

The Unprofitable Servant

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[0 : 00] Bible with you, grab that, and open it up to where we've been in Sunday school. Find the Gospel of Matthew chapter 25. So we started this chapter on Sunday morning, working verse by verse through and got a pretty good ways, and we came past this second story or parable about the kingdom of heaven in verse 14, and in trying to get through it and in teaching the material and the doctrine of the passage, I kept finding myself trying to make some application and some thoughts about those talents and how it's, you know, God gives talents and abilities to each of us and kind of taking a little bit of liberty with what the word talent is in the passage, a Jewish weight, and taking a little liberty there.

And so what I want to do, though, since we go through Sunday school and really are heavy on the doctrine and the teaching, I want to go back through and take a look at this guy, this one who ends up being called an unprofitable servant at the end of this passage, and consider why he ended up the way he did, and try to caution you against wasting what God gives you in this life and taking advantage of the time you have, the ability you have, and what God expects of you.

And of course, we're not worried about getting tossed into outer darkness. If we're children of God and saved by his blood, we're not worried about the doctrine. So we know the doctrine. We know where this goes.

But let's read through the passage again. And we'll begin in verse 14 through verse 30. And then we'll make some comments throughout this passage. Father, I want to pray first. Father, please help us to read and to study and understand the word of God.

And Lord, please put some truth into us tonight that will help us to serve you and to not be ashamed and to not be afraid, not use excuses, to not look for ways out.

[2 : 16] But Lord, to just to please you, to serve you with what you give us. Lord, I pray that you'd use this time to work in the hearts of each one that's here and even Lord, be with those younger people in the other building and minister to them.

I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Verse 14. For the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country who called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods. 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.

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.

After a long time, the Lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliverest 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'll make thee ruler over many things.

[3 : 29] Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed.

And I was afraid and went and hid thy talent in the earth. Lo, there thou hast that is thine. 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. Take therefore the talent from him and give it unto him that which hath ten talents. 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. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. This man's an unprofitable servant. Rather than being a good and faithful servant, he's called a wicked and slothful servant.

[4 : 49] Rather than being ruler over many things and entering into the joy of his Lord, he's cast into outer darkness where there's weeping and gnashing of teeth. And it didn't have to be that way.

This man made a decision, and it was based on something that we're going to look at here tonight that I pray and I hope that it draw your attention to it, that you'll be able to fight it and resist it and not allow it to make the decision for you in your life when God gives you something to do or seeks to see you please him.

So look at a few things I want to outline a little bit and then make some application. First in verse 15, notice this about this servant, is he had the ability.

He had the ability to do something with what was given him. The Lord delivered unto them, his servants, his goods. And in verse 15 it says, unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one.

To every man according to his several ability. So if he didn't have any ability, guess how much he would have gotten? Nothing.

[5 : 54] But he had ability. According to his Lord, he had the ability to handle at least one talent. He possessed a measure of value, a measure of skill that his Lord deemed him capable of handling his goods.

His Lord found him suitable to be responsible for his own personal goods. He had the ability. If I were you and I was, or I'm sorry, if it were you, and you were passing out your wealth for someone else to take care of, something you've worked and spent years of your life laboring and building up and then you were going to put it into the hands of another to take care of, you wouldn't gamble with your money.

You'd be looking for good and faithful servants, wouldn't you? To give it to. You wouldn't be looking for somebody lazy and irresponsible or somebody that's dishonest. If you're going to invest today, you're going to invest in a company that has a good reputation.

A company with a clean track record. Not somebody that's just on the news for laundering money.

You're going to stay clear from those. This guy had the ability.

The Lord thought so. He had the ability to be successful for his Lord. He may not have been rated as highly as the other two, the one that received five, the one that received two, and maybe the one talent wasn't so much compared to them.

[7 : 19] But the point is the Lord believed in his ability enough to give him some. And so much so that we could say he put money on it, didn't he? This man wasn't incapable. Maybe he felt he was incapable, but was that really true according to his Lord?

No, he gave it according to his several ability. Just notice that little word there, his several ability.

That will show up a little later. But just tuck that away.

If we excuse the servant and think, well, he didn't know what he was doing. He really shouldn't have been put in that position. If we excuse the servant, then we're accusing his Lord and saying, you messed up. You didn't know your servant.

You shouldn't have done that. And in this parable, in this thought that the Lord would be Jesus Christ that's coming back. So we're not going to be blaming the Lord here. We'll blame the man. But the man had the ability.

All right, there's something else. In verse 15, I'll say this. He had a quantity. He had something given to him. It says, and to another, one. One.

[8 : 21] He had one talent. That was his quantity. He wasn't empty-handed, was he? When his master left for his journey, he had a quantity.

His Lord distributed to him an amount of his goods, and it was by way of one talent. Others received more. Maybe they had more ability. Maybe they had more experience.

Maybe they'd been around for longer. We don't know. But the Bible says, unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required. And regardless of the number here, this man had something required of him, just as much as the other two did as well.

None of that really matters of who got what. The one thing that he received is the one thing that he was accountable for. He had a quantity. He was given something that he could use.

And he was expected to put it to use. All right, we'll see another thing about this man. He not only had the ability and the quantity, he also had opportunity. Notice that the Lord straightway took his journey at the end of verse 15.

[9 : 24] And then down in verse 19, after a long time, the Lord of those servants cometh. How long? Nobody knows. But I know one thing about the time. It was long.

He had opportunity. He had time. Long time. To do something with that talent. He didn't just have time to use. He also had examples of two other servants that he obviously knew quite well who were putting that talents that they received to work.

He could have borrowed off early, borrowed from their knowledge or their experience. He could have gone to them. The others both doubled what they were given. And so just that being the case, it doesn't seem like one of them went to Vegas and just got lucky and then came back and said, sorry about that, guys.

But it looks like they both knew what they were doing and used their talents and used the time wisely and doubled that for their master. This guy had the same opportunity.

The equal opportunity, equal time to fulfill his Lord's will. And furthermore, like I said, he could have gotten some tips, without a doubt, from the men that have been successful. He could have imitated their practice or learned from their success.

[10 : 35] He wasn't sick. He didn't fall on hard times. I don't see that he has any excuse at all for doing what he did with that talent. It says in verse 18 that he went and digged in the earth and hid his Lord's money.

The possibilities, however, were everywhere for him to use that talent. Not like the master sent him off to the desert and said, go work a miracle.

Look at verse 27. We read this when he came back. He said, thou oughtest, therefore, to have put my money to the exchangers. I mean, the first thing that comes to mind when you, what, you didn't do anything? Well, you should have at least done this.

Why didn't he go do that? That seems like the easy route he could have taken just to receive his own with usury. Could have got a little interest off the thing. You just put it in the earth. You're just giving it right back to me.

The man had opportunity. He had ability. He had quantity. That is, he had something physical that was given to him that he could use.

[11 : 39] And he had opportunity. And so do you. So do every one of you, myself included. We all have those three things. Now turn to Romans chapter 12.

And let's put this on our plates. Romans 12.

And I want to read verses 4, 5, and 6 here. Romans 12, verse 4. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office, so we, being many, are one body in Christ. And every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us. And he's going to list the whole, well, we'll read them. Whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith.

Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering. Or he that teacheth, this is known as a gift. On teaching, or he that exhorteth on exhortation. Or he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity. Or he that ruleth with diligence.

[12 : 48] He that showeth mercy with cheerfulness. Paul just goes off kind of on the side. He's listing some things that have been given into this body. But they're all different.

God's given different gifts. Verse 6. Having then gifts differing. Just like the body has many members, the gifts are different one to another.

According to the grace that is given to us. Alright, now let's move over to 1 Corinthians 12. And we'll see it again. 1 Corinthians 12. And this passage in this chapter generally speaking of spiritual gifts. The very first verse. Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren. I would not have ye ignorant. And we'll go down to verse number 4. Now there are diversities of gifts.

Just like we read. There's different gifts. But the same spirit. And there are differences of administrations. But the same Lord. This is all God's deal here.

[13 : 58] Verse 6. And there are diversities of operations. But is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the spirit is given to every man to profit with all.

Keep reading. For to one is given by the spirit the word of wisdom. To another the word of knowledge by the same spirit. To another faith by the same spirit. To another the gifts of healing by

the same spirit.

To another the working of miracles. To another prophecy. To another discerning of spirits. To another diverse kinds of tongues. And to another interpretation of tongues. But all these worketh that one in self same spirit.

Dividing to every man severally as he will. Here's the same word we saw in Matthew 25. Severally as he will. And it's the diversity and the differences.

And a separation of gifts to different people. And here it's the spirit of God that is dividing these gifts to every man. According to his will.

[15:00] As he the spirit of God will. And some of these gifts are just given out to different members of body of Christ. And what's the purpose though? Notice in verse 7.

Come back to verse 7. The purpose. The reason. The manifestation of the spirit is given to every man to profit. With all.

What was that servant called? He was called the unprofitable servant. And when God gives gifts and talents. If you want to stick with that word.

When he gives things and grace to the body of Christ. And he gives it for there to be profit. Not your profit. But the profit of the body of Christ. Look at Ephesians chapter 4.

Ephesians chapter 4. And we'll start in verse number 7.

[16:04] Ephesians 4 verse 7. But unto every one of us is given grace. Given grace. According to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith. When he ascended up on high.

He led captivity captive. And gave gifts unto men. He's quoting an Old Testament psalm. I believe. Just saying. Look. God. Christ has given gifts.

According to the measure of the gift of Christ. Just like he said back in the Old Testament. He ascended on high. Gave gifts unto men. And he goes on in verse 9. Now that he ascended. What is it? But that he also descended. First in the lower parts of the earth.

He that descended. Is the same. That same. Also that ascended up far above all heavens. That he might fill all things. Now get back on track. Verse 11. And he gave some apostles.

And some prophets. And some evangelists. And some pastors. And teachers. So here's a offices. Given to the body of Christ. For what purpose? Well the purpose back in 1 Corinthians.

[17:01] Was profit. But given to every man to profit with all. Here. For the perfecting of the saints. For the work of the ministry.

For the edifying. Of not the believer. Or the holder of the gift. But of the body of Christ. So we can grow up together. That we henceforth.

Be no more children. Tossed to and fro. And carried about. With every wind of doctrine. By the slight of men. And cunning craftiness. Whereby they lie in wait. To deceive. But speaking the truth. And love. Which is the job of these.

Offices mentioned earlier. May grow up into him. In all things. Which is the head. Even Christ. From whom the whole body. Fitly joined together. And compacted by that. Which every joint supplieth. According to the effectual working.

And so on. That every joint. Supplies something to the body. And the body. And the gifts are given. To perfect. To saints. To complete. To edify that body.

[17:57] To grow that body. For unity's sake. Now come back to Matthew 25. Where we were earlier. God gives abilities. He gives opportunities.

He gives individuals. Gifts. And he's given you something too. He's put something inside of you. And it's not the sign gifts.

That's done away with. We understand that. After the acts of the apostles. He's not asking you to speak in tongues. And he's not asking you to heal anybody. But what God gives inside of you.

Whatever kind of grace it is. That he's put inside of you. It could be in ministering. Not in the ministry. But in ministering. I mean. It could be. There's a thousand things.

You could be just. Have a knack for something. When you find out. You know what. I got to. This is kind of something I like. Why do you think you like it?

[18:57] Why do you think. I'm kind of good at this. Why are you good at it? There's things my wife is good at. I'm not even close to good. I don't even think the way she thinks. We're two different people. In a lot of different ways.

But there's things that she can do for Jesus Christ. Or do in this local church. That can help this church. And help you all. We were just discussing some things. For future events. And some. Kind

of.

Talking about getting some things on the calendar. And she sits there during the day at work. And looks at some ideas. She looks up stuff online. She comes up. She pitches stuff at me. And sometimes she hits things I would never in a million years think of.

Or just a different. I'll have an idea. She'll have a different take on it. And it's better. Or it's just. Because she sees it differently. The Lord puts things in her. He never puts in me. The Lord's going to put things in you.

That he'll never put in me. And vice versa. He's gifted us differently. Now come back to Matthew 25. All these things are going for this man.

[19 : 52] And I want to make this application to us as individuals. In the body of Christ. But all these things are going for him. Where he had the ability. He had the quantity.

The actual thing given to him. To use. And then he had opportunity to use it. And what did he go and do? He went and dug in the earth. And hid his Lord's money.

Why did he react that way? And by the way. Digging in the earth. And hiding your Lord's money. I mean. How is that a good idea? You know the Bible says in Matthew 6.

About laying up treasure in earth. That's what he did. He dug it in the earth. He says where moth and rust doth corrupt. And where thieves break through and steal. How would that guy feel to go back. And find out it's gone.

Or it's corrupted. And cankered. That wasn't such a good idea after all. But anyway. Getting back to this. Why did he go dig in the earth. And hide it? He tells us why.

[20 : 51] In verse number 24. Then he which had received the one talent. Came and said. Lord I knew thee. That thou art a hard man. Reaping where thou is not sown. And gathering where thou is not strong.

Yeah that's true. The man admits it. His Lord admits it in 26. Saying thou knewest. That I reap where I sow not. He wasn't offended by anything. He said. Absolutely right. I'm a successful man. I know how to make money. I know how to make this thing work. And he says. I knew thee. I knew that you're good at this. But I'm not. And in verse 25. I was afraid.

I was afraid. And went and hid thy talent in the earth. Was the man that received five talents afraid? Maybe a little.

But it doesn't say. He went and did it. Was the man that received two talents afraid? We don't know. We don't know what would have crossed his mind. But he went and did the job. But we know one thing. This guy went and hid it in the earth.

[21 : 49] Because he was afraid. Afraid of what? Afraid of his master? Being a heart? No. He was afraid of losing it. He was afraid that he didn't know what he was doing.

His Lord was really, really good at making money. And profiting. But this servant was not. His Lord had confidence in him. But not a lot of confidence.

Five. Two. And just give you one. Not that much confidence. But he had enough confidence to give it to him. Perhaps the man was inexperienced.

Perhaps this servant has never handled this kind of responsibility. Maybe he could clean the stalls. And mow the grass. And wash the clothes. Or feed the animals. Maybe he could do those things. But when you put that money in my hand. And tell me to go make it work for her. That's over my head. I'm afraid. He panicked. He feared. He felt he wasn't capable of turning a profit with his Lord's money.

[22 : 49] He might lose it if he attempted to use it. And so he went and hid it in a place he felt would be safe. His idea of a safe place anyway.

I was afraid. That's the whole issue. Fear. Fear. Fear crippled this man from doing what he was supposed to do for the Lord.

Fear cripples Christians every day from doing what they're supposed to be doing for the Lord Jesus Christ. It stands in the way of moving forward. It's like a giant right in front of you.

I'm so scared. I'm afraid to do that. I'm afraid. It binds believers by holding them back from taking a step for Jesus Christ. Fear restricts your mind.

Fear blinds your eyes. Fear ties your tongue. Fear forbids Christians from engaging in the good fight of faith. Fear is the enemy of faith.

[23 : 51] Take a look at 2 Timothy chapter 1 with me. Here's a verse that's gotten its way around the world here and the coronavirus came on.

Everybody was panicking and fearing for their lives. 2 Timothy chapter 1. And this is the second epistle to this man Timothy who's pastor at a church in Ephesus. And he is a young man. And in verse 7. I'll back up. I'll back up to verse 6. Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear. I wonder if Timothy was afraid. I mean he must have been afraid. Why is Paul telling him God didn't give you or us the spirit of fear? Stir up that gift that God's given you. Use it. Because God didn't give us the spirit of fear. We're supposed to be active. We're supposed to be getting out there and doing what God's called us to do.

[25 : 06] We're supposed to stand up for Jesus Christ. God didn't give us the spirit of fear. What did he give us? In verse 7. But of power. And of love.

And of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord. Nor of me as prisoner. But be thou partaker of the affliction of the gospel according to the. There it is again. The power of God. I think Timothy had some fears in him as a young man. It was the previous epistle where he said. Let no man despise thy youth. Timothy must have been intimidated. He's pastoring. Maybe he felt insufficient. Maybe he felt inexperienced for this great calling. This great responsibility placed upon him. And Paul says. Stir it up Timothy. Use that gift that God gave you. God didn't give us the spirit of fear. Don't let fear hold you back. Don't let it stand in your way.

[26 : 05] Don't let it stop you. God's given you the power. God's given you. The love and sound mind. You've been given power to overcome that fear.

As we read in verse 8. According to the power of God. When you step out of your fear. The power of God moves in. It's not the other way around.

The power doesn't come in and force out the fear. The power doesn't come from God and force you to step. And force you to act. And force you to serve. And force you to do it. That's not how it works. How it works is. Is you by faith. In the Lord Jesus Christ. And by trusting God. And by taking him at his word. And walking in that faith.

You decide. I'm going to put the old man down. I'm going to put on the new man. I'm not going to live in fear. I'm going to walk in faith. And as you decide to take that step for Jesus Christ.

[27 : 07] The power comes in the new man. It shows up. It doesn't force you to do something. But when you trust God. And lean on his word. And obey. Then you find you're filled with power.

The power of God. In the new man. The first time. That I ever. Down in Bible school. We went out to preach on the street. And it was a mandatory thing.

For the. I guess. Maybe it was for all three. I'm not sure. If it was all three years. I feel like it might have been. Might as well have been. Might have just been the second and third year.

But at any rate. The first time. That I was. Going out to preach on the street. By myself. I went with somebody. That I knew. But he was way across the intersection.

And I'm over here by myself. And I had been sweating bullets all day. To do this. And I knew I just had to do it. I just had to do it. I had to do it. I was kind of being forced into it.

[28 : 00] But I needed it. It was good for me. And so I'm out there. Out of my Bible. And I had verses and thoughts. Just scrambled all through my mind. What I'm going to do. I'm thinking on it all day.

And didn't really have a good opportunity. And it just wasn't a great opportunity. With the position of the intersection. The cars. Or the foot traffic. Or whatever was going on. And then. And the other guy had a better spot.

And I was more active. And he's looking over me. Like what are you doing? And I'm just kind of. I know what I'm doing. I'm sweating. I'm scared. I'm nervous. I'm stalling. And I don't really like. There's nothing really happening over here.

And part of my flesh is like. If you just wait it out a little longer. You won't have to do it at all. You can just stand here with your Bible. And look like a fool that way. But I was so frustrated with that. Inside. That fight. And that fear. And I'm praying. And it's. The fear is not going away. I'm scared to death. I'm probably pacing. Shaking. And finally it was. The opportunity presented itself.

[28 : 55] That was just like. Green light. Go. And I just opened up. And let it fly. For what it was worth. Who knows what came out of my mouth. But shortly after that.

It was on. There was. There was. The fear was gone. The power came inside. And I mean. I didn't turn into a preaching machine. It wasn't something.

Like the whole intersection. You know. Stopping. And people getting out and praying. And there was nothing happening like that. But what was happening inside of me. Was the new man. Was strengthened. With might.

By his spirit. There was something going on inside of me. The power of God came in. And just. The fear was gone. When I kicked the fear out. The Lord came in. And it was the.

The best. The jitters. Flew away. I was full of zeal. I could have just kept on going. Before I knew it. It was like the guys. Walking across the street. To go to the car. I'm like. Oh. Oh. We're done. Man.

[29 : 50] That was pretty quick. Once it got going. Because. I'm sure there was adrenaline. I'm sure there was things like that. Going on. The nerves. But there was a thing about. Kicking that fear out. And overcoming that fear.

And trusting God. And putting your. Faith to. Putting your feet to your faith. Now coming back to this man here. I'm not. You don't need to turn back. He had the ability.

He had something. God had given him. His Lord had put in his hand. He had the opportunity. But he admitted. I was afraid. And I didn't do anything with it. I was too scared.

To do what you wanted me to do. And I'm. I'm certain of it. Because I'm a man. I'm a believer. I'm saved. I have God in me. And I'm just like every one of you.

When it comes. Push comes to shove. There's times. I'm scared. Your fear comes inside of me quickly. And it doesn't want me to talk. It doesn't want me to witness. It doesn't want me to get involved.

[30 : 48] It wants to find a way to duck. To not go forward with it. And I've got to fight that. I've got to stand up against it. And I've got to pray. And ask God to give me the strength.

And the new man. And when I make the decision. I'm not going to be pushed around by my fears. I'm going to let God take control of this. He comes right in. And takes control of it.

So what are you afraid of? What are you afraid of? Not some big word fear. Whatever. There's a whole list of those. What are you afraid of?

In regards to what God is wanting you to do. With your life. Or with your talents. With your abilities. Some people are afraid to. They're good at organizing.

But they're afraid to do it. Because they're afraid to tell somebody what to do. Even though they've got it made. They can be structured. And could put something together. But they're just afraid of somebody not liking them.

[31 : 46] Or saying something bad about them. Or getting puffed up against them. Or whatever. There's plenty of excuses. And God isn't interested in them. So I'm just wanting you to consider this in your own heart.

What am I good at? What has God put inside of me? What gift can I be? Or how can I be used of him for this local church. And for the body of Christ. And for his will. And what's stopping me?

What's getting in my way? And what am I afraid of? Let's close in prayer. And before I pray.

If God's. If you know. Because I know how it goes. If you already know what you're afraid of. You already know where you've. You're not giving God. What he deserves.

You're not using what God's put inside of you. Some gift. Some grace. Some ability. Some talent if you will. You need to get that thing right.

[32 : 45] You need to quit wasting it. Because that man was a wicked. And a slothful servant. He was unprofitable.

But it's the ones that just obey. That are good. And faithful. And the Lord Jesus Christ. Deserves our faithfulness. Father.

Thank you for the message tonight. And for this example in the scriptures. Lord may you use it. May your spirit have access to our hearts. To be able to put this deep inside of us.

Lord may we recognize. Where it's our flesh. And where we allow fear to creep up. The spirit of fear. That so quickly intimidates us. And Lord gets in our way.

Ultimately gets in your way. Lord help us to recognize it. Give us a desire. To defeat it. We know we have access to you.

[33 : 42] To your spirit. We know that it can't stand before us. But sometimes it's just easier not to fight. Lord there's too many Christians not fighting today.

We need to fight. So God I pray you draw us to courage. To being valiant. To enduring hardness if necessary. But to fighting the good fight of faith.
For Jesus sake. We want to be deemed good and faithful. We want to be profitable. We want you to be glorified in us. Because you deserve it.
Not because you reward us. But because you're worthy. You deserve it. And so Lord I pray you'd prick our hearts. And grow us. And help us Lord then to administer these gifts and talents.
And graces to each other. And to this body. And may we grow closer. May we grow more fit in the faith. We pray this in Jesus Christ's name. And for his sake alone. Amen.
[34 : 36] Amen. Amen. R.O.A. I got you done five minutes early tonight. You get it.