

**Following Jesus**  
**God's Gifted and Talented Program**  
**Matthew 25:14-30**

I. Message

**a. Range – The Lord gives different gifts to each person – v.14-15**

- i. #1 – Everyone was given a different gift
  - 1. One gets 5, one gets 2 and the other 1
  - 2. Given by the master to his servants
  - 3. Not the servants' possession and not for his own use
- ii. #2 – The difference in giftedness was based on natural ability – v.15

**b. Responsibility – Everyone has the duty to use their gifts – v.16-18**

- i. The one with 5 and the one with 2 both invested and grew their gift (it was assumed that ALL of them would do this)
- ii. They used it in such a way that **the master benefitted while away**
- iii. The amount was not important, nor was it a badge of honor
  - 1. But it wasn't the amount that is at stake here
  - 2. How they used it was

**c. Returns– Everyone will be held accountable for how their investment benefitted the master – v.20-21**

- i. The servant with ability for 5 invested the 5 and gained 5 more
  - 1. He was given a “well done”
  - 2. He was given more responsibility
  - 3. He was invited into the joy of his lord
- ii. The servant with ability for 2 invested the 2 and gained 2 more
  - 1. He was given a “well done”
  - 2. He was given more responsibility
  - 3. He was invited into the joy of his lord

**d. Regret – Status quo is not acceptable to the Lord – v.24-25**

- i. The one who did not benefit the master was full of excuses
  - 1. “You are a hard man. You make a lot of money without me”
  - 2. “I was afraid of you and so I erred on the side of caution”
  - 3. “I saved everything you gave me”
- ii. But Jesus condemned this servant as “wicked and lazy”
  - 1. It wasn't that he was less of a servant for only having the ability for one talent
  - 2. He was less of a servant for choosing to not invest the little he had!

**e. Reckoning – Everyone gets their appropriate reward – v.28-30**

- i. To the one that has, more will be given

- ii. To the one that has not, what he has will be taken away
- iii. The unprofitable servant was cast into outer darkness
  - 1. Some day we will all stand before the Lord to give account for our lives
  - 2. Will you hear “well done, enter into the joy of the Lord?”
  - 3. John Greenleaf Wittier – “Of all sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these, it might have been.”
  - 4. That will certainly be true of every one of us that wastes the opportunities we have been given to make an eternal impact!

## II. 3 Conclusions

### a. Contentment: Don't worry about everyone else's giftedness

- i. This is really easy to do
  - 1. Rather than be grateful for what we have been given
  - 2. Rather than recognizing that everything we have is of grace
  - 3. Rather than humbly using what I am given to accomplish good
  - 4. I am tempted to be discontent and focus on the gifts of others!
- ii. But the faithful servants in this parable don't
  - 1. They are not worried about how their natural abilities are scored
  - 2. They are not lifted up with pride
  - 3. They are not discontent with their allotment of the master's grace
- iii. They just get to work, as soon as they receive their gift
  - 1. Ephesians 2:19-22; Ephesians 4:16
  - 2. 1 Corinthians 12:14-19; James 3:1-2

### b. Calculation: Focus on using you gifts for the Lord's benefit in a quantifiable way. What gifts?

- i. Your natural abilities – aptitudes you are born with or lean toward
- ii. Your spiritual gifts – special and specific skills given to serve the church
- iii. Your personal resources
  - 1. The most obvious: Your financial resources
  - 2. Not just financial resources
    - a. How are you leveraging your connections for the Master?
    - b. Your time, home and other assets, Your influence, Your Vote
    - c. **EVERYONE has something to do in that middle triangle – Are you?**

### c. Consideration: status quo is not rewarded

- i. Jesus said that failure to use gifts for the master is “wicked and slothful”
- ii. So how are you going to invest?
  - 1. Determine your best ministry investment sweet-spots
  - 2. Develop a micro-investment strategy
  - 3. Develop a macro-investment strategy