

Time and Talents Matthew 25: 14-30

This parable follows on from Jesus exhortations to be watchful and prepared for the second coming and the Parable of the Ten Virgins. It is followed by a section of teaching on the final judgement. As such this whole section of Matthew's gospel is very much focussed on the future. But this parable also has much to teach us about the present.

The subject of the parable is the Kingdom of Heaven.

<p>What is the Kingdom of Heaven?</p> <p>The Kingdom of Heaven or Kingdom of God (the two terms are used interchangeably) speaks both of the present, the time that started with Jesus earthly ministry and continues in the church age and also of the future when Christ returns.</p> <p>This parable therefore speaks of both the present and the future.</p>	<p>What is a Talent?</p> <p>In the OT it is a unit of weight (about 34kg).</p> <p>In the NT it is a unit of money approximately equal to 20 years wages for a labourer or about £300,000 in todays money.</p> <p>The modern use of the word to describe an ability or gift, derives from this parable.</p>
<p>The Parable</p> <p>As is common with the parables it is good to look for the overall meaning of the parable and not to over allegorise the details.</p> <p>It is probably best to understand the talents in this parable to refer to anything that we have been entrusted with; including spiritual gifts, the scriptures, natural gifts and abilities etc. This prevents us from narrowing the application of this parable.</p> <p>v.16-18 The Good servant actively puts his talents to work. Probably by investing in a business venture. This takes a lot of time and effort. It should be noted that there is considerable risk involved here but the servant who takes the safe option is condemned.</p> <p>v.19-23 Speak of a time of accounting. What is the parallel here?</p> <p>v.26-30 Provide a stern warning.</p>	
<p>What does this parable teach us about our use of gifts and resources?</p> <p>What has God entrusted us with? Do we make the most of what we have been given? How can we be like the good servant and put our talents to work? Should we be more prepared to take risks? What is the warning to us from the 3rd servant?</p>	<p>What does this parable teach us about the Kingdom of Heaven?</p> <p>In the present? In the future? What does it say about those who are faithful in this life, in the new heavens and earth?</p>

“The parable insist that the watchfulness that must mark all Jesus disciples does not lead to passivity but to doing one's duty, to growing, to husbanding and developing the resources God entrusts to us, till “after a long time” (v.19) the master returns and settles accounts.” - The Expositors Bible Commentary.