

MATHEW 25 - THE LORDS ADVICE FOR THE LAST DAYS

3 criteria for Christian performance evaluation

The message about virgins, talents and sheep/goats sums up the key factors for success in the last days as regards effectiveness and readiness.

This is a very short set of notes. Needs amplification.

VIRGINS - desperate need for the Holy Spirit and His oil - so our light can shine before men - so that they might see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven

TALENTS

Mat 25:14 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.

- this is about how the Kingdom operates and how value is added
- man travelling is Jesus, after His ascension
- call is the call of God (relate to call throughout Bible and first step for strategy). Also, if I be lifted up I will draw all men unto me e.g . Street prayer ministry, like in Rundle Mall
- delivered - gifts (e.g faith, 5 fold ministry, grace), abilities - nothing sourced in ourselves - all provided - all heavenly sourced - all free
- the parable teaches that we must be faithful and fruitful, not fearful and lazy.

Mat 25:15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

- we can't all be well-known preachers. Paul - Apollos. Thus different reckoning standards

Mat 25:16 Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents.

- traded. Put to use. Action. Who added to them? How were they multiplied. ALL from, by, to God. Nothing of self.

Mat 25:17 And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two.

Mat 25:18 But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

- wrong choice. See later verses about sheep and goats. Two thieves. Choose this day Strategy - right and wrong directions (God or World. 2 Kingdoms. 2 outcomes. Blessing vs Cursing. Add value or lose it).
- notice it's the Lord's money

Mat 25:19 After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.

- reckoned - they and the Lord give an account of their stewardship. he assesses what we have DONE - with HIS gift.

Mat 25:20 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.

- I have gained. Partnership. Means by my good works YOU have brought the increase.

Mat 25:21 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.

- commendation. Our AIM? Note this is the way our journey of growth works - little by little, according to our obedience. Increasing responsibility and gifting for increased fruitfulness

Mat 25:22 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.

Mat 25:23 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.

Mat 25:24 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:

- false understanding of God. Maligning God's character to excuse his lack of effort. Did not appreciate the Giver, the gifts or the job description.

Mat 25:25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine.

- fear not faith. Talk about POWER of God vs power of sin and importance of stepping out on a Kingdom journey, not content to stay where we are.

Mat 25:26 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:

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Mat 25:27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

Mat 25:28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents.

Mat 25:29 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.

Mat 25:30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

- the fruitful achieves an abundant reward (eternal life) - not a share of the increase but a rich inheritance above and beyond the gifts and outcomes from faithful service

- the lazy loses the lot and gets everlasting punishment

- talk about ROI - from profitability and capital gain

- what is a spark to the sun. What is a drop to the ocean. God is infinite. His Kingdom is vast beyond measure or what we can imagine or think. Get elevated. Immense resources and outcomes.

CONCLUSIONS ABOUT TALENTS

- we must value God's gifts

- Grace grows by use and decays by misuse

- Service is an opportunity to be grasped, not a problem to run from or avoid
- we are being tested and measured
- 2 ways - blessing and cursing. Sheep and goats. 2 thieves. Right hand and left hand.
- note the link between salvation and service. Both are by, from and to God. Man's works are valueless without God's grace (unmerited favour). Importance of humility.
- it's all about MOTIVATION (see WHY paper) - man's motivation vs God's. We are moved by our love for Him and our appreciation of what He has done, is doing and will do. I Him I live
- FOCUS - from the moment we are saved we set our face to God and His glory and away from the world and its motivations, methods and pleasures.
- DELIGHT/JOY - our delight is in pleasing the lord, not ourselves.
- why be fruitful? It proves love for God and neighbour. We learn about neighbour in the following verses - the hungry, thirsty, stranger, naked, sick, prison etc (THE LEAST)
- REVIVAL?

SHEEP & GOATS

- last judgment
- note many who call themselves Christians get rejected - sobering thought for compromised Christians and Church leaders