDED ... Notice how v.21 and v.23 begin, **His lord said unto him**. There is something beautiful about that ... the master's voice, the smile on their master's face ... the joy as they stood before him, - unworthy *slaves* **rewarded** by their Master, and they both heard the commendation no money could buy, **enter thou into the joy of thy lord**. ... *Personal!* ... They took up residence with their master in his home. All the hard and arduous tasks for him faded when they heard those words, - beautiful words an ordinary slave would never hear.

Recognised ... **Recompensed** ... **Rewardred**. The final servant also requires our consideration for he is a warning. All three servants shared the same lord as master, and each were responsible to him. They all were to give to him their best attention and effort. However, the final servant was a 'servant' in name only ... for he had the name of being a servant but there was nothing to prove it!

You may say this servant was only given one talent ... It doesn't matter what he was given for was it not gracious of the master to have given him anything at all? ... He was a slave, - the master owed him nothing, and the reason the master gave him one talent was because that was enough ... But no matter what he gave him, the master gave his third servant the opportunity.

None of the servants needed to get anything for it was their duty to serve ... and remember they were slaves ... and slaves don't get paid, no matter how much work they do. ... But the servant could not cast it up to his master, "You passed me by! You ignored me! You did not give me the opportunity you gave the others" ... This third servant was without excuse, and here is how this final servant stood before the master ... and by the way, *he had to stand before him!*

HIS EXCUSE (v.24-25) He did not really know the master for he accused him, "Master, you are a hard tyrant of a man. You sit in your comforts and reap the rewards while we do all the work. No matter what we do, it's never enough, so why should I bother trying?! I've taken the measly one talent you gave me ... buried it in a hole in the ground ... and here you are, ... here's it back again!" ... From his own lips he demonstrated he did not truly know his master for he rejected any of the master's goodness to him ... He did not know the master, as the other two did ... and so he made **his excuse**.

HIS EXPRESSION He said he was afraid (v.25), - ... I doubt it! I imagine he was a ‘puffed-up’, lazy good-for-nothing who reckoned the world owed him ... the type the more you give them, they reckon it’s never enough! ... I wonder too if the master had given him the one talent to identify him as a counterfeit? ... If the third servant had taken his one talent and worked as the other two had, and if he had gained even another talent he would have received the same commendation as them. But, instead of *commendation* he received *condemnation*.

His excuse, his expression ... HIS EXPULSION There was no messing with the master who had worked hard to achieve all he owned and that was the standard by which he required others to work, - he expected those in his service to follow his example.

Whereas the other two servants entered the presence of the master with joy, this third servant, - in fact, we can hardly call him a servant because servants serve, - ... this third man lost the one talent he had and it was given to the servant with ten. The unfaithful servant became penniless ... and was expelled from the master’s presence forever.

There is an obvious warning here through the servant who squandered his opportunity. He was **unfaithful**. He was **unfruitful**, and he was **unforgiven** for rejecting the master’s instructions.

When you are a Christian, the Lord Jesus is living in your life as Saviour, Lord and Master, - you invited Him in. You are His child and you have the benefits of being a Christian, - a home waiting for you in the Master’s presence. That is a gift none of His people take for granted, - God has shown you *grace*. ... And whether He has given you ‘five talents’ or ‘two’, or one, you are privileged He has given you *any!* ... What a slight on Him when some ‘bury it in a hole in the ground and do nothing with it’! ... It is a simple parable, and yet it has a profound lesson ...

For all the Lord has done for me,
I never will cease to praise Him ...
Sweet is the work, my God, my King,
To praise Thy Name, give thanks and sing.

May we attend to the work into which our Master has called us, with the talents He has given us to achieve His purpose so that we also may hear His words, **Well done, thou good and faithful servant ... enter thou into the joy of thy lord.**