

INTRODUCTION.

A. Scripture text: **Matthew 25:1-13.**

“Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. **2** Five of them were foolish, and five were prudent. **3** For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, **4** but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps. **5** Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and *began* to sleep. **6** But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet *him*.’ **7** Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. **8** The foolish said to the prudent, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ **9** But the prudent answered, ‘No, there will not be enough for us and you *too*; go instead to the dealers and buy *some* for yourselves.’ **10** And while they were going away to make the purchase, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut. **11** Later the other virgins also came, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open up for us.’ **12** But he answered, ‘Truly I say to you, I do not know you.’ **13** Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour.

B.

COMMENTS.

A. Here are some analogies in the parable:

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| 1. The kingdom of heaven | the church, |
| 2. The bride groom | Christ. |
| 3. The midnight arrival | the second advent. |
| 4. The virgins | church members. |
| 5. The wise virgins | the prepared. |
| 6. The foolish virgins | the unprepared. |
| 7. The lamps | faith or works. |
| 8. The oil | works or the Spirit. |
| 9. The sleep of the virgins | the sleep of death. |
| 10. Tarrying of the groom | delay of the second coming. |
| 11. The midnight cry | the call to judgment. |
| 12. The refusal to give oil | merit not transferrable. |
| 13. Exclusion of the foolish | rejection of the unprepared. |
| 14. The shut door | impossibility of last-minute preparation. |

B. Good, clean, moral, respectable people who have exquisite taste, cultural excellence and social acceptability will be lost if they have no oil in their lamps.

C. Both oil and lamps are necessary. Faith and works save!

PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

INTRODUCTION.

A. Scripture text: **Matthew 25:14-30.**

“For *it is* just like a man *about* to go on a journey, who called his own slaves and entrusted his possessions to them. **15** To one he gave five talents, to another, two, and to another, one, each according to his own ability; and he went on his journey. **16** Immediately the one who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and gained five more talents. **17** In the same manner the one who *had received* the two *talents* gained two more. **18** But he who received the one *talent* went away, and dug *a hole* in the ground and hid his master’s money.

19 “Now after a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. **20** The one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, ‘Master, you entrusted five talents to me. See, I have gained five more talents.’ **21** His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’

22 “Also the one who *had received* the two talents came up and said, ‘Master, you entrusted two talents to me. See, I have gained two more talents.’ **23** His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’

24 “And the one also who had received the one talent came up and said, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you scattered no *seed*. **25** And I was afraid, and went away and hid your talent in the ground. See, you have what is yours.’

26 “But his master answered and said to him, ‘You wicked, lazy slave, you knew that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I scattered no *seed*. **27** Then you ought to have put my money in the bank, and on my arrival I would have received my *money* back with interest. **28** Therefore take away the talent from him, and give it to the one who has the ten talents.’

29 “For to everyone who has, *more* shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. **30** Throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

B.

COMMENTS.

A. Here are some analogies found in the parable:

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| 1. Man going to another country | Christ the Lord, |
| 2. The other country | heaven where Christ is. |
| 3. The servants | Christ's disciples. |
| 4. Distribution of talents | endowment of gifts. |
| 5. Return of the man | second advent. |
| 6. The accounting required | the judgment. |
| 7. The profit reported | improvement of gifts. |
| 8. The buried talent | sloth, and an evil heart. |
| 9. The joy of the Lord | felicity in heaven. |
| 10. The outer darkness | punishment of the wicked. |
| 11. Faithful servants | faithful Christians. |
| 12. The unfaithful servant | unfaithful Christians. |

B. The virgins waited until His coming while the servants were employed until His coming.

C. The failure was not in the size of the gift, but in the servant's failure to use it.

D. Let us never neglect our opportunities to serve (Gal. 6:10).

THE PARABLE OF THE POUNDS

INTRODUCTION.

A. Scripture text: **Luke 19:12-27.**

So He said, "A nobleman went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and *then* return. **13** And he called ten of his slaves, and gave them ten minas and said to them, 'Do business *with this* until I come *back*.' **14** But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to reign over us.' **15** When he returned, after receiving the kingdom, he ordered that these slaves, to whom he had given the money, be called to him so that he might know what business they had done. **16** The first appeared, saying, 'Master, your mina has made ten minas more.' **17** And he said to him, 'Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, you are to be in authority over ten cities.' **18** The second came, saying, 'Your mina, master, has made five minas.' **19** And he said to him also, 'And you are to be over five cities.' **20** Another came, saying, 'Master, here is your mina, which I kept put away in a handkerchief; **21** for I was afraid of you, because you are an exacting man; you take up what you did not lay down and reap what you did not sow.' **22** He said to him, 'By your own words I will judge you, you worthless slave. Did you know that I am an exacting man, taking up what I did not lay down and reaping what I did not sow? **23** Then why did you not put my money in the bank, and having come, I would have collected it with interest?' **24** Then he said to the bystanders, 'Take the mina away from him and give it to the one who has the ten minas.' **25** And they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas *already*.' **26** I tell you that to everyone who has, more shall be given, but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. **27** But these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them in my presence."

B. We have a job to do:

1. We are living in the period of time between Christ's ascension and His return. We do not know when He is coming back. While He is gone we have a job to do. When He returns He will check our work.
2. There is a great similarity between this parable and the parable of the talents (see Mt. 25:14-30). The parable of the talents discusses the wise use of opportunities while this parable deals with our work as servants preaching the gospel.

I. **THE FAITHFUL SERVANTS** (see Lk. 19:15-19).

A. They knew their responsibility. Each had a "pound" and was to go to work. What is the pound?

Probably the gospel of Christ:

1. "Entrusted with the gospel" (1Th. 2:4).
2. "The stewardship of the gospel" (1Tim. 1:11,18; 6:20; 2Tim. 2:2).
3. "Treasure in earthen vessels" (2Cor. 4:7).

B. We must be about our Father's business (Lk. 2:49; 19:10)!

C. They did their job faithfully. They did not make the following excuses:

1. "This is not a great sum of money."
2. "Why even bother to do business."
3. "How do I know if He will ever come back?"

D. They were rewarded for their faithfulness:

1. Not all have the same results but all who work get results (Mt. 13:23).
2. The "cities" in the parable could refer to greater opportunities for service or just the eternal rewards to be enjoyed in heaven.

II. **THE UNFAITHFUL SERVANT** (see Lk. 19:20-26).

A. He knew his job but did not do it. He could not plead ignorance. Unfaithfulness is sin. It has often been said that the greatest ability is dependability.

B. He was unfaithful, because his heart was not right with his master. He did not live what he believed. A proper fear of his master (and our Lord) will mobilize us to service, not paralyze us to quit.

- C. His unfaithfulness cost him his reward. This man was so afraid he took no risks. He lost his opportunity, he lost his pound, he lost his reward.

III. **THE REBELLOUS CITIZENS** (see Lk. 19:14,27).

- A. The immediate application here is to the nation of Israel.
- B. But it has an even wider application and that is when the Lord returns He will have to punish those who would not bow before Him and submit to His will (2Th. 1:7,8).
- C. When the Lord returns it will mean reward for the faithful, loss of reward for the unfaithful, and terrible judgment for the unbelieving, rebellious people who rejected Him.