

*Your talent is God's gift to you. What you do with it is your gift back to God. -Leo Buscaglia*

*"Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things." - **Matthew 25:21***

### **The Parable of the Talents**

<sup>14</sup>"Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. <sup>15</sup>To one he gave five talents<sup>[a]</sup> of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. <sup>16</sup>The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. <sup>17</sup>So also, the one with the two talents gained two more. <sup>18</sup>But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

<sup>19</sup>"After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. <sup>20</sup>The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.'

<sup>21</sup>"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

<sup>22</sup>"The man with the two talents also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two talents; see, I have gained two more.'

<sup>23</sup>"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

<sup>24</sup>"Then the man who had received the one talent came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. <sup>25</sup>So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'

<sup>26</sup>"His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? <sup>27</sup>Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.

<sup>28</sup>" 'Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. <sup>29</sup>For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. <sup>30</sup>And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

A talent speaks of many things that God has given you, such as money, talents, intellect, physical abilities, opportunities, employment, skills and gifts of many kinds. Notice that all three men were given something. No one in this world is without gifts. Everyone has something to offer. No one is useless! This doesn't mean that since everyone has talents that they will use them for God. We should, no matter how "small" we see our talent. We shouldn't compare them to the talents of others.

This parable also teaches us that, even though we are all created equal, not everyone has the same talents. Let's face it: Some people are born with more money, have greater skills, are built bigger and stronger than others, have more opportunities, and are even smarter than others. This does not mean that God is unfair, because he balances out the talents with responsibility: "From everyone who has been given much, much

will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked" (Luke 12:48).

So the person with greater talents is held more responsible than the person with fewer talents. Therefore, before you wish for more talents, realize that the more talents you have, the stricter God will be with you on Judgment Day.

Many people are always complaining about their handicaps—their lack of money, skills, opportunities. You can't change the fact that you may not have the same talents as others, but you can make the most of what you have. The thought occurred to me: Why didn't the Lord mentioned a fourth man who ventured out to increase his master's talents but went bankrupt? We all know of people who took a risk, but failed.

But as I thought about this, I realized that there is no risk in using your talents. The risk happens when you try to use the talents that belong to others.

People fail, not because they tried to multiply their talents, but because they tried to steal other people's talents. So before you use your talents, make sure that you are not stealing other people's talents and pretending that their talents are yours. You'll go bankrupt if you try to invest other people's talents! You have to be totally honest with yourself and separate fact from fantasy. What talents has God really given you and what talents do you wish he had given you? You can only use what you have.

## **THE PEANUT**

Now, don't minimize your talent. It is easy to see the little you seem to have and say to yourself, "What can I do with this little talent, or with this meager salary, or with this insignificant job, or with the scarce opportunities I have, or with my lack of skills!" God will show you how to make the most of your talents.

George Washington Carver was a genius. As an African-American living in the South, he came across a discovery that would change his life and revolutionize the Southern agriculture industry.

One day he prayed: "Mr. Creator, show me the secrets of Your universe."

God replied, "Little man, you're not big enough to know the secrets of My universe. But I'll show you the secret of the peanut." "Oh, well," Carver thought, "better the peanut than nothing."

"Take the peanut apart," God said. Carver did, and discovered several hundred components in the peanut. God continued, "Now, start putting it back together again—this time in different forms."

As Carver did, he discovered that from the little peanut he could make plastic, paint, oil, and foods of many kinds. He became rich by maximizing the potential of a peanut.

## **QUESTIONS:**

- 1. What talents do you possess?**
- 2. How can you use these talents for God?**
- 3. Do you feel as though you don't have any talents? Why do you believe this lie?**
- 4. Look around the room and begin to tell others the talents you see in them.**
- 5. What has God deposited inside of you?**

The Word of God says, "You have a treasure inside of you. This treasure is the kingdom of God." The kingdom is rich with potential, faith, and great power. But God gives you only the raw material, and you have to turn it into usable material. This is your job!

You must take what you have and turn it into something good and profitable. This takes work! The human body is a perfect illustration of this. We all have muscles, but some have big muscles—not because they were born with them, but because they exercised. Others look scrawny because they don't use their muscles much. If you don't use it, you'll lose it.

The real question is not "How much have you got?" but "Are you willing to use what you've got?" Even if it seems small? The fact is, God seems to take real delight in using small things in big ways.

Here are some Biblical examples of God using what seems small in a big way:

1. Consider the poor widow woman who had only a jar of oil and a handful of flour. God used the little she had to feed her entire family for three years.
2. What about the little stick that was Moses' rod? God used it to split the Red Sea.
3. Gideon's little trumpet—when blown—defeated the Midianites who fought with Israel.
4. Samson slew a thousand Philistines with only the jawbone of a donkey!
5. David's bantam harp drove out demons from King Saul.
6. Elisha took the cloak Elijah gave him and struck the Jordan River. And the river dried up—all because Elisha used a little piece of cloth.
7. Seventy years after Solomon's temple was destroyed by the Babylonians, the prophet Zechariah told the Jewish governor Zerubbabel, "What are we waiting for? Let's rebuild the temple!" "How?" Zerubbabel wondered. "We don't have permission to do it!" "What's in your hands?" the prophet asked. "A little plumbline used for measuring the height of buildings," Zerubbabel answered. "That's all you need to get started," the seer replied. "Who despises the day of small things? Men will rejoice when they see the plumbline in your hands!" And with a little measuring rod in the governor's hand, the temple was rebuilt.

There are just a few examples from God's word of "small" talents being used by Him in a great way.

Don't despise the small things you possess. They can be used by God to bring great results!

#### **QUESTIONS:**

1. **In what ways do you use your creative talents?**
2. **God has gifted all of His creation with special skills and talents. Not one person is left without some degree of creativity to share with others. Are you using your talents and gifts to serve others with?**

**Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. (1 Peter 4:10)**

Being talented and using your gifts is not limited to the arts and music. You do not have to paint like Rembrandt or be a concert pianist to be talented. Creativity is a God-given ability to create something special out of something ordinary. That could be turning ordinary eggs into a delicious dinner for you family, or turning a dry, ordinary article into an intriguing and interesting piece of work.

Somewhere within you, you have a unique gift, and you have the capability to bring that talent out and use it to the best of your ability. For instance, both cooking and writing are creative gifts given to us by God. Many people will tell you how they would love to write the next great Christian book,, but very few people ever do, why is that? Because of fear and lack of ambition.

The number one reason many of us do not allow our talents and gifts to come out into the open is because we fear what others will think of us, or we have been taught because of comparing that we are not good enough. Low self-esteem keeps our talents hidden. We live in a society that thrives on comparing people, places, and things, which makes people feel as though they have to measure up to everyone else. But it is wrong to come to conclusions about comparisons.

We have all been created good enough no matter how much money we make or how pretty or handsome we are. We should never compare ourselves to others and their creative talents because that keeps our own creative growth stunted. If we think we cannot measure up, we don't do anything with the talents we have. We are all different for a reason. If God created everyone to paint and sing, no one would do anything else, would they?

Some of us do not have the ambition and motivation to use the talents and creativity that God has gifted us with. But is this what God wants? Doesn't God want us to use our gifts, according to our abilities to serve and help others with? Yes! It doesn't matter what you have been gifted with, God wants us to bring our gifts out into the open to share with others.

I highly encourage everyone to bring out the creative spirit within them, and to realize their potential to serve others with the gifts God has given them. Creativity comes upon you when you least expect it, so be ready to jump at the chance to turn something ordinary into something extraordinary.

And remember, if it is serving others, it is always good enough no matter what it is. We need to NOT look at what we can't do like others, but look at what we CAN do for others. Everything from God is good, so then whatever your talent is it must be good!

**Paul said this: I wish that all men were as I am. But each man has his own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that. (1 Corinthians 7:7)**

*The notes below are from the weekend message.*

Acts 4:13 NKJV

“The gift of the Holy Spirit is primarily about **GOD** and **HIS WORK**, not about **YOU** and **YOUR WORK**.”

“If we operate only according to our **TALENTS** and **ABILITIES** we get the glory. But, if we operate according to the **POWER OF THE SPIRIT**, God gets the glory.”

Matthew 8:5-10 NKJV

“When you rely on your own **TALENTS** you will experience your **BEST**. But, when you put your faith in God and allow His Spirit to work in you, you will experience **GOD’S BEST**.”

2 Peter 1:3 NKJV

Matthew 19:24 NKJV

1 Corinthians 1:26-29 NKJV

John 15:5 NKJV

IMPORTANT QUESTION

“Will God ever ask you to do something you aren’t able to do?”