



## THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

### SCRIPTURE READING: MATTHEW 25:14-19

In the parable of the talents, one man received five talents, one collected three, and the last was given a single talent. All were given their gift for a long period of time and entrusted to use it wisely.

In Christ's day, a talent was a large amount of money: It represented a fortune. With this in mind, imagine how each listener hung on every word Jesus said, as they envisioned what it would be like to receive such a grand gift. Like hitting the jackpot of a multi-million dollar lottery, they'd ask themselves, *"Would I have to pay taxes on all my winnings? Should I invest it for later or spend it all now? Shall I give some away and if so, how much? What's the first thing I'd buy with so much money?"*

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to be hit it big? Perhaps you've bought a lottery ticket a time or two, gone to the casino, or put money in the office betting pool after all, you tell yourself, *"What's a few bucks, if I can win a bundle."* The truth is, however, most never win when they gamble, and believe it or not, it's a good thing. If winning money were that easy, hard work, responsibility, and determination would become a thing of the past.

Though this parable is more than two thousand years old, it still applies to you and me today. In Jesus' story, a talent represented a large amount of money, but at its core, it was simply a gift. Today, a talent refers to aptitude, skill, and ability. It's the things you love to do because you are best at them. It's what fulfills you and makes you most happy. Perhaps you are good at a particular craft or have the gift of hospitality. Maybe you are a skilled leader and can effectively lead a large group of people. Or, possibly your talent is best used with those in need, because God has granted you with great compassion. Whatever your talent may be, it is easy to identify because it's what you tend to gravitate to and what you are good at doing.

Of the three men in the parable, only one was scolded for how he invested it. The man who was given little did the least with it, and it displeased his master greatly. Granted a single talent, he didn't give it a chance to grow or develop, for he dug a hole in the ground, covered it with dirt, and walked away. Wasting what he had been given. He did the worst thing he could have ever done by ignoring it, and it made his master very angry.

Like the master in the parable, God is our Creator. Granting each of us specific talents, gifts, and abilities, we are never to hide them or deny their existence. To waste what we've been given steals richness from our life and spoils opportunity to bring glory to the One who gave the gift to us. What a shame it is to not reach our full potential and settle for mediocrity: No wonder it angers God.



What talents, gifts, and abilities has God given you? If you can't name any, it isn't because do not have one, it simply means you have not yet discovered it. You *are* a special creation, made by the hand of God, and He wants you to discover all He's created you to be. Trust that you are His special child, determine to discover your gifts, and then use them to glorify Him in all you do.

**PRAYER:** *Dear heavenly Father, thank you for granting me with my own unique gifts and abilities. Sometimes I don't always see the talents you've given to me, but I ask you to help me discover them so I can use each one to glorify you. Help me to obey your commands and give you the credit in all I do. My life is yours; do with it as you please! Amen.*