

Parable of the Talents

Matthew 25:1–30 (focal passage: vs 14–30)

by Kevin Thames

We will begin with the Parable of the 10 Virgins as a lead into the Parable of the Talents. Jesus, when sharing these parables, did not break between the telling of these parables. This shows us that they were told together intentionally. Let's take a look at what was shared in the Parable of the 10 Virgins so we can understand better why it was first and the Parable of the Talents followed.

Matthew 25:1–13

¹Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. ²Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. ³For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, ⁴but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. ⁵As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. ⁶But at midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' ⁷Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. ⁸And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' ⁹But the wise answered, saying, 'Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.' ¹⁰And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. ¹¹Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' ¹²But he answered, 'Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.' ¹³Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

As we look at this parable, we can see a focus on **inward preparedness**. 5 Virgins took flasks of oil with their lamps and 5 took no oil with them. We see that the 5 who were not prepared needed to go and restock. They returned too late and were not let into the marriage feast. The 5 that understood the necessity to have extra oil because they were acting in wisdom were available at the time the bridegroom arrived.

While we can take some time to look into the meaning of the delay of the bridegroom, who is represented by the 5 foolish and 5 wise virgins, or how we might apply the concept of bearing burdens versus loads; we will simply keep this as the leading example Jesus gives prior to the passage we will spend time in this morning.

Let's now look at the Parable of the Talents:

Matthew 25:14–30

¹⁴For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property.
¹⁵To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. ¹⁷So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. ¹⁸But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. ¹⁹Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.' ²¹His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' ²²And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.' ²³His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' ²⁴He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, ²⁵so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.' ²⁶But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? ²⁷Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. ²⁹For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. ³⁰And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

- 14) - "it" - The Kingdom of Heaven - see chapter 25:1
 - a man going on a **journey**
 - servants entrusted with **His property**

15) - 5, 2, 1, according to **ability**

16) - 5 servant went "**at once**"

17) - 2 servant "**also**"

18) - 1 servant - "**dug**" and "**hid**"

dug - when we float up to the 30,000 foot view and see this slave as a steward of God's creation and that fact that the slave is subject to his master, it is ironic that he is using God's Creation to "dig." Even the act of rebellion that he is participating in requires the resources that God has allowed him to use. Once he has made full use of digging in the dirt... what else to we dig in the dirt for? Does the thought of a grave

come to mind? There is so much imagery here as we see the inward sin, distorted belief, manifesting itself through actions. We take a quick jump over to James 1:15 where we see the conception of sinful desire leading to the birthing and growth of death.

It is not difficult to see the “**secular humanist**” in the actions here as the slave **digs** into God’s creation with intent to find a way to **hide** the responsibility entrusted to him.

I’ll depart for a moment as we look to Romans

Romans 1:16–25

¹⁶For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”

¹⁸For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ¹⁹For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. ²¹For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²²Claiming to be wise, they became fools, ²³and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

²⁴Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, ²⁵because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

Let’s take a look at our 1 Talent Slave - The secular humanist

He has dug...he is hiding... Can you see it? Evolution? Let’s come up with a plan that explains mankind but has no need for a creator so there is no accountability for the truth we are hiding that is right in front of our faces.

Let’s explain why God’s redemptive plan is woven into these (Romans 1:20):

Photosynthesis

Seasons

These things are so apparent, they are undeniable - So is the return of the master...

He has expectations for what He has given to us. Listen to how the slave responds to his master when the accounting of the resources is tallied.

'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, 25) so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.'

Do you hear the accusation against the master? The slave has taken no ownership for his circumstances and blames the master for the reality before him. He even goes so far as to claim fear as an additional excuse.

The end for this servant is clear. We understand what is the end for those that put themselves in the place of God.

The other two servants - "at once"

I have used this parable in my life as an encouragement to use the resources God has given me to bring life wherever I go.

- Resources - Giftings (Romans 12:6) Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us...

Are we digging? Are we hiding?