

## Matthew 25:14-30

### The Challenge of Discipleship Study 11: Stewardship

**Focus Question:** *What is your typical response when someone gives you a lavish gift?*

#### Word of Life

**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!'**

Matthew 25:21

#### Read [Matthew 25:14-30](#)

The parable of the talents follows immediately after the parable of the wise and foolish maidens. A talent was the largest monetary unit of the ancient world. One talent was equal to 6,000 denarii. The amount entrusted to the servants is huge, implying a great deal of trust on behalf of the master.

The servants in the parable do not know how long the master will be gone, but they are to be vigilant and faithful until the master returns. The servants will be held accountable for how they use the resources entrusted to them while the master is gone.

1. *Were the servants actively working on the master's behalf, or were they only concerned about their own security? How so?*
2. *Why would the master trust the servants with so much money?*

Note the familiar theme of grace in the parable. All are given the gift of talents; none is left outside the gift of grace. The challenge in this parable (as in all of Matthew) for the disciple is: What will we do with the lavish, generous gifts the master has given?

3. *How would you assess the stewardship practices of each of the servants?*
4. *Should all of the servants been given the same amount of talents? Why or why not?*

The first two servants "went off at once" to multiply the gift (vs. 16-17). They trusted in their relationship with the master. They were future-focused, willing to risk for the master's increase. In contrast, the one-talent servant fearfully focused on the past. "I knew you were a harsh man... so, I was afraid." He did not trust that his relationship with the master could risk failure. He did not trust his own abilities. His fear immobilized him and led him to hide the gift until the master's return.

5. *Why did the master respond differently to each servant?*
6. *How would you describe each of the servants using modern images?*

Applying this parable to the church, the message is clear. Do we encourage one another to try to avoid disaster; or do we foster an attitude of trust and faithfulness, of willing risk-taking for the increase of the kingdom? There are some who put the gifts into action. And there are some who, out of fear, doubt, or selfishness, choose to keep it all for themselves and fail to see that the gifts given are intended to be invested on behalf of others. To these is spoken the word of judgment: If you try to keep the gift for yourself alone, you will lose everything.

7. *Where do you find yourself in the parable?*
8. *What is the message of this parable for you?*
9. *How might you encourage people to use their gifts?*

#### Prayer

Giver of all gifts, help us to be good stewards of your gifts.

#### Dig Deeper

[1 Corinthians 12:4-11](#)

#### Last Word

This week,  
assess your God-given gifts and your stewardship of those gifts.