

## **REWARDED FOR OUR LIFE**

### **MATTHEW 25:14-30, I CORINTHIANS 3:13**

Does it really matter how you live your life after you have trusted Christ? After all, since we are saved by grace through faith, then there is absolutely nothing that can remove us out of the hand of God. Since we are saved, there is nothing that is going to keep us out of heaven. So why should we even consider the idea of rewards when it comes to eternity? Because, God makes one thing a very sober reality- and that is the fact of judgment. At the judgment seat of Christ, our Lord will expose all our works and life we will be soberly awakened to find that there was more to the Christian life than just trusting Jesus Christ as Savior.

To illustrate how the rulership in heaven is set up He uses three servants who belong to their master. In that day, a servant was the permanent possession of his master and at his disposal at any time.

**It is the Lord's desire to reward each and every believer.** However, He knows that there are going to be some believers who absolutely waste their lives. Therefore, if you think that your reward will be the same as that of other believers you need to listen carefully. Because when we have lived out our lives, we will stand before our Lord, and then He will judge us personally, carefully, and thoroughly.

**1. EACH PERSON HAS BEEN ENTRUSTED WITH ONE OR MORE TALENTS, GIFTS.** In this passage of Scripture it is interesting to notice that all three of the men had been given a talent. 25:15, "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. **Jesus didn't say that he gave two of them talents and zero to the third. Because that is not the nature of God. By nature of God Himself, He has given you at least one talent, one gift, one ability if not more to advance the kingdom. There is not a person who has been saved by the grace of God that has not been given a talent, gift and ability. But there are millions who believe they have no gift because they may have never put it into practice.**

**Sometimes we like to get around accountability by saying something like this, "I just don't know how to do this." Or we may say, "I am just not gifted". But notice this passage carefully.** All three of these men had at least one gift with which to honor their master.

To say that you have no talent is a direct violation of the Word of God. You have been given a talent to use for God's glory. The key question is will you use it. God will not make you use your talent, gift or ability. But it doesn't alter accountability at the judgment.

When we stand in the judgment, Jesus Christ is going to reward us. But imagine this thought. Imagine hiding or covering up your talent, gift, ability or opportunity for service. The sad reality will be that if you never use the talents, gifts, and abilities that God gives you here, then at the Judgment all your reward based on those abilities will be wiped away for all eternity. Imagine the horror of knowing you had a gift by God to sing, but never did it for the glory of God, or was given the ability to teach and instruct but simply didn't have time to do so. Then at the Judgment all those potential rewards will go up in smoke.

Imagine everything stripped away from your life but your saved status. God doesn't want that, but the reality is, that is going to be the way it will actually be in the day of Judgment.

Only God Himself knows all the screaming, crying, because Christians will watch as everything goes up in smoke all because of one thing- “they refused to use their talents, gifts and abilities for the glory of God. But on the other hand, there are going to be those smiling in the Judgment who faced difficult days while they were on earth, and from time to time wanted to quit, but refused to do so because their hearts desire was to please the Lord. Only God knows the teachers that will be rewarded because they refused to give up, when in their weaker moments they wanted to. God doesn’t take lightly the person who is faithful to Him. Neither will He reward lightly the person who is faithful to Him. Rewards is a big matter to God and He will reward lavishly to the person who has walked the consistent walk of faithfulness.

## **2. EACH PERSON DETERMINES HOW HE WILL**

**RESPOND WITH HIS TALENTS.** In this story Jesus illustrates three responses. The responses were not based at all on the heart, power, and majesty of Jesus but, rather based on the heart of each individual given the talent. The person who had been given many talent used his. However, Jesus didn’t brag on how many he had, because he didn’t obtain them of his own strength or might, they were given to him by God. But Jesus does comment on his faithfulness in using his talents in a wise and profitable manner. As a result, the Master honored him with additional talents. The person who had been given less talents used his and put his into practice. Notice he didn’t complain that he didn’t have as many as the one with the most talents, but rather he used his talents to be faithful to his Master. The man with two talents didn’t walk around complaining that he wished he had more. Quite the contrary, he was faithful and diligent in obedience to his Master. As a by-product the one with two talents received the same exact compliment as the man who had five. He was given two and put them into practice. The man with five put his into practice and both received commendations.

If you are faithful with the talents, gifts and the abilities that God has given you, You will receive the exact same compliment from our Lord Jesus Christ as Moses, David, Paul, or any other Bible character. **Why? Because faithfulness is determined by God in proportion to the abilities that He knows that He has given you.** God isn’t so interested in people like Paul and David, that He overlooks us. If that were so He would be a prejudiced God which violates His nature.

When Paul comes to the end of his life, he describes how he has lived, “faithful”, and he describes what type of fight he has fought, “the good fight”. But that isn’t all he makes it very clear that God has a reward awaiting him for his life of obedience, servitude, and yieldednes to the living Lord. But Paul goes another step. He declares that there is a reward awaiting all who “love the Lord” (See 2 Tim 4:8)

The only ones that will love the appearing of the Lord are those who have used their life, their gifts, abilities and talents to the best of their human ability. God is fully aware that on this side of life we will never be perfect, but we can be available, dependable, and faithful. Sadly, the person with only one talent went and hid his. Jesus didn't get upset because he only had one, because it is Christ who gives us our abilities. But rather the Lord was grieved because of the unfaithfulness of the servant with one talent. The issue is not how many talents you have but the way in which you use the ones you have been given. There are going to be faithful housewives

who loved their families and devoted themselves to their families and to their church and in the Judgment our Lord shall bless them.

### **3. EACH PERSON WILL BE REWARDED BASED ON HIS**

**WORK NOT ON HIS SALVATION (I COR.3:13)** The issue at the judgment seat of Christ is not salvation, that was settled when you asked Jesus into your life. Because you and I cannot be rewarded for something that we had absolutely not part in. You and I had nothing to do with the death, burial and resurrection. That was totally of God. **The issue in the judgment is going to be our works.** (*“Every man’s work shall be made manifest” 1 Cor. 3:13*) We will be called individually into an account on what we did with our opportunities. How we used them, misused them or abused them. We will be called into accountability of our talents. Whether we used them, abused them, or wasted them. God will call every preacher who preaches the gospel and quits into account. He will call all saints who abandoned His church into account. God makes it clear through Paul, (*“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” 2 Cor. 5:10*)

### **4. EACH PERSON WILL HAVE CHRIST PERSONALLY**

**ANALYSE HIS/HER LIFE.** In Mt.25, the Lord examined each man individually. They were not compared to one another. Neither will that happen in the judgment of Christ. We are going to stand alone, based on what God has given and gifted us to serve Him with. **The servants were called to give account of their faithfulness not the number of their works!!!** Nothing more and nothing less! They were judged on the fact if they were sinless perfect. Because when we stand in the judgment, our Lord knows that we are not sinlessly perfect. If we were there would have been absolutely no need for Him to die on the Cross. Jesus will analyze what we have done with what He has entrusted to our keeping. God knows exactly what He has given us, and He will evaluate how we have used what He knows He has given.

### **5. CHRIST WILL JUDGE AND REWARD US IN DIRECT**

**PROPORTION TO WHAT TALENTS HE HAS GIVEN US.** The Lord only called these men to give account of one thing. The things left in their keeping. They were responsible for no one else. Neither were they responsible for the activity of others. But they would give a complete account of themselves. The good news of Scripture declares that you will not give account of any other person, their actions, or they way they responded to you. The only person that we will give account of in the judgment is ourselves. Christ will not call a person to give a greater account than what he has been given. The one with one talents was not called to give account of 5 talents, neither was the one with 2 talents wasn't called to give account of 5. You and I will not be called to give account of one talent more than we were not entrusted with. It is God and God alone who knows how He has gifted us, and what talents He has entrusted into our keeping. How wise it is for any man or women to use his talents wisely, knowing this- that some day when we least expect it our Master will return

### **6. EACH BELIEVER WILL NOT RECEIVE THE SAME**

**NUMBER OF TALENTS.** These three men had three different abilities. You may say, "I don't have that many abilities to use." Friend, that is not and never will be the issue. The issue is, how faithful will you be with what you have been given. A wise man or woman is one who realizes

that the issue is faithfulness and obedience. If the man with 2 talents was faithful with his talents, then in the sight of God, he was a success. If the person with one talent had been faithful with his talent. He would have been a success in the sight of God. God is fully aware that all people are not given the same roles. If all were preachers, then where would the members be? God has given us whatever talents He chooses to give us according to His divine plan for our lives.

**7. EACH BELIEVER'S REWARD WILL NOT BE BASED ON THE NUMBER OF TALENTS BUT ON THE FAITHFULNESS IN USING WHAT IS GIVEN.** If the issue was based on number then Jesus would have given a greater word to the one with 5 than the one with 2. However, the truth is that the servant with 2 talents received the exact same compliment as that of the other. If you have 2 talents and are using them the best you know how then you are using 100% of your talents and in God's sight you are a success. The world may see you as a failure- but in the end who is keeping the ultimate record- God or the world?

But if you have been given 4 and are using 2 then you will give account of using only 50% of your talents. Is 50% any different than 100%. In God's sight, it will mean a great deal of difference in the judgment.

**8. EACH BELIEVER THAT FAILS TO USE HIS LIFE WISELY WILL SUFFER LOSS IN THE JUDGMENT.** In Mt.25, Jesus tells the story of the last servant. He suffers loss. The Bible doesn't say this servant goes to hell. Although it talks about weeping and gnashing, it is interesting to notice that there is no biblical reference to eternal fire or hell mentioned here. And verse 14, the Bible says "**the kingdom of heaven** is like a man who had three servants." What is God revealing. Here is a picture of a servant who has wasted his life, time, opportunities, talents and in the end lost great reward that could have been received. This one who wasted his talent found that it was taken from him for all eternity. God makes it perfectly clear a person can gain or lose for all eternity. (*1 Cor.3:13 says, "If any man's work is burned up he will suffer loss."*)

The loss is not heaven but the loss of rewards because of a failure to be faithful till the finish of the Christian race. If salvation was all there is to life, the question must be asked, "Why does God take such time talking about rewards? Because He knows that there is more than just salvation and He knows Christian will either gain or lose based on their devotion, loyalty and faithfulness to Jesus Christ and the gifts they have been given. God gives a picture of a saint who is heaven bound, yet he is heaven bound with a wasted earthly life.

**9. YOUR REWARD AWAITS YOU IF AND ONLY IF YOU ARE FAITHFUL WITH WHAT GOD HAS ENTRUSTED TO YOU.** There will be many who go through the fire of judgment only to find that nothing lasts. Yes they will be saved but have nothing to show for living on earth. There will be others who choose to be faithful regardless of the cost and regardless of how many may quit. Only God knows the countless saints who had only one or two talents, but they used them and exercised them until the day the Lord called them home. Faithfulness is expressed in being available to God for His will, His agenda and His plan. A faithful saint, though he may be limited in some areas is quick to answer "yes" to the call of God to use him or her. Because from the bottom of their heart there is a desire to follow the Lord.

Though countless saints have fallen and quit, and decided that they can retire, “Don't let the failure of someone else fracture your faith and cause you to quit.”