

Buried Talents: Matthew 25:14-30
08-15-21

In Matthew 25 Jesus gave us several parables to consider in regards to the end of time and His return in judgement. One of these parables, the parable of the talents, describes what the judgement day will be like. In the parable, three servants received a different amount of talents; two of them invest and increase the amount, while the third one hides his talent. When the master returns, the two who invested are praised, while the third is condemned.

What are talents meant to represent? In Romans 12:6-8 we are told that all of us are given a measure of God's grace in order to serve Him. We might consider talents (in the parable, they refer to a weight or monetary measurement) to be comparable to our abilities (1 Corinthians 14:3), or our resources (2 Corinthians 8:2), or even our efforts and opportunities (Acts 4:36-37).

But perhaps what is worth considering here is the man who buried his talent. Why do we bury our talents? Let us consider for possible reasons we might take what God has given us and put it away from use.

First, it may be that we are driven by the wrong fear. The servant declared that "I was afraid..." As the reason he hid his talent. It is not wrong to fear God (1 Peter 2:17), but this means we ought to to fear His wrath, not failure. God expects our best efforts; throughout Scripture God has made it clear that His expectation is our effort, not our success. Someone who does not try because they fear failing is fearing the wrong thing.

Another point made in the parable is laziness. The master proclaims "You... lazy servant" when the servant is presented. We are servants of God (2 Timothy 2:15), and we are expected to be diligent and hard working. Yet perhaps some take the gifts God has given them and don't use them because of the work that would be involved in that use.

Here is another possible reason we bury our talents: we don't think we can do something perfectly. Consider the parable of the two sons in Matthew 21:28-30. What if the son who said he would and did not obey his father did not do so because he was waiting for the perfect moment and opportunity to act? Sometimes we need to make opportunities.

Finally, what if the man did not know he had the talent? Of course, that does not seem to fit in this parable, but it is true that many have talents that they do not consider that they possess. Scriptures stated that we all have some measure of gifts from God (talents) (Romans 12:3). Perhaps we are unaware of our ability or do not see something as an ability, and therefore fail to use it.

We all need to consider what talents we have and how we can use them. We need to ask ourselves how to grow talents, and what misuses talents. This is something for which we will give an accounting before God.