



World Christian Fellowship

www.wcflondon.com
wcflondon@gmail.com

Christian or not!

Matthew 25:14-18

Matthew 25:14-30, *“For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. ¹⁵And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. ¹⁶Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. ¹⁷And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. ¹⁸But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord’s money. ¹⁹After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰“So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’ ²¹His 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.’ ²²He also who had received two talents came and said, ‘Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.’ ²³His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many*

things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’²⁴ “Then he who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed.²⁵ And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.’²⁶ “But his lord answered and said to him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed.²⁷ So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest.²⁸ So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents.²⁹ ‘For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away.³⁰ And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

We begin today to look at one of the great parables in all the Scripture, the parable of the talents. It is a parable about the tragedy of wasted opportunity.

Scripture calls all of us to make the most of spiritual opportunity. From the beginning of Scripture to the end, we are called upon to maximize our privileges.

Ecclesiastes 11:1, *Cast your bread upon the waters, For you will find it after many days.*

You throw it out and it will be brought back.

Ecclesiastes 11:6, *In the morning sow your seed, And in the evening do not withhold your hand; For you do not know which will prosper, Either this or that, Or whether both alike will be good.*

We better take advantage of every opportunity, for we know that any one missed may be wasted.

Proverbs 10:5, *He who gathers in summer is a wise son; He who sleeps in harvest is a son who causes shame.*

You better store up while you can.

You better harvest while there is harvest to be had.

Psalms 69:13, *But as for me, my prayer is to You, O Lord, in the acceptable time; O God, in the multitude of Your mercy, Hear me in the truth of Your salvation.*

Isaiah 55:6, *Seek the Lord while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near.*

Jeremiah 8:7, *“Even the stork in the heavens Knows her appointed times; And the turtledove, the swift, and the swallow Observe the time of their coming. But My people do not know the judgment of the Lord.*

Jeremiah is saying is that the animals, the birds know where to be when and how to care for themselves at the appointed season, and that is more than some people know.

Psalm 95:6-8, *Oh come, let us worship and bow down; Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. ⁷For He is our God, And we are the people of His pasture, And the sheep of His hand. Today, if you will hear His voice: ⁸“Do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion, As in the day of ⁹trial in the wilderness,*

Today, in the appointed time, the acceptable time, the opportune time, the privileged time.

Hebrews 3:7-8, *Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you will hear His voice, ⁸Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, In the day of trial in the wilderness,*

2 Corinthians 6:2, *For He says: “In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you.” Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*

Our Lord Jesus called us to make the most of the moment, to make the most of spiritual privilege and spiritual opportunity.

John 12:35-36, *Then Jesus said to them, “A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest*

darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. ³⁶ While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.” These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them.

Calling us to take advantage of spiritual opportunity.

The simple overarching message is the tragedy of wasted opportunity.

Our Lord has been answering a question from the disciples. The question is when is your coming?

He has already said five times **Matthew 24:36, 42, 44, 50 and 25:13** that no one knows the day nor the hour.

Jesus gave signs of the period before His coming. He described the birth pains that would result in the kingdom. He discussed the sign of the Son of Man in heaven.

He talked about the danger and deception and evil of the Great Tribulation period. He said it would all happen so fast that whoever was alive when it started would still be around to see its finish. It would happen that fast.

He has given them all kinds of details as to the events around his Second Coming just prior to it. But as to the exact moment and the exact day he has not told them.

He will not tell them to what generation it will come.

He will not tell them in what century or what era or what period.

He will not tell even the ones who are alive when the signs begin the exact moment it will happen, because he wants all men to live in anticipation of his coming so that there is constant readiness on the part of everyone.

If something like the Second Coming of Christ will happen but we don't know when, then we are forced to always be ready.

The unknown character of His coming, the sudden, unexpected, surprising reality of it is that which causes all men to seek to be ready, for it could happen to their generation.

Our Lord wants to force the disciples and us to understand is this that we need to be ready.

In an hour we don't think He comes.

When no man knows, He comes, and we all need to be ready.

Jesus calls for constant readiness, and He does it by using two parables:

- The parable of the virgins in verses 1-12, and
- The parable of the talents in verses 14-30.

Both basically have the same intention, the same point.

The message is clear that is to be ready.
They are two very important parables.

The parable of the virgins was a parable about readiness.

V 13, *“Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.*

The parable of the virgins and the parable of the talents differ in a sense. They are both parables about readiness.

There were ten virgins.

- Five were ready when the bridegroom came because they had oil in their lamps.
- Five were not because they didn't.

Everyone was waiting but only five of the ten were ready to go into the wedding feast. The whole point of that parable was to talk about readiness and preparedness.

It emphasized waiting for the coming king. Looking for the coming of the Lord and anticipating His return. The emphasis was on waiting. It was on that internal heart attitude that longs for the coming of the Lord.

The parable of the talents is not just an emphasis on waiting but its **emphasis on working**.

While we are waiting, looking, watching, and serving. This what the parable of the talents emphasizes. Together they provide for us a masterful balance of living in anticipation of the Second Coming.

We do not live in anticipation of the Second Coming only like virgins or bridesmaids waiting for the ceremony to begin with nothing to do, all dressed up, nowhere to go, just waiting to start.

That would be an imbalanced anticipation, but while we are a looking, anticipating, waiting, and we also should work.

We are also working.

We are also serving.

We are also making most of our opportunity.

We are also stewardship and magnifying the very role that God has given us to serve Him.

When one of those things is overemphasized or one of them is lost, the Christian experience is out of balance.

People who are no longer looking for the Second Coming but spending all their time working in the world have lost a perspective that is necessary for balance.

People who are always looking and waiting and waiting and not bothering to be working have also lost a very important balance.

2 Thessalonian 3:10-11, *For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. ¹¹For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies.*

There is a balance.

On the other hand, some people in the time of Peter had just decided the Second Coming isn't going to happen so we will throw everything into the world that is.

2 Peter 3:3-4, *knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, ⁴and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."*

There is a balance.

Not all watching, waiting and no working.

Not all working and no watching and waiting.

Because we don't know the moment or the hour.

We are watching all the time, but we are working as well.

This is the balance one must have.

The balance of the Christian life can be seen by the virgins who had oil.

They had the internal necessary grace. The oil represented a transformed nature, a redeemed soul, a changed life. They had the necessary grace and the soul.

The talent parable illustrates the fact that true believers manifest that necessary grace in the life of service.

On the one hand, they have saving grace.
On the other hand, they have the lie of serving.

True balance in Christianity.

We are not just sitting around waiting and neither are we just working.

We are working and we are waiting.

We are looking and we are serving.

True saving faith is the faith that works.

James 2:17, *Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.*

The parable makes the point of not readiness only but readiness in the sense of serving.

The outer manifestation comes in this parable where the inner grace is seen in the other one.

Compare this parable with **Luke 19:11-27**.

They are not the same.

Luke Parable was given several days earlier by our Lord.

Don't confuse the two. It is a different parable all together.

Now, as we look at this parable, the message we want to understand are reward for the faithfulness and wasted opportunity.

We are in a period waiting for the Lord to come, but it is not a time for only waiting, it is a time for seizing opportunity and making the most of privilege.

What do we need to know then about spiritual opportunity?

- 1. Responsibility.**
- 2. Response.**
- 3. Reckoning.**
- 4. Reward.**

1. Responsibility received.

V 14, *“For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them.*

Jesus is talking about the kingdom of heaven.

Transition from the parable of 10 virgins.

The kingdom is likened to two of these parables.

These are parables about the kingdom.

The kingdom is the sphere where God rules by grace and salvation through Christ. The kingdom is the sphere of God’s dominion in Christ.

His rule under His territory.

Whenever we see the mention of the kingdom of heaven, one of two things is meant.

Sometimes the term the kingdom of heaven is used for the exclusive internal, invisible, genuine body of redeemed people.

The real kingdom, the true kingdom.

Matthew 18:3, *and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.*

Here Jesus is talking about being converted and entering in. Jesus is referring to the kingdom of heaven in its invisible, internal, and genuine sense in that it is the truly redeemed.

Matthew 25:34, *Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:*

The kingdom is referring to that place prepared for the truly redeemed.

When we go through the Gospels and see the phrase the kingdom of heaven or kingdom of God, know this, that it can often refer to the invisible kingdom. That is the kingdom invisible because it is a spiritual one where it is occupied by those who are truly regenerate, and they are invisible. In other words, we can't see who is in that kingdom. We can't see the hearts of men.

But on the other hand, sometimes the kingdom of heaven is used to refer to the visible kingdom, the outward kingdom. The kingdom which is made up of people who identify themselves with Christ. Some are real and some are false.

- The kingdom is like wheat and tares in Matthew 13.
- The kingdom is like a dragnet full of stuff that's dragged up from the bottom of the sea. Some is fish to be kept, and some is refused to be thrown away.

- The kingdom is made up of soil some is good and some is bad.

There are times then when the Gospel record refers to the kingdom in its outward external, organizational, visible sense, and sometimes in its organism internal invisible sense.

We need to know that as study a parable so that we can properly interpret it.

Now in the case of the virgins, the kingdom was like ten virgins. We found out five of them were real and five of them were false. Five of them had internal grace, five of them did not. Therefore, the kingdom there was picturing the true and the false in the organized external visible kingdom.

This parable too!

Now don't be shocked at that and don't need to be confused. We do the same thing with the word church.

For example, sometimes when we refer to the church we are talking about the truly redeemed.

But when we say, "Something is wrong in the church today," we could be talking about the mixture of stuff that's in the church, true and false.

The same is true in the Lord's references to the kingdom.

In this case as in the case of the virgins, Jesus is talking about the true and the false.

But it is the kingdom Jesus is talking about.

He is not talking about pagans.

He is not talking about reprobate people who deny Christ, deny God, want nothing to do with his church or his kingdom or his name.

He is talking about two kinds of servants:

- The kind who uses their opportunity and
- The kind who wastes it.

But both identify themselves as servants of the Lord.

Within the framework of the kingdom here in its outward, external, broad and visible sense.

This kingdom is like a man who travels into a far country, goes on a long trip.

We know he didn't just get on a plane and fly there and come back the end of the week. In those days, you could be gone for a year, or two, or for a long time.

This was a very common kind of thing.

He goes away, and he calls his own servants and delivers them his goods.

The kingdom and the kingdom is filled with different kinds of servants. A common picture.

Many people misunderstand this. The church visible, the kingdom external is filled with diversity.

It is the **mustard seed** of Matthew 13 that grows into a bush that is massive and disproportionate, and birds build their nests and lodge in it.

It is a **net full of fish** to be kept and garbage to be discarded.

It is **wheat and tares**.

It is **virgins** with oil and virgins without.

It is **two houses, one with a foundation** and one without a foundation.

It is **two paths and two gates**.

The kingdom will always have the false and the true, whether then in our Lord's time, whether now or whether even in the time of the Great Tribulation.

We know this time specifically being discussed in the sermon is in the time of the tribulation right before Jesus comes.

- Even in that time there will be virgins without oil.
- There will be servants who waste their opportunity.
- There will be houses without foundation.
- There will be tares growing among the wheat.

- There will be refuse caught in the net.
- There will be bad soil.
- There will be people on a broad path who went through a broad gate thinking they were going to heaven but not getting there.

This will always be there, that kind of deception and being deceived.

These people will accumulate who ultimately say, “Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name and done many wonderful works in your name and cast out demons in your name?”.

The Lord answers them saying “I never knew you. Depart from me you workers of iniquity.”

We must understand that in the kingdom there always is this combination, unless the Lord is specifically talking about the invisible inward spiritual kingdom of the truly redeemed.

Here it is the visible kingdom Jesus is speaking about it.

The man has a lot of servants, a lot of people who attach themselves to him. Their heart attitude is going to be manifest here.

There are a lot of people in the kingdom today, a lot of people under the rule of Christ as it were in his church today, under

the authority of the Christ-appointed leaders and elders and pastors today.

We can see the comparison of the kind whose hearts are right and are not right as we put them up against this very parable.

He calls his own servants. These are the people that are within the kingdom.

He knows them.

He understands them.

They know him.

Certain amount of acquaintance here, very much like a Judas even who was a servant of Christ, followed Him, was a disciple, went through all the activities. The church will always have those kinds of people.

He delivers to them his goods. He is going to be gone long enough, and he must keep up with the economy. He makes wise investments.

He must produce his crops. He must make sure that everything is cared for.

The word for servant here is the word ***Doulos***, and we shouldn't miss the point that is not a slave of the lowest rank.

Here were artists, artisans, craftsman, gifted agriculturalists, and good with business and good traders in that time.

Those kinds of people who could do just about anything would fit somewhere in the structure of service in an estate like this.

When a man went away, he would hand these people who were trustworthy, capable servants a certain amount of his goods so that they could bring him back a return on his property while he was gone. It was not an uncommon thing.

They were stewards to handle the funds and assets and resources for the profit of a master, which profit they would return to him on his arrival back.

He delivers them his goods, and he apportions them out.

V 15, *And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey.*

The master knows the talent of his servants. He knows the skill of his servants.

So, he assigns out to them that which he believes they are capable of handling properly.

- To the first he gives five talents,
- to the second two, and
- to the third one.

They are only illustrative.

The numbers could be different, but they illustrate low and high and somewhere in the middle.

A talent is basically, we use it to speak of someone's abilities, but it meant a weight.

It meant a weight, like a scale.

Revelation 16 it talks about a hailstone weighing a talent.

Now the value of each talent would depend on whether it was gold, which would be very high, an astronomical amount, five talents of gold.

Or whether it was silver, quite a bit less,

Or whether it was copper, quite a bit less than silver.

It is probably best to see this as silver because the word used for money in verse 18 is a word that is frequently used to refer to silver coinage.

The man was going away, and he gives them what amounts to in weight a certain amount of coinage. He probably bagged for them.

One man got a bag full weighing five talents, one two talents, and one, one talent.

The idea was that take this, invest it, and get a return for me on it. Show yourself a faithful steward, that was the idea.

It isn't important what the monetary value was. There is really no way to calculate that. Since we don't know what the metal commodity was, we don't exactly know what the coins were. What is important is only to see what they did.

V 15, to each according to his own ability;

Each man's ability was that which determined what he received. Some people had greater capacity to handle a large amount than other people did that's the way it was, and so he apportioned that out.

One got five, one got two, and one got one.

Now it is obvious as you look at the parable that the master here is the Lord Himself.

Going on a journey is the Lord going back to heaven where He is right now.

We are now in management, and we have been given various, bags of coins.

That is what we are to use for the working out and the serving that God would have us accomplish while He is away, until Christ comes back.

Not all of us have received the same amount.
This is something we must understand.

Not everybody is the same. Everybody was created differently with differing mental capacities, differing verbal capacities, differing skills, talents, capabilities.

Then you add to what we received in terms of creation from God, the fact that each of us has been exposed to different opportunities, different privileges, different teachers, and different discipling processes.

The range is vast.

There are people who have gotten doctors degrees by the handful from seminaries, and on the other hand there are Christians who know very basically nothing but the Gospel. They believed that maybe from a missionary somewhere and they have a very primitive culture, and they have never heard much more than that.

Maybe they are very limited educationally and maybe even some people are very limited mentally, and some people are very limited emotionally.

All of us are different, and that is by the design of God. It is fine to be a one if you are a one. It is fine to be a two if you are a two or a five if you are a five.

This is the way God designed it.

A picture of spiritual capacity, spiritual privilege, spiritual responsibility, and spiritual opportunity.

We know the servant who really loves his master is going to say that

- Here is my opinion to show him how much I love him.
- Here is my opportunity to really invest my time and my energy and my thought and my work to bring him back a return on what he has given me.
- Here is my opportunity to show him that he was right in trusting me to sort of return his confidence in me.

I want to live up to what he thinks. This would appeal to the noblest motive in the heart of a loving servant. This would really be something he would want to fulfil for the sake of the master to whom he owed so very much.

The whole point is that the Lord gives people within the framework of his kingdom/ church all different levels of capacities and opportunities.

The issue is what they do with those opportunities.

Talents in our bag, the talent that we carry, the bag of coins that we carry would include teaching, how much teaching have we received, how much opportunity to hear, mixed with our God-given and God-created intellectual capacities, emotional capacities and gifts and skills.

- How much opportunity for fellowship
- How much opportunity for spiritual advantage and insight,
- How much opportunity for blessing,
- How much have we received of all that the kingdom offers,
- This is our bag, mixed with our God-given capabilities.

When you come to our Church, and if we were to give everybody here an IQ test, the result would be a wide range on the level of intelligence.

- Most of us would fall somewhere around the normal people, but there is a wide range.
- Some people who hear what is preached at the very low end will only grasp a certain amount.
- Some at the very high end who hear what's going on and read and study are going to grasp far more.

We are all at some point in the middle.

With God-given capability by His sovereign design, if it hasn't been destroyed by drugs or alcohol or something else, we have this capacity.

We use that capacity to take in what God provides for us and to return to Him the maximum use of that spiritual privilege. Those of us that have had the privilege of being here in this country and being here in this church have a heavy bag.

Think about it, there are baby Christians out in different places in our own country and other parts of the world who know so very little. We are so far down the line with so much opportunity and so much advantage.

Those of us who come to this church have been given such a heavy bag as it were. Certainly, it differs, because we have differing capacities to receive it and take it in.

But all of us in the visible church, all of us who identify ourselves as servants of the Lord, whether we are real or not, have been given these privileges.

You have the privilege of hearing the Word of God, of being taught, of meeting people who love the Lord and walk with the Lord.

There are some Christians who are the only Christian in their family, the only Christian in their community.

There are some people in their world who are the only Christian in their town that they know of.

The difference in the five and the two and the one is a God-given difference.

God put you here to fill your bag here.

God has given you the opportunity to be whatever it is that he designed you to be.

God will proportion out just what you ought to have according to your capability.

God won't give a five a one and give a one a five.

God apportions it out like it says in **Romans 12**.

God gives each person gifts according to the measure of grace and the proportion of faith.

The five doubled his and the two doubled his.

It is an equal percent of faithfulness but not an equal result.

It is true in spiritual ministry that some have greater results than others, and that may be due to spiritual capacity as well as opportunity and privilege and so forth.

God gives us differing capacities which will produce differing results. The implication of this problem is that even in the

kingdom there will be different levels of rulership for people at different capacities.

God sovereignly has designed some of us to be rulers and some of us to be followers and some of us to fit in at all different levels.

Just like Jesus did with the disciples where it was obvious that Peter, James, and John were a leader over which Peter was a unique and special leader. It was obvious in the Jerusalem church where all those fine people came together. James rose to a place of leadership.

God has designed it that way.

Did we give back to God when given the opportunity a maximum return?

This is the issue here.

- If you are a five, he wants five back.
- If you are a two, he wants two back.
- If you are a three, he wants three.

You could be a five and give back two. You could be a two and only give back one. The point is maximum return!

You have a bag that God is holding you responsible for.

It is a stewardship bag. It is a bag of privilege.

It is a bag of opportunity.

You are managing that part of God's fortune.

Every time you sit under the teaching of the Word of God, read the Word of God, every time you learn a great truth out of the Word of God, somebody just dropped something else in your bag, and that somebody was the Spirit of God.

Now you are responsible for the living out and the working out of that opportunity of the privilege you have been given.

My fear is that we have all wasted those.

It is true faithfulness that the Lord calls for. We have been given tremendous responsibility.

2. Response.

What is our reaction?

What do we do with the spiritual opportunity?

V 16, Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents.

Immediately is a key word.

The fruit of inward salvation.

A true servant immediately activated. His heart instantly responds to the privilege of serving his Lord. That is the fruit of inward salvation.

It is an immediate response. He went and traded, the word means to work literally, but technically as in this case it could be used to refer to engaging in business.

He went out and did business. We don't know what he did with the five talents.

Maybe he bought a field and cultivated it and produced a crop that was worth twice as much as he paid.

Maybe he went and bought seed with it and planted the crop.

Maybe he bought a piece of land, turned around and sold it.

Maybe he gave it to somebody who was entering into a trade situation and got a bigger return, which doubled his investment.

We don't know what he did because it doesn't say.

V 16, "He made"

The word there ***Kerdainō*** means to profit.

He profited.

He gained five more talents.

He doubled his master's money.

This shows maximum commitment.

He made the most of his spiritual privilege and opportunity.

V 17, *And likewise he who had received two gained two more also.*

He made the most of his two.

Now everybody has the same opportunity.

Some people hear the Gospel in a very limited way.

Some people have exposure to a massive amount of it.

Some have had very little privilege and opportunity, some very great.

But in both cases, they gave a maximum return on the privilege God gave them, and that's what God was after.

The main point Jesus making is very simple:

Be faithful to maximize your opportunity.

Turn back to God what He gave you.

Give him a full return on the opportunity and privilege.

V 18, *But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money.*

He dug a hole and buried it. Now that was a common thing to do when you wanted to save money.

Matthew 13:44, *“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.*

At that time that people used the ground as a safe for keeping their money. They would map out with so many steps from here and so many steps from a tree and whatever, and the fortune is buried.

This person just dug and put it in a hole, just like **Achan** had done after he stole all the money.

Joshua 7:21-22, *When I saw among the spoils a beautiful Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. And there they are, hidden in the earth in the midst of my tent, with the silver under it.”* ²²*So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent; and there it was, hidden in his tent, with the silver under it.*

This man buries the money, does absolutely nothing with it. He absolutely wasted his opportunity and privilege.

Now this is not saying that one-talent people can be sure they are going to be unfaithful.

It is not saying that one-talent people are going to really be the ones who are the losers. What it is saying is even though you only have one you are responsible for it.

You are responsible to give God back a return on that tremendous spiritual opportunity he gave you, even if it was only a one and not a five.

Even if your opportunity was limited, you are responsible. Some people have heard it and heard it had privilege after privilege.

Some people have sat in our Church for years outwardly and extensively they parade themselves as though they were servants of God and maybe even be so deceived in their mind. They are fives in that sense.

On the other hand, there may be people who just in a limited way heard the Gospel. They are just as responsible for a return on that one as anybody is for the return on the five.

If the person with the five didn't return it, no wonder the Lord was made at him. He was just mad because he wasted so much.

Jesus uses the illustration of the one so that the anger of the master is not because he lost so much but because of the wasted opportunity. That makes the point.

The one who has the very least opportunity is equally responsible.

What a powerful message this is!

We have been given spiritual privilege while our Lord is away. He has given us differing levels of privilege, but he wants a maximum return on his privilege, on his opportunity granted to us.

We will either give him back equal to that privilege, opportunity, or we will not, and it will be wasted.

Even a person with limited opportunity who is a one with limited opportunity to respond to the truth and the Gospel with limited exposure to Bible teaching and spiritual life and spiritual friendship and sanctifying graces from other believers and so forth, even a person with one is still responsible to God for that one, and to be a steward of that limited privilege.

Jesus is not talking about the Rapture.

I have been pointed all along that it is the Second Coming.

This is at the time of accounting at the Second Coming.

This is not a time for rewarding Christians but a time for dissecting Christians from non-Christians.

The main issue of this parable.

The distinguishing mark is this:

Two servants used their opportunity to serve the Lord and therefore proved the genuineness of their salvation.

They were willing to spend their time for the sake of their Master.

One servant stuck his Master's money in the ground and spent his time doing exactly what he wanted. He called himself a servant, but he wasn't. He said he belonged to the Master, but he didn't and was ultimately thrown out.

Again, we see the same kind of warning from our Lord that he gives repeatedly, ***“Be sure that though you are outwardly associated with the kingdom, you are also inwardly belonging to the kingdom.”***