

**Text:** Matthew 25:14-30

**Title:** Stewardship

**Truth:** Be ready for the Lord's return by being a faithful steward.

**Date/Location:** Saturday December 30, 2023 at FBC

## Introduction

Read the parable.

Stewardship is defined as “the job of supervising or taking care of something, such as an organization or property.” The word *manage* is a good description of this activity.

The parable of the talents in Matthew 25 is in the context of Matthew 24:32-25:30 in which Jesus is answering the disciples' question about “when will these things be?” from 24:3. The Lord first answered their second question about the sign of His coming, and then turned to their first question about the timing.

## I. Questions You Have?

Discuss any questions (other than the ones below) that the audience raises. For example:

Explain the character of the third servant. He was wicked and lazy. He had wrong thinking about the master. He thought he knew, but he did not really know.

Did the master know the propensity and character of this servant in advance, and that is why he gave him only one talent? I do not doubt that this larger character evaluation was part of it, but the text tells us that he gave them each one according to their ability.

The statement that “you knew I was a hard man” trips up some, because they do not realize it is more like “you *thought* I was a hard man” and the thought was wrong! The master is saying that the last servant will be judged in accord with his own words. Wrong they are, but the servant did not even do what as in his own best interest in light of his thinking on the matter.

## II. Thinking about Stewardship

- A. Keeping our attention on the story itself, what is a talent in the story? What is the trading?
- B. Now shifting our attention to the application of the parable, what do the talents represent? Do not be confused by the similarity of that word with the its common usage in modern English.

We should understand the talents to represent resources that God has given to us, including abilities.

- C. About the application, what is the trading and the burying?

Trading represents the tasks that God has given us—the work, the service. God not only entrusts to us resources, but various tasks as well.

- D. What about the examination at the end? What is wrong with the third guy’s thinking and attitude?

The examination at the end evaluates faithfulness, not amount. So the guy with 5 and the guy with 2 talents are equally commended, and I would suggest they are equally faithful with what the master gave them. You may have little resources and/or little ability and/or small

tasks, but you can be just as faithful with them and just as pleasing to God.

The third servant was not faithful. Instead, he was lazy and wicked. His attitude and his stewardship showed it.

E. The master in the parable represents God, and the evaluation at the end represents the judgment (Great White Throne or Bema Seat).

We are stewarding for *God*, not for ourselves. We are servants.

F. The parable of the talents teaches us to be ready for the Lord's return **by being faithful**. This is like 24:45-51. The focus is on faithful service and an evaluation at the end of one's service. This is true over all the ages, and even also during the Tribulation. Just because there are bad things going on "out there," does not excuse anyone from faithfulness.

### III. The Bible Often Speaks of Stewardship

The concept of steward is often mentioned in the New Testament. Look these up and ponder each one.

Matthew 20:8

Luke 12:42

Luke 16:1-8

1 Cor. 4:1-2

Titus 1:7

1 Peter 4:10

## IV. Areas of Stewardship

Brainstorm with the men what are all the areas of stewardship for which we are responsible.

### Resources

- A. Time
- B. Health
- C. Money
- D. Children
- E. Marriage
- F. Ministry
- G. Gospel
- H. Bible
- I. Friendships
- J. Possessions
- K. Skills, “talents”
- L. Spiritual gifts
- M. Mind and thoughts

### Tasks

- A. Work or school
- B. Church involvement
- C. Evangelism
- D. Personal spiritual growth

There are other important concepts, like stewardship in little versus much (Luke 16:11-12).

## Conclusion

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