

To be Found Faithful

Matthew 25:13-30

Online Sermon: http://www.mckeesfamily.com/?page_id=3567

“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour”

When we dwell on the promise that Jesus will one day return does that unshakeable truth instill hope or fear within our hearts as Christians? While part of us wants to jump up in pure joy and say “YES LORD JESUS COME,” is there not another part of us that is a little fearful that upon judgment the Master will be less than impressed with how little we did to serve Him while here on this earth? Upon our conversion we were not only adopted and sealed by the Holy Spirit as God’s children but were also given spiritual gifts or talents that are necessary to do His divine will. To our shame, often when Christ came knocking on the doors of our hearts to serve in His kingdom, we refused His request on the grounds that the service was either too easy and without public glory, too difficult, we were unworthy¹ or that it was just not the right fit for our self-absorbed living!² While we could try to ease our guilty consciences³ by standing on the theology of “once saved always saved,” would we not sink the moment we “licensed loiterers”⁴ of His kingdom realize that living a complacent, lazy life that lacks fruits and good deeds is damning proof that we have never truly been born again? After all, surely those who were bought at the price and have received every perfect gift⁵ and spiritual blessing would see serving God not as drudgery but as an honor, for He alone is our portion ... right? The following sermon is going to review the *Parable of the Bags of Gold* with the goal of spurring us on to use our talents for Jesus so that one day we might hear the words “good and faithful servant!”

Everyone is Given an Incredible Talent (14-18)

Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. ¹⁵To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. ¹⁶The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. ¹⁷So also, the one with two bags of

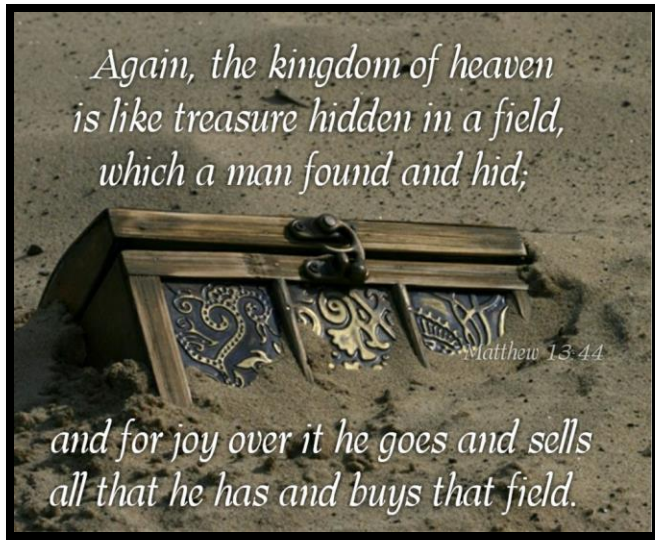
¹ C. H. Spurgeon, [“Unprofitable Servants.”](#) in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 26 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1880), 325.

² C. H. Spurgeon, [“Unprofitable Servants.”](#) in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 26 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1880), 325.

³ C. H. Spurgeon, [“Unprofitable Servants.”](#) in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 26 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1880), 327.

⁴ C. H. Spurgeon, [“Unprofitable Servants.”](#) in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 26 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1880), 326.

⁵ C. H. Spurgeon, [“The Two Talents.”](#) in *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 4 (London; Glasgow: Passmore & Alabaster; James Paul; George John Stevenson; George Gallie, 1858), 81.



weighing a half a million pounds.¹³ This would have been the equivalent of twenty years of wage¹⁴ in today's dollars or about ¾ a million dollars! The servants took this enormous amount of money, took a risk by starting up new businesses¹⁵ and worked incredibly hard to earn more money for their master. Likewise, upon our conversion we have been given talents in the form of spiritual gifting that our master expects us to use by serving in His kingdom. Do you realize that whoever believes and asks in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ will do miracles greater than what Jesus did while on this earth (John 14:12-14)? And

do you realize that the rewards for serving in His kingdom is not just storing treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:19-21)¹⁶ but also the opportunity to serve in a greater capacity in His kingdom?¹⁷ What an honor it is to be entrusted with so much when we are but sinners saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9)!

The final point that I would like to make concerning the above verses is that serving the



Master is not an option but a daily requirement! In the parable the master went on his journey but gave the slaves no idea when he would return but merely that upon his arrival, he expected to receive a return on the monies he entrusted to them. Likewise, Jesus who has gone to prepare a place for us will one day return (John 14:3-4) and evaluate what we have done with our spiritual gifting. It is not enough for Christians to merely “hang in there” and idly wait for their Master’s return for not serving in His but building their own kingdom they prove they were never

¹³ D. A. Carson, [“Share Your Master’s Happiness.”](#) in *D. A. Carson Sermon Library* (Bellingham, WA: Faithlife, 2016), Mt 25:14–30.

¹⁴ D. A. Carson, [“Matthew.”](#) in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 516.

¹⁵ D. A. Carson, [“Share Your Master’s Happiness.”](#) in *D. A. Carson Sermon Library* (Bellingham, WA: Faithlife, 2016), Mt 25:14–30.

¹⁶ D. A. Carson, [“Share Your Master’s Happiness.”](#) in *D. A. Carson Sermon Library* (Bellingham, WA: Faithlife, 2016), Mt 25:14–30.

¹⁷ Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to Matthew*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press, 1992), 629.

really Jesus' disciples.¹⁸ "Waiting for Jesus to return is never merely passive"¹⁹ but as those who must give an account of their service²⁰ will out of genuine love want to use their influence, knowledge, strength, time, reason, intellect²¹ and YES especially their spiritual gifts to serve and through the power of the Spirit "to build assets in the Master's kingdom."²² Salvation is not the end goal of a person's life but the stepping stone to be empowered and invited to serve in God's kingdom both in this life time and the next! Since we do not know the day or hour when the Master will return to be found faithful upon His arrival means planning for our glorious future by His side by serving moment by moment!²³

Some will be Found to be Faithful (19-23)

After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. ²⁰The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.' ²¹**"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'** ²²**"The man with two bags of gold also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.'** ²³**"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'**

The identical words of praise and commendation of both the servants²⁴ who got five and two talents accentuates the truth that it is not the total amount earned but the faithful obedience in "living up to one's potential and giftedness"²⁵ that our Master seeks and rewards us for. We all have marvellous differences in gifting²⁶ and roles to perform in God's kingdom! Since the Holy Spirit distributes the gifts and is through His power that one serves, to hear the words "good and faithful servant" is not the result of the "greatness of the goods with which one was entrusted"²⁷ but one's obedience and faith that through God all things are possible! When God

¹⁸ James Montgomery Boice, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001), 536.

¹⁹ D. A. Carson, "[Share Your Master's Happiness.](#)" in *D. A. Carson Sermon Library* (Bellingham, WA: Faithlife, 2016), Mt 25:14–30.

²⁰ D. A. Carson, "[Share Your Master's Happiness.](#)" in *D. A. Carson Sermon Library* (Bellingham, WA: Faithlife, 2016), Mt 25:14–30.

²¹ James Montgomery Boice, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001), 532.

²² D. A. Carson, "[Share Your Master's Happiness.](#)" in *D. A. Carson Sermon Library* (Bellingham, WA: Faithlife, 2016), Mt 25:14–30.

²³ D. A. Carson, "[Share Your Master's Happiness.](#)" in *D. A. Carson Sermon Library* (Bellingham, WA: Faithlife, 2016), Mt 25:14–30.

²⁴ James Montgomery Boice, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001), 533.

²⁵ Michael J. Wilkins, *Matthew*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2004), 807.

²⁶ C. H. Spurgeon, "[The Two Talents.](#)" in *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 4 (London; Glasgow: Passmore & Alabaster; James Paul; George John Stevenson; George Gallie, 1858), 82.

²⁷ C. H. Spurgeon, "[The Two Talents.](#)" in *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 4 (London; Glasgow: Passmore & Alabaster; James Paul; George John Stevenson; George Gallie, 1858), 86.



asks one to serve no matter how small or big the matter one is to receive such a request with pure joy. To one who controls and sustains all things seen and unseen, there is no such thing as a too “small” of service²⁸ because He rewards based on obedience and faith, not size of divine assignment. Likewise, one should not see any service as “too big” for one to accomplish because in seeing it this way one falsely assumes it is through one’s own might and power that success in service happens. Since rewards for service are not based on the “law of works” but according to the law of grace,²⁹ with

thanksgiving in our hearts and overwhelming enthusiasm³⁰ we are to approach our loving Master with confidence that our small “might” of service when presented with obedience and faith will be rewarded in same manner as bigger acts of service!

Another thing that should be pointed out is that we are to see our service through the eyes



of Christ! The master in this parable did not say “well done brilliant or distinguished servant” but well-done faithful servant.³¹ When God enables His own to accomplish great things in His kingdom often the praise from others inflates one’s ego and such a person falls into a great pit of pride in which ministry success becomes a product of one’s own effort and management style.³² No matter how successful one must not forget “we are His workmanship, created by Him, and therefore to ourselves we dare not take a particle of praise.”³³ Neither did the master say to the servant with two talents “well done with what little I gave

²⁸ C. H. Spurgeon, “[The Two Talents.](#)” in *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 4 (London; Glasgow: Passmore & Alabaster; James Paul; George John Stevenson; George Gallie, 1858), 81–82.

²⁹ C. H. Spurgeon, “[Unprofitable Servants.](#)” in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 26 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1880), 334–335.

³⁰ James Montgomery Boice, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001), 533.

³¹ C. H. Spurgeon, “[Unprofitable Servants.](#)” in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 26 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1880), 334.

³² C. H. Spurgeon, “[The Two Talents.](#)” in *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 4 (London; Glasgow: Passmore & Alabaster; James Paul; George John Stevenson; George Gallie, 1858), 81.

³³ C. H. Spurgeon, “[Unprofitable Servants.](#)” in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 26 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1880), 333.

you.” When God asks us to do what we consider “minor” things sometimes out of pride we refuse to do such “menial” tasks. Foolishly we say that with my extensive abilities I can be the “public figure” in my church and community! What we often forget is that those “with little influence and a narrow sphere”³⁴ are often the ones called to do great things in His kingdom. Also, it will not be until the Master returns that we find out the true affects of our faithful service. Our labour when in Christ is never in vain (1 Corinthians 15:58) and we simply do not how many seeds we have planted and watered or how much our “cups of water” (Matthew 10:40-42) have changed the hearts of many!

Some will be Found to be Wicked (24-30)

Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. ²⁵ So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’ ²⁶ “His master replied, ‘You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? ²⁷ Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest. ²⁸ “ ‘So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. ²⁹ For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. ³⁰ And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

From the above verse we learn about a great principle of spiritual life: while using one’s spiritual gifts leads to ministry development and growth,³⁵ refusing to do so proves that such a person is not part of God’s kingdom.³⁶ Fearing that his failure would incur his master’s wrath³⁷ he chose to overlook his responsibility to his master³⁸ by burying his talent in the earth where it would be unproductive but safe.³⁹ The master called the servant who had one talent wicked because of his unjustified slander, laziness and lack of desire to serve.⁴⁰ From this wicked servant we learn that “receiving God-given abilities is a responsibility that accompanies a right

³⁴ C. H. Spurgeon, “[The Two Talents](#),” in *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 4 (London; Glasgow: Passmore & Alabaster; James Paul; George John Stevenson; George Gallie, 1858), 84.

³⁵ Robert H. Mounce, [Matthew](#), Understanding the Bible Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 235.

³⁶ Leon Morris, [The Gospel according to Matthew](#), The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press, 1992), 632.

³⁷ D. A. Carson, “[Matthew](#),” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 517.

³⁸ D. A. Carson, “[Matthew](#),” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 517.

³⁹ Michael J. Wilkins, [Matthew](#), The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2004), 807.

⁴⁰ James Montgomery Boice, [The Gospel of Matthew](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001), 536.



relationship with God.”⁴¹ Contained in this parable is a dire warning that half-hearted, double minded attempts to appear to love and serve God⁴² will lead to many on the day of the Lord to hearing the phrase “go away I never knew you” (Matthew 7:22-23)!⁴³ I am not suggesting that salvation is not by grace and faith but merely that works is evidence that one has been saved!⁴⁴ So if you are wondering if you are the wicked servant in this parable then ask the Holy Spirit and review the evidence: are you faithfully using your God-given gifts to build up the

body of Christ and advance His kingdom?⁴⁵ If you are then you are one of the good and faithful servants in this parable and you will receive even greater responsibility in heaven but if you are the wicked servant all shall be taken from you and you will spend an eternity in hell where there will be “weeping and gnashing of teeth” (verse 28)!

Conclusion



Our hearts should leap in pure joy that our Lord is going to return to judge us for the way in which we served Him while on this earth. We have all been given at least one spiritual gift so that we might be able through the power of the Spirit to accomplish our assigned kingdom goals and tasks. Those who have been born-again are not to become license loiterers whose lives lack fruits and good deeds. To reject service on the grounds that it is too easy and without public glory or too difficult and seemingly impossible is

⁴¹ Michael J. Wilkins, *Matthew*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2004), 808.

⁴² C. H. Spurgeon, “Unprofitable Servants,” in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 26 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1880), 334.

⁴³ D. A. Carson, “Share Your Master’s Happiness,” in *D. A. Carson Sermon Library* (Bellingham, WA: Faithlife, 2016), Mt 25:14–30.

⁴⁴ James Montgomery Boice, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001), 534.

⁴⁵ D. A. Carson, “Share Your Master’s Happiness,” in *D. A. Carson Sermon Library* (Bellingham, WA: Faithlife, 2016), Mt 25:14–30.

a sin against He who is sovereign and sees all service equally valuable and rewards based on faith and obedience, not results of which he alone can only do! The gifts we have received are of enormous value for with them and through the power of the Holy Spirit we as His ambassadors and royal priests are expected to perform miracles greater than Jesus did while here on earth. This parable finished with a dire warning: refusing to use the talent one has received is evidence that one is not saved and therefore will spend an eternity in hell weeping and gnashing one's teeth! May we take this warning to heart and may we serve our God with thanksgiving in our hearts that He has found us to be worthy to serve and will speak the following words to us, "good and faithful servant!"