

Church of God Sunday School

PARABLES OF JESUS: THE TALENTS

Matthew 25:14-30

Have you ever had someone ask you to take care of something special? Perhaps Father gave you money for the Sunday school offering and told you to be careful not to lose it. Or perhaps Mother asked you to watch your baby brother or sister for a few moments while she had to go downstairs. If you wanted Mother or Father to be proud of you, you did your best to take care of what they entrusted to you.

Did you know that God is giving each of His children a special job? One day Jesus will return, but while we are waiting for Him, should we be idle or lazy? Jesus told a story about the different ways three servants worked while waiting for their master's return.

Jesus told of a man who was preparing to travel to a country that was far away. He called for three of his servants and "delivered unto them his goods." He gave each of his servants "talents." In Bible times, talents were what we would call money.

To one servant the man gave five talents, to another servant he gave two talents, and to the third servant he gave one talent. He gave to each servant "according to his . . . ability."

Why do you think he gave each of his servants money? Was it for them to spend on themselves? The servants knew that their master expected them to put the money to good use while he was gone.

Then the man left, and he was gone for a long time. When he returned from his journey, he called for his servants. The servants gave a report of what they had been doing while their master was away.

The first servant took the five talents his lord (a title for the master) had given him and "traded with the same, and made them other five talents." He now had

ten talents! His lord said to him, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

The second servant said, "Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them." He now had four talents! His lord said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

The third servant came, bringing only the one talent he had been given. He said, "Lord, I knew . . . that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth." He did not even *try* to use the talent his lord had given him. He dug a hole in the ground and hid the talent until the lord returned.

The lord was very angry with the third servant. He said to him, "Thou wicked and slothful servant . . . Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to

the exchangers [like a bank], and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury [interest]."

Then the lord ordered this one talent taken from the third servant and given to the servant who had ten talents. The wicked and lazy servant was "cast . . . into outer darkness," where there is "weeping and gnashing of teeth."

God is giving His children talents, or gifts. Your gifts belong to God, just as the talents belonged to the lord in this parable. The servants knew the talents were not for their own use, but were to be used for their master.



How are you using your God-given gifts? Are you using them for selfish reasons? Or are you not using your talents at all (like the servant who buried his talent in the ground)? God wants you to use your talents for Him. Even if God only gave you one talent, you can use it in a way that pleases Him.

Someday Jesus will return, just as the lord in the parable returned. When Jesus comes, He will want to know what you have done with your talents. Will

Jesus call you a "good and faithful servant," or will He call you a "wicked and slothful servant"? Why don't you ask Jesus to help you use your talents for Him?

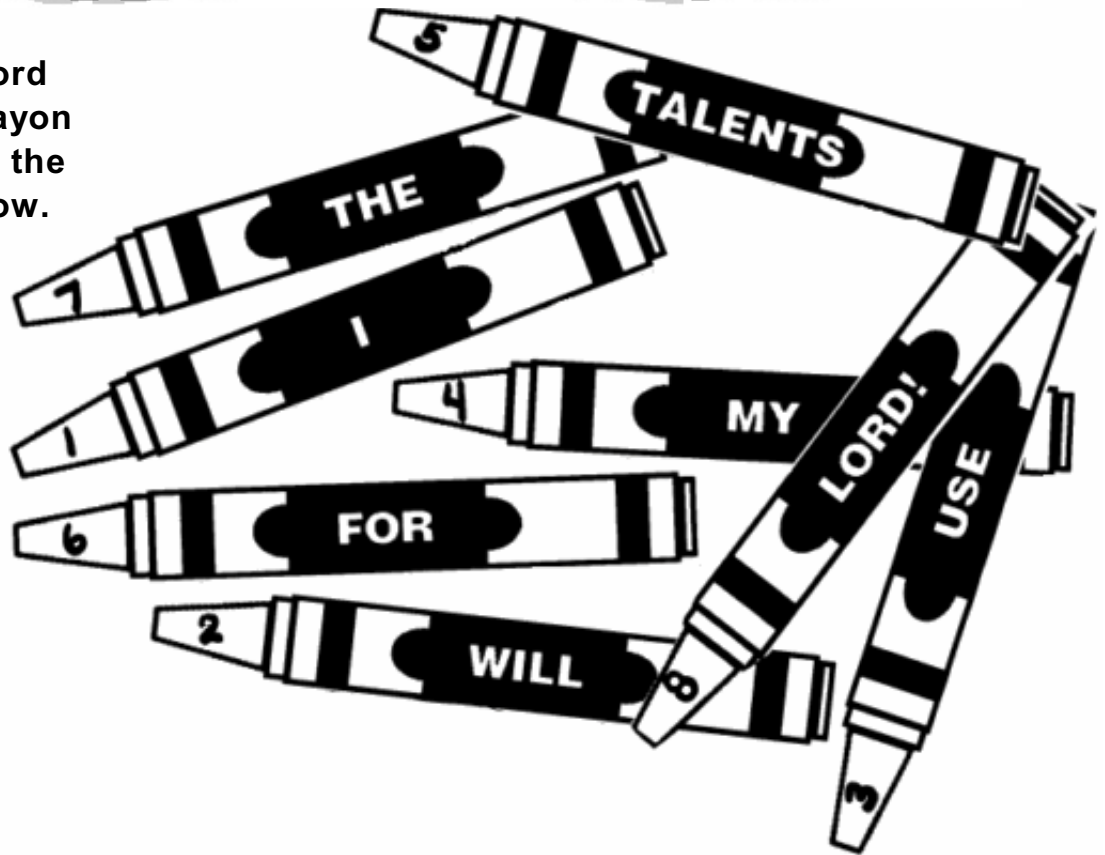
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**MEMORY VERSE:**

*"Well done, good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of thy lord."* —Matthew 25:23  
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Talents

Write the word from each crayon that matches the number below.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____



How Should You Use Your Talents?

How Many



(Draw the talents each servant received in the circles)

Talents?



Talents Are Given to the Servants