

WATCH THIS VIDEO

What is it all for?

DISCIPLES.AWANAYM.ORG/STEWARDSHIP

CORE VERSE

For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away.

Matthew 25:29

In the kingdom of God as in business, the one who makes the most of the opportunities he or she is given gets to move on to greater rewards and possibilities. The people who are lazy and indifferent miss out on both the present as well as future rewards. While we may not be able

to decide on the gifts God has given to us, we can choose how we will use them. God will hold us responsible for how we use all that He has entrusted to us. So use it or lose it!

USE THE SPACE BELOW TO HELP YOU REMEMBER THIS VERSE. FEEL FREE TO WRITE, DRAW OR DESIGN IN WAYS THAT MAKE SENSE TO YOU.

READ MATTHEW 25:14-30.

It was a normal thing for wealthy people to travel at this time. One of the benefits of being rich in the Roman era was the opportunity to take off and see the world, trusting others to handle your business while you were gone.

Another great thing about being rich was the opportunity to get richer. Someone with money to loan could make huge money back in interest. Many people were eager to borrow in this struggling agricultural economy, and not much money was available. So the rich could loan some of their cash to a moneychanger and make even more back. It was not unusual for someone to double their money if they had enough time to keep it loaned out.

And so our parable begins. A wealthy man going on a journey leaves quite a bit of money with three different servants (vv. 14-15). A talent weighed between 58 and 80 pounds and was likely worth about 10,000 denarii—or 10,000 days' wages for the average worker! That's a lot of cash!

You know the story. The servant with five talents doubled his master's money, as did the servant with two talents (vv. 16-17). But that guy with one talent totally messed up. If it was so easy to double his master's money, why did he just bury it in the ground (v. 18)?

His excuse was that he was afraid of losing it (in a bad investment) and getting punished by his hard-nosed master (vv. 24-25). Maybe. Some have speculated that servants at the time sometimes hid their traveling masters' money instead of investing it in the hope that their master might not come back and they could eventually

claim the money as their own (which they could not do if it was invested in a bank in their master's name).

Whatever his motive, the *wicked and lazy* servant paid the price for hiding his one talent instead of at least trying to make it grow (vv. 26-27). His talent was given to the most productive servant (v. 28), and he was cast into *outer darkness* (v. 30).

Christians have interpreted this parable in a variety of ways over the years. The point for us now, though, isn't to worry that God is going to cast us into *outer darkness* if we don't make the most of the gifts He has given to us. We are saved by grace through faith in Christ, not through our performance.

But Jesus does reveal to His disciples an expectation here. He does want us to see Him as our master and ourselves as His servants. He does want us to see His gifts to us—including our very lives—as belonging to Him and available to be strategically used to increase what He owns and bring Him more joy.

He also wants us to see that investing our lives really well—for His profit and glory—is the way to grow our influence and bring the most joy into our own lives as well: ... "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord" (v. 23).

So how are you investing your life for your master?

CORE CONCEPTS

God desires for us to take responsibility for all that He has given to us.

STEWARDS:

One who manages the property or well-being of another

QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE OVER THE NEXT TWO DAYS

- » DO A LITTLE RESEARCH AND RECORD HOW MUCH FIVE TALENTS WOULD BE IN TODAY'S MONEY. BE SURE TO CITE YOUR SOURCE(S).
- » HOW IS INVESTING MONEY TO MAKE MORE MONEY DIFFERENT FROM INVESTING OUR TIME, ENERGY, AND CREATIVITY FOR GOD'S GLORY? HOW IS IT THE SAME?
- » IF WE'RE TALKING ABOUT HOW A PERSON SPENDS HIS OR HER LIFE, WHAT MIGHT BE THE EQUIVALENT OF BURYING MONEY IN THE GROUND? WHAT ARE SOME WAYS THAT PEOPLE WASTE THE GIFTS GOD HAS GIVEN TO THEM?
- » WRITE YOUR OWN QUESTION: