



Every believer is a sojourner on a pilgrimage to heaven. While we are here on earth, though, we have responsibilities, and we have all been given spiritual gifts accordingly. This parable reveals God's heart toward our use of His gifts in service to Him until He comes again.

ONCE *Upon a Time*

3. A talent was a measure of money worth about 20 years' wages. The master entrusted his servants with a veritable treasure. How did the man determine how many talents to give to each servant?

4. Looking at Matthew 25:16–18, explain what each man did with the talents entrusted to his care.
 - Man with five talents

 - Man with two talents

 - Man with one talent

5. When the man returned from the far country, he demanded an accounting from each man. Describe the profit each servant was able to report to his master.
 - Man with five talents

- Man with two talents

- Man with one talent

a. What was the response of the master to the servants to whom he had given five and two talents?

i. According to the response in verse 21 and 23, what two character qualities seemed important to the man?

b. What was the response of the master to the servant to whom he had given one talent?

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- i. According to the response in verse 26, what two character traits were attributed to the servant with one talent?

- ii. Do you consider laziness to be a sin?

6. What explanation was given by the man who received the one talent and did nothing to increase its worth?
 - a. This servant had a distorted view of his master. This is a picture of those who have a false view of God... perhaps thinking that He is unreasonable and harsh. Have you ever recognized that you had a distorted view of God? Describe how you viewed Him.

b. According to Matthew 25:25, what emotion was the result of this servant's inaccurate perception of his master?

c. How does your relationship with God affect how you use the gifts He's given you?

7. The unprofitable servant was cast into outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Would you say the behavior of the unprofitable servant indicates that he is a believer or unbeliever?

a. Can someone be a believer and still be an unprofitable servant?

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8. How does this man giving the talents to his servants and going on a journey relate to Jesus and believers?
 - a. Verse 19 tells us that the man in this parable was gone a long time. Why do you think they were not given a specific time frame for how long he would be gone?
 - b. What does this tell us about the importance of being prepared for the return of the Lord?

9. Just as the servants had to give an account to the master when he returned, so will we be called upon to give an account to Jesus when He returns. Look up the following verses. What are some things the believer will be called on to give an account for one day?

- Matthew 12:36–37

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- What occupation was David faithfully working at as found in 1 Samuel 16:11?

PERSONAL: Faithful means trustworthy, dependable, loyal, stable. Would you say your life reflects this characteristic of faithfulness? If you went to be with the Lord today, would you expect to hear Him say to you, “Well done, good and faithful servant”? Why or why not? If not, what could you change in order that a confident “Yes!” could be your answer to this question? (Keep in mind that God does not expect perfection.)

11. After His death and before His ascension into Heaven, Jesus gave instructions to His disciples. What were His instructions according to the following verses?

- Matthew 28:19–20

- Mark 16:15

- Luke 24:46–49

- Acts 1:8

- a. The Great Commission is a mandate for everyone to be active in fulfilling. There are many ways to carry out this mandate, such as:
 - one-on-one witnessing
 - street witnessing
 - teaching the Word to equip the saints with the gospel message
 - any serving done to support the church as it wins souls to Christ
 - going on the mission field
 - financially and prayerfully supporting someone on the mission field
 - raising your children in the admonition of the Lord

- List some other ways you can use your natural abilities and spiritual gifts to support the work of fulfilling the Great Commission.

ONCE *Upon a Time*

12. Look up the following Scriptures and write what you find regarding receiving and using gifts from God.

- Romans 12:4–8

- 1 Timothy 4:14

- 1 Timothy 6:18–19

- 1 Peter 4:10

PERSONAL: What has God entrusted to you? What are you doing with what has been entrusted to you? Are you a faithful servant, or are you slothful regarding spiritual things? If you're not sure what God wants of you, pray and ask Him to reveal to you what He wants you to do for Him. If you are not being faithful in what He has already given you, then determine this day to make a change.

When Jesus Christ returns and takes His church to heaven, He will sit on His judgment seat and judge His own people. He will not judge our sins, because these have already been judged on the cross. But He will judge our works and will give rewards to those who have earned them.

--Warren Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary

