THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS
Matthew 25:14-30

Introduction:

1. Matthew, chapter 25, is a continuation of Jesus’ discourse in the previous chapter.
   a. Having given the signs by which His disciples could know of the approaching destruction of Jerusalem, Jesus turned His attention to His second coming.
   b. He gave a series of parables showing the need for always being prepared because His coming would be sudden.

2. The parable of the talents is sandwiched in between the parable of the ten virgins and the parable of the sheep and the goats.

3. Its purpose is to show the importance of using our talents to His glory for we will have to give an account when He comes.

Discussion:

I. THE PARABLE IS BASED ON PRACTICES OF THE FIRST CENTURY.

   A. A wealthy man was going on a long journey to another country.

      1. He entrusted his wealth to his three slaves.
      2. His wealth was in the form of talents of silver or gold.
      3. The weight of a talent ranged from 70 to 100 pounds.
      4. To one servant, he gave five talents, to another two and to another one.
      5. The distribution was according to the ability of the servant.
      6. He expected them to buy, sell, trade, and make a profit.

   B. When the master returned, he called his servants to give account.

      1. The first one had doubled what he had and was commended.
      2. The second servant had done the same and was also commended.
      3. The third servant brought his one talent back and gave it to his master.

      a. He said, “I knew you were a hard man so I was afraid and buried the talent.”
      b. His master was angry, took the talent from him and cast him out of his presence.
C. The meaning of the parable is clear:

1. Jesus is the Master who has returned to Heaven.
2. Christians are His servants.
3. Our talents are our natural gifts, time, money, education, opportunities, etc.
4. They are meant to be used in the Lord’s service.
5. When Christ returns, we will give an account at the Judgment for how we have used everything He has given us.
6. We will be commended or condemned accordingly.

II. THERE ARE SEVERAL GREAT LESSONS IN THIS PARABLE FOR US.

A. Each man received talents in proportionate to his ability.

1. Every Christian has talents that others may not have.
2. Some have more; some less, but all have some.
3. Each person is expected to do his best with what God has given him.
4. Members of the church should find out what their talents are and begin developing them as soon as they are baptized.
5. Those who are afraid, lazy or indifferent, and do not develop their God given talents, will be condemned.
6. Those who use their talents will increase their ability to serve.
7. if we do not develop our talents we will lose them.

B. The one talent man was held responsible for his one talent.

1. He was not condemned because he had only one talent; he was condemned because he did not use his one talent!
2. Many members argue they have just one talent when they are multi-talented.
3. A longtime member of the church would not lead a prayer, make announcements or even pass the communion, but he often spoke at public functions in the community.

C. The one talent man made excuse for his failure by blaming his master.

1. He said: “I knew you were a hard man...I was afraid... therefore I hid your talent.”
2. He falsely accused his master.
3. Some think the Lord expects too much of His people.

   a. The Lord is compassionate and merciful; His yoke is easy and His burden light (Matt. 11:30).
b. He will not put more on us than we can bear (1 Cor. 10:13).

D. The one talent man lost his talent.

1. The talent was taken from him and given to the faithful servant who had ten.
2. He lost his talent simply because he did not use it.
   a. Churches often lack teachers because men and women will not even try.
   b. We often lack songleaders though many men would be capable with a minimum of training.
   c. Leading public prayers is not so difficult if one maintains an active private prayer life.
   d. Leadership in the church is not a performance; it is a service!

3. Anyone who speaks publicly will make gaffes.
4. Fear is overcome by doing that which one fears.

E. The one talent man lost his soul.

1. He was cast out because he did not even try!
2. The Lord called him a “wicked and slothful servant.”
3. We think of wickedness as doing bad things; it is also wicked to fail to do the right things:
   “To him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin” (James 4:17).
4. “Slothful” is simply laziness; there is never an excuse for laziness!

Conclusion:

1. Jesus is our Lord (Acts 2:36; Rom. 10:8,9; Luke 6:46).
2. Our Lord has returned to Heaven, but will one day come again.
3. He has given each of us talents, time, opportunities, money, property, etc. to use in His service.
4. Everything we have is really on loan from God (1 Cor. 4:7).
5. Each one of should ask: “How will I give an account to the Lord?”