

"The Olivet Discourse"

Matthew 24-25

Part 28

Introduction: Tonight as we come back to our study of the Olivet Discourse we are stepping back into the Parable of the Talents. Last week in our study we looked at Matthew 25:14-18. This parable is about a man who took a journey into a far country and before he left, he entrusted his money to those who professed to be his servants. They had the responsibility of investing their lord's money so that when he would one day return they could return his money along with the earnings.

Now when he distributed the talents, which were of great value, he gave to every man according to his several ability:

Notice Matthew 25:14-15

He knew the abilities of each of the men and therefore he entrusted to them different amounts according to that which they could handle. One man received 5, another 2, and another 1.

Now before we move on I need to remind you of the spiritual Truth which Jesus is teaching with this parable. The "talents" here represent "spiritual truth". The "servants" represent "those who profess to be saved". This includes those who are TRULY saved and it includes those who are RELIGIOUS but are not saved. We know this because of what is recorded in Matthew 25:30.

Notice Matthew 25:30

This man who received 1 talent was cast into outer darkness therefore he would not be a true believer because God would never cast one of His children into hell.

So in this parable we see that believers and unbelievers both receive "spiritual truth" from the Lord. As I told you last week these talents are handed out even today as believers and unbelievers alike gather in church services where the Truth of God's Word is taught. Believers come here on Sunday and so do unbelievers. Both sit under the teaching of God's Word and as everyone hears the Truth of the Bible God drops talents in everyone's basket.

You may receive 5 because you got a lot from the study because you are a person who is walking in close fellowship with the Lord. The person next to you may have received 2 because that was all they could handle. Then there is the unbeliever who may receive only 1 and that "1 talent" was the Truth that he or she is lost and needs to be saved. They could also receive another talent because through the message they heard the Truth that one day they will stand before the Lord in judgment.

Notice Matthew 25:16-18

Last week we looked at the 2 different responses to the talents.

1. The man who received 5 and the man who received 2 both invested the talents entrusted to them and each doubled what he was given.
2. The man with 1 talent buried his in the ground.

In these 2 responses we can see again the 2 groups of people which Jesus is speaking about.

"Religious"

The man who buried his talent represents those who are religious but not saved. Let me show you a picture from God's Word of how a religious person will appear on the outside.

Genesis 4:1-8

And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD.

² And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

³ And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.

⁴ And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

⁵ But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

⁶ And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

⁷ If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

⁸ And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

When we look at Cain we see a clear picture of a religious person. He came to the right place, he came at the right time, he brought an offering, he believed in God, so therefore, Cain is a perfect picture of the **RELIGIOUS** person. We also see this in what Cain did with the "talent" (Truth) which was given to him. You see Cain and Able were both given the Truth that God required a blood sacrifice for the forgiveness of sin. Abel invested this Truth but Cain buried it.

"Saved"

The two men who invested their talents are a picture of the TRUE believer who hears the Truth of God's Word and he or she then takes that Truth and applies it to their lives. Obedience is a mark of salvation.

1 John 2:3-5

³ *And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.*

⁴ *He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*

⁵ *But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.*

Now let us move on in our study.

I. The Reckoning

Notice Matthew 25:19

The word "reckoneth" means "to settle accounts". The idea here is that the lord of the servants came back after a long time and he called each

one in to settle the accounts of how they had invested what he had entrusted to them.

Let me give to you some life lessons from this verse:

1. **There is a day of "reckoning" coming.**
2. **God knows exactly what He has entrusted to each person.**
3. **On the day of reckoning everyone will be held accountable for the Truth which God has given to them.**

Now let me put these lessons together so that we can grasp what it is that our Lord is saying here. There are 4 different days of reckoning which are coming:

1. **The day of reckoning for the believers and unbelievers of the Great Tribulation.**

Notice Matthew 25:19

When we read this verse we see that this day of reckoning happens when the Lord returns. This day of reckoning will take place after Christ returns at the end of the tribulation and before the establishment of His earthly Kingdom. This is the context of the reckoning which we read about here. This will be seen when we get to the separation of the sheep from the goats later in chapter 25.

Now at this day of reckoning the sins of the unsaved will not be judged (that will come at a later date), but at this day of reckoning those who have survived the Great Tribulation will be revealed as a True believer or a false believer. So what do the talents have to do with the separation of believers from unbelievers? The way the "talents" (Truth) are handled will manifest if a person is a believer or an

unbeliever. In this parable and the Parable of the Ten Virgins Jesus is showing us that the True believer will watch in anticipation for His return and the True believer will invest the spiritual Truth he has while he waits.

2. The day of reckoning for the Old Testament Saints.

The Old Testament Saints will be resurrected before the Kingdom is established and they also will be held accountable for the "talents" which God had entrusted to them.

There will also be 2 other days of reckoning. One will happen after the rapture and one will happen after the 1000 year Kingdom of our Lord.

3. The day of reckoning for the believer IN CHRIST.

This day of reckoning will taken place after the rapture, in heaven while the tribulation is happening on the earth.

2 Corinthians 5:8-9

⁸ *We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.*

⁹ *Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.*

The word "accepted" here does not mean that we labor to be saved. It means "to please" Him. Let me show you the same word in another verse.

Hebrews 13:21

²¹ Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

The word "wellpleasing" is the same word. So in 2 Corinthians 5:8 Paul is saying that we are to labor so that our lives will be "wellpleasing" to God. Now as he continues he tells us why.

2 Corinthians 5:10-11

¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

¹¹ Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

Here is the believer' day of reckoning. It will be at the Judgment Seat of Christ when we stand before the Lord and we will answer for all the "talents" that He has dropped in our baskets. It will be then that we will receive or lose rewards.

1 Corinthians 3:11-15

¹¹ For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

¹² Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

¹³ Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

¹⁴ *If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, **he shall receive a reward.***

¹⁵ *If any man's work shall be burned, **he shall suffer loss:** but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.*

We have many different materials which we can build with. We can build with gold or we can build with stubble and everything else in between. To build with gold is to invest the "talents" which God has dropped into your basket. To build with wood, hay or stubble is to push the "talent" aside and to spend our time and energy on things which have no eternal value. The fire will destroy these works completely. It will be the works that withstand the fire which will be rewarded.

The 3rd day of reckoning will be the final day of reckoning for all unbelievers.

4. The day of reckoning for ALL of the unsaved.

The unbeliever's day of reckoning will be much different. Their day of reckoning will be at the Great White Throne Judgment.

Revelation 20:11-15

¹¹ *And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.*

¹² *And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the **books** were opened: and another **book** was opened, which is the book of life: and **the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books,** according to their works.*

¹³ And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

¹⁴ And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

¹⁵ And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

In verse 12 we see that at this judgment there are multiple books. The Bible tells us that one of the books is the book of life. But we are not told what the other books are. I believe there are 2 other books besides the book of life. The book of life will answer the pleas of the unsaved when they attempt to reason with God.

Matthew 7:21-23

²¹ Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

²² Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

²³ And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

There will be MANY who will plead with the Lord in that day and He will point to the book of life to show their names were never recorded.

Another book that will be there will be a book which contains all the sins of the unsaved. Then there will be another book which I believe

will be a book that has recorded in it all of the Truth which the unsaved were exposed to. This would also be the book that has recorded in it every "talent" which God dropped in their basket. This book combined with the book of sin will determine the degree of suffering in the lake of fire.

Luke 12:47-48

⁴⁷ And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

⁴⁸ But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

Conclusion:

Next week we will move on in this parable and we will see the advantage of investing the "talents" which God has entrusted to us. But let me leave you with a reminder that God will not forget the talents which He has placed in your basket. You and I will be held accountable at the Judgment Seat of Christ.