

# Worship Team Expedition Weekly Devotional



## Week 5: Matthew 25:14-30

So, there you are. Speechless. Your boss is looking at you from across his very expensive desk waiting for a response. Your mind races as you ask yourself, “Did that just really happen?!”

You’ve found yourself working for a very wealthy person. We’re talking *extremely* wealthy. Huge mansion. World traveler. Owns multiple businesses. Could buy-a-small-country-if-he-wanted-to type wealthy. Get the picture? And when he invites you into his office you can’t imagine the amazing assignment he’s about to give you.

“I’m developing a business in another country and will be gone for quite awhile. I need some quality people to manage my assets while I’m away and you strike me as the right kind of person,” he says. “I think you could be successful at expanding this business, so...here is \$6.5 million; please invest and grow for this for me. You can do that, right?”

What would you do?

Perhaps you’re familiar with a parable that Jesus tells in Matthew 25 about three servants who found themselves in a similar situation. Their master handed them extremely large sums of cash (called talents in Bible times) and told them to invest the money. They handled the assignment/opportunity in different ways.

Two of the servants wisely invested the money and doubled the portions entrusted to them. The third servant took the money and buried it. Let’s read what happens when the master returned to settle accounts with them:

<sup>20</sup> The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.’

<sup>21</sup> “His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’

<sup>22</sup> “The man with two bags of gold also came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.’

<sup>23</sup> “His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’

<sup>24</sup> “Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you

have not scattered seed. <sup>25</sup> So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'

<sup>26</sup> "His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? <sup>27</sup> Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.

<sup>28</sup> "'So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. <sup>29</sup> For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. <sup>30</sup> And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' - Matthew 25: 20-30 (NIV)

Wow. Quite a story, isn't it? The Holy Spirit may draw out something different for you as you read it, but here are two big takeaways for me:

- God has entrusted us with valuable talents, which He expects us to invest, and we will someday account for what we did with those talents.
- God doesn't want us to be fearful, rather He wants us to boldly invest and grow those talents for Him.

So what has God given you? Maybe it's a voice to sing, skill to play, an ear for sound, or an eye for design. Whatever talent He has given you, it is *valuable*. Some received more talents than others in the parable, but even just one talent was still a pretty hefty sum of money to be entrusted with (some Bible scholars estimate a talent could have been as much as 20 years of wages for a common worker!). What God gave you is really valuable. Don't miss that; don't belittle that. You have been given an extraordinary gift to use and grow. It's a big deal. The talents, the gifts come from Him and we are stewards of them; someday He's going to ask how we used those talents. I don't know about you, but I want to have something to show for what He gave me!

Let's talk about the servant that had nothing to show when the master returned- what happened there? What went wrong? He got scared. He was afraid to risk. Afraid to step out in faith and put his talent to work. He didn't even choose the fairly safe option of putting the money in the bank to gain interest. Yowzer.

So...who do you want to be like in this story?

Do you want to be like the servants who recognize the value in what God has given them, boldly pursue opportunities to expand their talents, enjoy the growth of those talents, and then gladly bring back the increase to their master? Or the one who was fearful and shrank back and lost everything in the end?

If conquering fear is a battle for you, can I encourage you with something? Having fear is normal- we ALL experience fear at some point when thinking about taking a risk or stepping out in a bold way for God. That is perfectly normal and there's nothing wrong

with feeling fear. The important thing is **focus**. Focus on Christ– His faithfulness to you in the past, what He’s called you to, and the reward awaiting you– so that fear doesn’t stop you from moving forward into God’s best. When the disciple Peter *focused* on Christ, he literally walked on water towards Christ; when his focus shifted to the wind and waves he started to sink. It’s the same for you– focus on Christ and remember you’re not alone– He’s right there with you providing the strength you need to do what He’s called you to do. Don’t let fear pull you down and make you miss out. Don’t give fear that kind of power.

When I’ve been in the trenches fighting fear, the following verse has been really helpful. Memorize it and claim this truth when fear rears its ugly head in your life:

“For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.” 2 Timothy 1:7 NLT

Sometimes it will take a lot of discipline to fight fear and focus on Christ. And some days you may not win the battle. That’s OK, Christ is waiting with open arms; so get back up and keep going, keep walking to Him, keep focusing on Him.

One last thought– did you notice that the master references the talents he had entrusted to those servants as “few things”? And that he would now trust the faithful servants with “many things”? That must have blown the minds of those servants because the talents he had given them were no small sum of money! What would “many things” look like?!

God has incredible, unbelievably awesome, hard-to-even-imagine-they’re-so-great blessings in store for those who are faithful to Him. Follow the path of the good servants and not only will you enjoy using your talents for God in this life, you’ll be entrusted with so, so much more in the next. Wow!

Jesus, help us boldly grow and invest the talents you have given us for your kingdom. Help us to courageously take the faith risks you are calling us to take and not give in to fear!

### **Questions for thought:**

What is God saying to your heart as you read this parable and reflect on it?

What is one talent God gave you? What choice is He prompting you to make today to develop that talent for Him?

Any fears pop up when you think about growing your talents? How has God helped you overcome fears and move forward in the past? How has God shown himself faithful (and come through for you) before?