

MATTHEW 25: 14-30

14. For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.
15. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his own ability; and straightway took his journey.
16. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents.
17. And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two.
18. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.
19. After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.
20. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.
21. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.
22. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them.
23. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.
24. Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:
25. And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine.
26. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:
27. Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.
28. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents.
29. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.
30. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

In this parable, the Lord is revealing how He will judge people at the Last Dread Judgment after the world that we are now living in comes to a fiery end. To each person individually upon birth, the Lord gives talents. These talents are our personal spiritual and physical abilities. The Lord

gives different amounts of talents to every person "according to his own ability". This means that God knows ahead of time the strengths and abilities of each person and what he is able to accomplish with his talents. Therefore, He places people in life situations where they can best put their talents to good use.

It is the responsibility of the person during his life to use these talents in such a way that they will bring good to both himself and others for the glory of God. Those that were given a great amount of talents will be expected to have achieved a great amount of good with them. Those who were given a moderate amount will be responsible for a moderate amount of achievement. Even the person who received a meager amount, one talent, will have to give an answer as to how that talent was used. If we use our talents for good and the glory of God, we will be rewarded with a blessed life in eternity. Those of us who "bury our talents", meaning that we do nothing good with them, will be punished by "being cast into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The servants who had the five and the two talents and multiplied them represent people who use what God gives them correctly. They not only used the talents to benefit themselves, they also were concerned with doing what would bring benefit to other people. And equally important, they did this not for their personal glory but for the glory of God. But, the servant who had one talent represents the person who wastes God-given talents and does nothing of benefit with them. Since each person is placed in a life situation where he is best able to use the talents given him, God will not accept any excuses for talents being buried.

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, our life on earth is a time given to us to show God how and where we wish to spend eternity. We are created in the image of God in order to be like Him. God gives us everything that we need to be able to accomplish this goal. It is then up to us to succeed. What we must realize is that it is not sufficient to just not do anything bad. Sadly, priests often hear people saying that since they don't do anything that is bad, they are good people. This parable, however, emphatically warns us that that is not enough. We must not only avoid doing what is bad, we must also accomplish through our lives a measure of good that glorifies God.

May God help each one of us to see clearly what we are able to accomplish and give us the strength and the will to do it. It may take some effort but the reward is wonderful beyond description.

With Love in Christ,

Archpriest Serge Kotar