

LESSON 23 Devotional

Leveraging Your Talents

Many are familiar with the Parable of the Talents that Jesus taught about referenced in Matthew 25:14 – 30. Jesus told his disciples this story to emphasize the importance of their stewardship responsibility from a temporal and an eternal perspective.

Although the story emphasizes money, it was about much more than money. Jesus wanted His disciples to know that they would ultimately be judged on how well they invested and leveraged the talents and resources they had been given.

Today, as you read this passage about a Master and his three servants, view the Master as a Venture Capitalist investing his money in the business ventures of his three servants.

Read Matthew 25:14-30.

“For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servant and entrusted to them his property. ¹⁵ To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶ He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. ¹⁷ So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. ¹⁸ But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. ¹⁹ Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰ And 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.’ ²¹ His 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.’ ²² And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.’ ²³ His 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.’ ²⁴ He 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, ²⁵ so I was afraid, and I went

and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.’²⁶ But 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?’²⁷ Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest.²⁸ So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents.²⁹ For 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.³⁰ And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. What did the Master hope to gain by investing in these three men and their abilities?

- 2. What percent return did the two successful servants receive? How well do you feel they leveraged their talents? Do you think they received that level of return from just giving it to the bankers and drawing interest?

- 3. How much risk do you believe the two servants took to make such a high return? What level and types of risk did the one take who had no return? Which path was the riskiest?

- 4. On a scale of 1-10 how much risk are you typically willing to take in business (1 is risk averse, 10 is the highest level of risk)? How do you feel about that score?

5. On that same scale, what level of risk do you believe God expects us to take in business?

6. What steps might you take to leverage the talents God has given you and either raise or lower your level of risk to where God might be pleased?
