

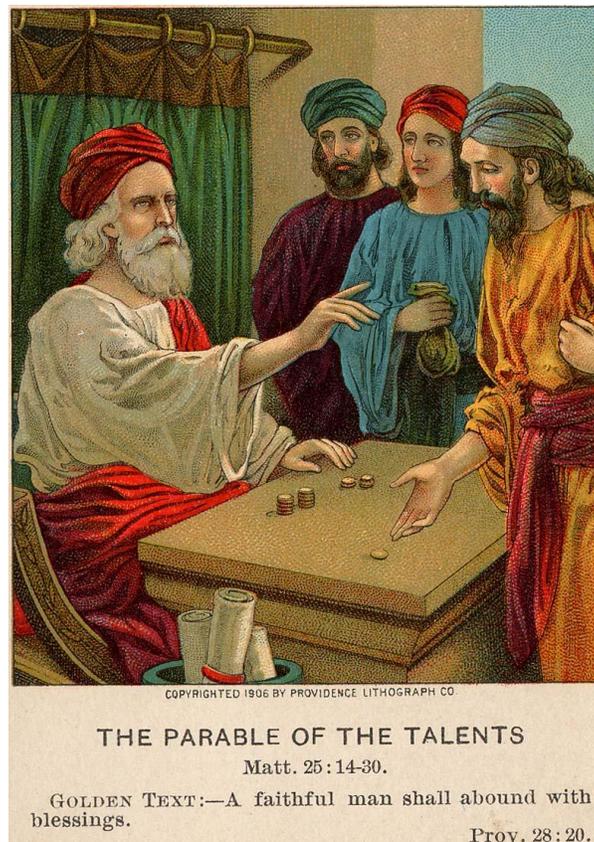
GIFTS and TALENTS Pt.1: THE PARABLE of the TALENTS, GIVING, GIFT of GIVING, MAMMON

As you read the Bible you learn that God has gifts for you. These gifts are to empower you to live a righteous life, to build up the body of Christ and to bring God glory. God equips us to serve Him and to fulfill our purpose. No matter what age you are when you are truly saved, the Holy Spirit begins to give you gifts. Some gifts are known right up front and others take time to manifest as you grow in Christ.

Let's begin with a story that Jesus told that is a great example to us about our gifts and talents. In this story, the man travelling into a far country is a picture of Jesus.

Matt.25:14-30 - 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 (he entrusted his money to them). And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability (dividing it in proportion to their abilities); and straightway took his journey. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents. And likewise he that *had received* two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money (he dug a hole and hid the money). After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them (he called them to give an account of how they used his money). 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. 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 (come and share your master's happiness!). 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. 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 (come and share your master's happiness!). 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 (where you have not scattered seed): And I was afraid (I was afraid I would lose your money), and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, *there* thou hast *that is* thine (here is your money back). 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: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and *then* at my coming I should have received mine own with usury (interest). Take therefore the talent from him, and give *it* unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given (To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath (But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away). And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. *Other adjectives for the unprofitable servant are: useless and worthless.*



The Parable of the Talents, talks about talents and we understand that it was money that was spoken of.

God is the One Who blesses us with His provision through our abilities, gifts and talents. He is the Lord Who provides for us. He also gives us the ability to get wealth. **(Deut.8:18)** He can help you get the right job, to make the right connections, to excel in the abilities He has given you, to have favor with your bosses etc. We are to use the provision He gives us to take care of ourselves and our families first of all, and also to put it to work for the Kingdom of God. God does not want us to be greedy over money. He does not want us to hoard it and He does not want us to squander it either.



This is Pastor Erustus of our outreach ministry in Kenya. There is a “gift of giving” and Pastor shared this about it: “God has gifted some people in the area of wealth for the furtherance of His Kingdom work. Paul talks of the gift of giving in Corinthians **(II Cor.9)** which God grants to some people. Which means for one to be gifted in giving, God will give them the ability to get wealth. Like in the 3rd letter of John, Gaius was gifted with giving and God gave him wealth with which he supported the apostles. God gifts his people differently in order to build the body of Christ. But the only problem, those blessed with wealth have turned to be selfish, lovers of themselves and pleasure, proud, lovers of money and have

allowed their hearts to be over ruled by the Mammon spirit. Their hearts have turned away from God back to the world.”

Everyone is required to tithe. There are offerings in addition to the tithe. When you give above the tithe, that is an offering. We have to see the reason behind God commanding tithes to be paid. The tithe was and still is to support God's work and His ministers in order to help build the Kingdom. The work of God and rather the gospel, cannot be preached without believers giving offerings and tithes. There are bills to pay, materials to buy, fuel needed, food, buildings to be built for God's work etc and all this requires money.

Do not think that God is not concerned with what you do with your money. He is. It is one of the very things that we will give an account of to God, for how well we used what He blessed us with. Teach your children to tithe and give when they receive money. In so doing it will not be something hard to do as an adult and all the while they will be laying up treasures in heaven. **(Matt.6:19-20)**

Not everyone has the “gift of giving.” One of my gifts is the gift of giving and God has moved me into a position to be able to help support our outreach ministries in a great way, through this ministry.

Now that I have laid out to you that you will account for how you have used your money in this life, let’s move on from there and discuss your talents or abilities. This story has a two-fold meaning for us. One is that we are to use our resources, our money for the furtherance of the Kingdom of God. The second is in regards to the talents or abilities that God has given us.

Notice in the story, the Lord did not give every man the same talents, but according to each person’s ability, He gave. We are not to compare our Christian walk with anyone else’s. We each have a different journey in the Lord. We will face and go through different tests and trials. We grow in the Lord at different rates. We have a common purpose to shine our lights for Jesus and let God use us to win souls for His Kingdom but He will use each one of us in different ways. We are all striving to please and obey God and to enter into heaven, but each of us will serve differently according to His purpose for our lives.

The ministry God has blessed me with is very different from Pastor Erustus's and from Pastor Dalbeer's. Yet, we are all ministers of the Lord's. Pastor Sarah and I are both women pastors and yet we minister in completely different ways.

Two of the servants got busy using the talents they were given. They increased the money they had been given to work with and this pleased their lord. They were commended and rewarded for what they had done. They had been faithful over a few things and their lord said he would make them ruler over many things.

Luke 16:10-13 - He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much (whoever can be trusted with very little can be trusted with much): and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much (he that is dishonest with little is also dishonest with much). If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon (if you are not trustworthy in handling worldly wealth), who will commit to your trust the true riches (*true riches of heaven*)? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one (be devoted to the one), and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon (money) (You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money).

Those two profitable servants were faithful with what little they had been given and it pleased the Lord and so He gave them more responsibility. Always do what's right even if no one is around and no one is watching because the Lord is always watching. **(2 Chro.16:9, Psalm 34:15)**

You cannot serve two masters and mammon is mentioned there.

List of Gods : "mammon" - 1 record **This is satan - the god of this world (2 Cor.4:4).**

Name ▲ ▼	Origin ▲ ▼	Description ▲ ▼
God name "Mammon"	Syriac	The god of this world. Mammon was the Syrian god of wealth, similar to Plutus of Greek and Roman mythology. Syriac

There is a god called mammon. The origin is from Syria. The god of this world. Mammon was the Syrian god of wealth, similar to Plutus of Greek and Roman mythology.

The Bible tells us the god of this world is satan. **(2 Cor.4:4)** So you can see the Bible plainly states over and over that you cannot serve the Lord God Almighty and satan. The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. **(1 Tim.6:10)** Many people have an idol in their life and it is money. Money is one of satan's great weapons to lure people away from God. So much so that he even carries the title "mammon."

Are you faithful with the money God has blessed you with? You can serve your Creator with what He has given you or you can serve self with what God has given you. When you live to please yourself only, satan gets the benefits and glory from that.

CLOSING

If you don't know what your gifts and talents are, now is the best time to start praying and ask God to show you and to make it clear to you what they are. Ask Him to help you to use what He has given you to bring Him glory.

In the next few lessons I'm going to talk more about gifts and talents and point out some Biblical examples of them as the only gift I spoke of today was the gift of giving.

PRAYER