

# THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

*Matthew 25:14-30; cf Luke 19:11-27*



## BIBLE VERSE COMMITTING TO MEMORY

### Ephesians 2:10

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.



*December 25, 2011*



## STORY LESSON BIBLE STORY

...continuing with the parable genre (Jesus telling semi-cryptic stories with a point).

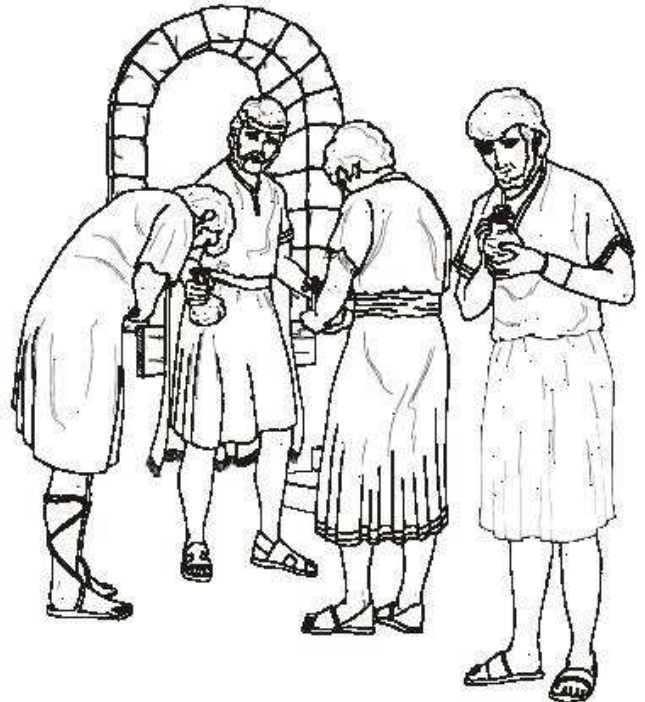
The kingdom of heaven will be like:

A man is about to head out on a journey. He brings his servants together and entrusts his property to them. He divides it among his three servants: one gets five talents of money (\$5,000), the second receives two talents (\$2,000), and the third is entrusted with one talent (\$1,000)... "each according to his ability" (Matthew 25:15 emphasis added).

Then the man left.

The servant with five talents put the money to work and doubled it—making a total of TEN talents.

The second servant did the same with his two talents—making FOUR total.



The third servant took his one talent, dug a hole in the ground, and hid his master's money.



A long time later, the man returned and began to settle up with each servant.

The first servant gave a favorable report to the master explaining that he had doubled the money entrusted to him. The master was pleased and 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 share in your master's happiness!" (Matthew 25:21).

The second servant also gave a favorable report of his care of his master's money by doubling it. The master replied in similar fashion, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come share in your master's happiness!" (Matthew 25:23).

The third servant did not give a favorable report. Instead he relayed to the master how he thought that he was a hard man, taking what was not his, and therefore was to be feared. This servant told the master that he had hid the talent in the ground. It is remarkable to note the contrast between the master's response to the third servant when compared with the previous two:

"You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? 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.

"Take that talent from him and give it to the one who has ten talents. For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him.

"And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Matthew 25:26-30



Engraving by Lucas van Doetechum



## LIFE APPLICATION

### MAKING IT REAL

#### **Active Member of the Kingdom of God**

Is Jesus talking about the talents that God gives each human being to use for the Lord's sake and we are each accountable for how we steward that talent? Maybe.

Remember, Jesus was talking to Israel, the chosen people of God. Israel was his audience (we have to be mindful of this audience, for it can radically change the way we interpret the parables).

Perhaps Jesus was talking to Israel about how they treated the mission God had given them when they became a nation—to be a light to the nations, so that all would come to know the One, True God of heaven and earth through Israel. Which servant reminds you of how Israel treated this God-ordained mission for the world? Yep, the third servant.

Perhaps this translates to us 2,000 years later as this: We are the Israel of God now... the church of Jesus. We are the representatives of the kingdom of God—we are citizens of heaven. The church is the lighthouse set up on a hill for all to see. Our mission is identical to that of Israel—to be a light to all the nations, so that all would come to know the One, True God of heaven and earth through Jesus (the True representative of Israel, who did for Israel what she could not do for herself). This parable becomes a warning to the newly constituted Israel, the church—be careful not to take the talent, the mission of God, and hide it in the ground. Instead, put it to work. Do something with it. Make the mission of God multiply on this earth. For the master is coming back, and each new covenanted person of God's church is going to have to give a report of how he or she used the talent of God, the mission of God.

#### **Talents in Action**

Don't waste the talents that God has given you. He has made each of us extremely special with unique natural and supernatural abilities. God wants us to be all that we can be in and through him. If we let God use us and not be afraid, amazing things happen.





## QUESTIONS

### REMEMBERING

**1. How much money did the man give to his three servants each?**

Servant 1 - 5 talents

Servant 2 - 2 talents

Servant 3 - 1 talent

**2. What did each servant do with the talents that were entrusted to them?**

Servant 1 - doubles the 5 talents into 10 talents

Servant 2 - doubles the 2 talents into 4 talents

Servant 3 - hid the 1 talent in the ground

**3. What did the master say to the first two servants when he learned what they had done with the talents entrusted to them?**

"Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come share in your master's happiness!"  
(Matthew 25:21, 23)

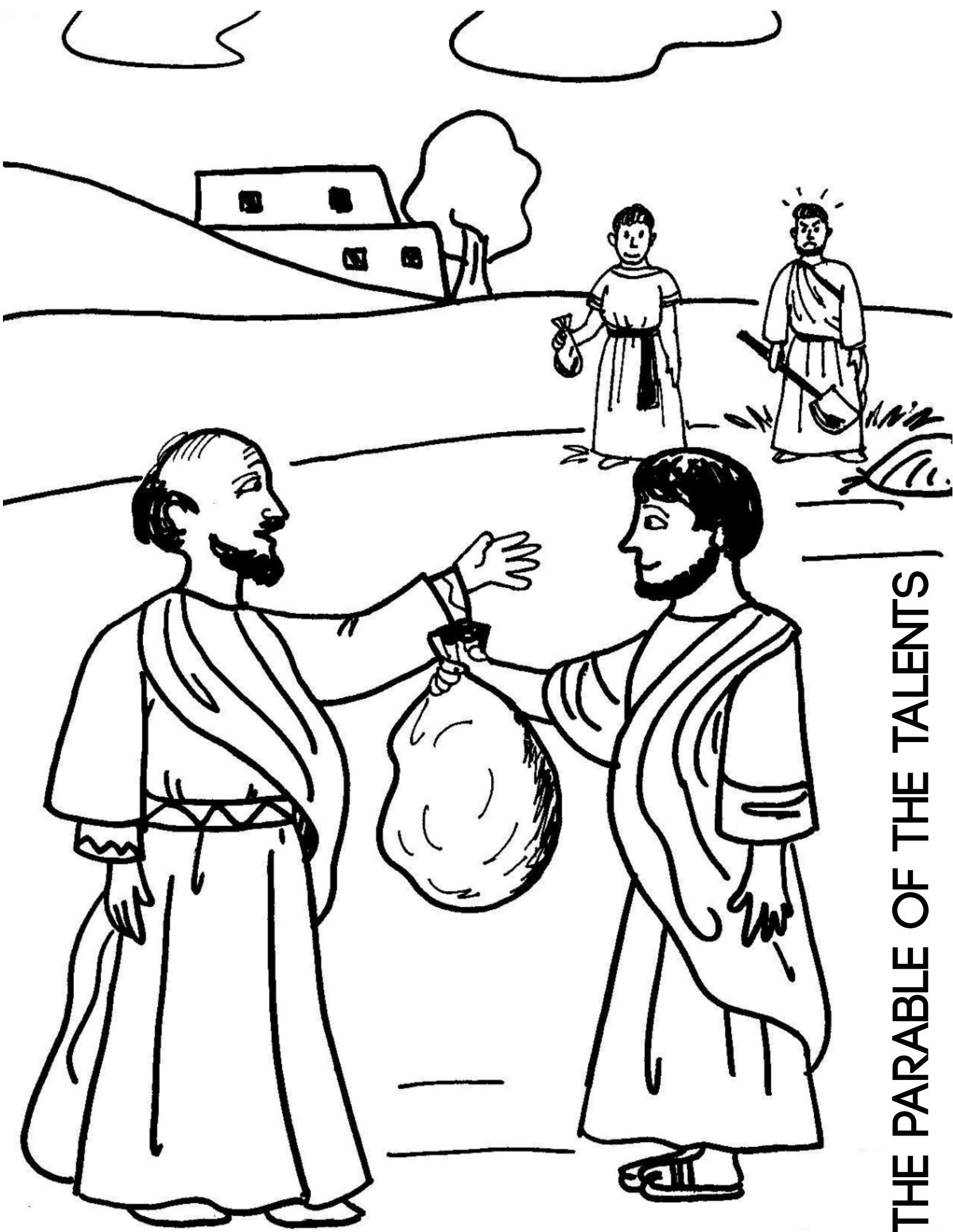
**4. How did the master respond to the third servant—happily or extremely angry?** Extremely angry

**5. What is the talents that God has entrusted you with?**



## COLORING SHEET

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