

## **End of the Year Exam**

### **12-18-16PM**

Matthew 25 gives us parables about the return of Jesus in the day of Judgment. One of those parables the parable of the talents, describes how our Master will look at us with the things He has given us to work for him with, described in the parable as talents (a monetary amount). Yet we know that there are many things that we are given to serve God. As our year comes to a close, let us consider that this year we must give an account to the Master of the efforts we have done for Him. Specifically how have we used the Time, Resources, Opportunities, and Obstacles we have received in service to Him?

#### **Give An Account Of Your Time**

Ephesians 5:15-16 speaks about redeeming our time and using it wisely. Using your time wisely could be described in questions: did you apportion time for prayer? Did you make time to know God? Perhaps instead we might ask if we wasted our time. Were we focusing on satisfying the flesh rather than serving God? Did we put it off, assuming there is still time ahead?

#### **Give An Account Of Your Resources**

We were all blessed with food, shelter, clothing this year. But we also are given abilities that were meant for service to God (1 Corinthians 12:4-5). Did we use these abilities to serve ourselves or our God? In Luke 12 we read the parable of the rich fool who was blessed by God with great abundance. He decided to store it up for his pleasure, to make his life easy. In verses 20-21 God called him a fool and took his life. God blesses you with resources and abilities; have you used them for Him or yourself?

#### **Give An Account Of Your Opportunities**

Galatians 6 speaks about bearing our burdens. The chapter seems to parallel the parable of the talents in describing the things God gives us to serve Him. When you had opportunity to do good, did you do so? When you had opportunity to serve Christ (Colossians 4:5-6), did you do so? When you had an opportunity to defend your hope (1 Peter 3:15), did you do so?

#### **Give An Account Of Your Obstacles**

For many, the tribulations or obstacles we faced in 2016 are the reasons we give for not having served God. But do we consider that obstacles are necessary in service to God? Scriptures tell us that we must face difficulties as Christians (Acts 14:22, Hebrews 12:11). When you faced issues of health, finance, strife, frustration, or home, did you endure these things to the glory of God? Did you have the response these things should bring about in us, or did you abandon hope and faith?

One marvelous thing to consider about our Master is that He does not judge us on the results, but on our efforts with what we have. The servant with 10 talents and the servant with 4 talents each entered the pleasure of their Master; we might assume that had the servant with but one talent obtained the interest from it, that would have even been enough. Also consider that God has told His servants in the past that there are result so four labors that we cannot discern; Elijah thought he had failed God, but God revealed that he had succeeded (1 Kings 19). As Paul said: *I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase* (1 Corinthians 3:6-7).