

BE A BRINGER

“40 One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). 42 And he brought him to Jesus....”
John 1:40-42a


A bringer makes one touch each week by investing and inviting someone to Christ and church.

Name three people you will pray for their salvation this week:

PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THE WEEK

“Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you;....” I Samuel 12:23a

MISSIONARIES OF THE WEEK



Charles & Jurdlean Strong | Mexico

PRAY - We currently are in desperate need of a parking lot for our church. We are in the midst of raising \$8,000 for this endeavor. Pray that God will provide funding for this land purchase.

PRAISE - All of the churches in the Veracruz area that we work with are really doing well despite the pandemic! We are so thankful for their faithfulness in the midst of the difficult circumstances we are in the midst of. I hope you will continue praying for us and the ministries God has given us. We so value your prayers!

The Story Of The Talents

The first thing to notice about the servants in Jesus’s parable is that they are given their talents: “to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability” (Matthew 25:15). The master wasn’t obligated to give the servants anything. Each servant received his talents by the grace of the master.

The implication of this is clear: none of us has any ground for boasting in our “talents.” What is true about receiving the gospel is true about receiving talents: “What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?” (1 Corinthians 4:7).

But Jesus includes an important phrase in Matthew 25:15: “he gave . . . talents . . . to each according to his ability.” In English this can be a bit confusing, since “talents” and “abilities” can be synonyms. It can sound as if Jesus is saying God gives us abilities according to our abilities. But in Greek the meaning is clearer. The word translated “abilities” in this sentence is *dunamis*, which most commonly means power or capabilities.

What Jesus is getting at here is that God graciously entrusts to his servants certain skills and a certain amount of power to employ them. God gives us certain abilities and certain capabilities.

So we must each ask: what are we doing with our talents — with the grace God has given to us? It’s a sobering and liberating question.

It’s sobering because we know our own selfishness, that we are prone by our sin nature to act like the worthless servant who neglected his stewardship. But even such sobering reflection is a grace, because it can shake us out of our self-centered stupor and motivate us to greater diligence.

But the question is also wonderfully liberating, for at least two reasons: 1) God himself supplies us with everything we need, both our talents and our strength to manage them — both our abilities and our capabilities. 2) Realizing this frees us from comparing ourselves with others. We can be free from envying servants who are more talented and/or have greater capacities than we do. And we can be free from judging servants who are less talented and/or have lesser capacities than we do. God is the talent and power-giver, and he holds each of us accountable only for the “grace given to us.”

You have been given talents. They are valued very highly by the Lord. What are you doing with them? Let this question sober you and liberate you. For to every servant who is faithful with the talents entrusted to him, the Master will say, “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” (Matthew 25:23). This is what we want to hear.

Source: “Have You Buried Your Gifts” by Jon Bloom

KEY VERSE

Matthew 25:21 (NKJV)

“His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’”

WEEKLY READINGS

Monday: Matthew 25:14-30; Psalm 24:1; I Corinthians 4:7

Shift #1: From Owner To Manager

1. Who does the master represent? Who do the servants represent? What do the talents represent?
2. In this parable, who owned the talents? How were the talents distributed? How should you react if you are given more? How should you react if you are given less?

Tuesday: Matthew 25:16-18; Luke 12:16-21; Matthew 6:19-20

Shift #2: From Accumulation To Impact

3. What did the servants do with the master’s talents?
4. What are some gifts God has given to you? How can you use them to make an impact for God?

Wednesday: Matthew 25:19; Romans 14:10,12; I Corinthians 4:2

From Independence To Accountability

5. The servants had to give an accounting of their stewardship when the master returned. You don’t have to wait for Jesus to return to evaluate yourself. How do you think you are doing at managing what God has given you?
6. Do you believe you are ready for the Lord’s return? Why or why not?

Thursday: Matthew 25:20-23, 26; John 14:1-4; II Cor. 5:8-10

From Rebuke To Reward

7. What did the master expect each servant to do?
8. What did the master say to the first two servants who doubled the master’s talents?
9. Do you think Jesus will say these words to you when your life on earth ends? Why or why not?

Friday: Matthew 25:21,25; Malachi 3:10; 2 Timothy 1:6-7

From Fear To Faith

10. What reasons did the third servant give for burying the master’s treasure?
11. How does fear impact your stewardship? How does fear impact your relationship with God? How can you overcome fear?
12. Has God given you a gift that you have buried? How can you unbury it and invest it for God?