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## "THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS"

IT IS supposable that some of the Lord's people may not be what is termed talented, in the sense of possessing large talents or many talents, but it is not supposable that any one in the Body of Christ would be without some talent, some opportunity for service. This parable of the Talents implies it. (Matthew 25:14-30.) Every one of these servants was called; every one of them received either one or more talents – and the parable did not apply merely to the beginning of the age, to the Apostles, etc., but evidently was intended to be applicable down to the end of the age, until the Lord should return from the "far country." As those who lived at that time did not remain until the Lord's coming, therefore the parable must include all who would become his disciples down to his second advent. Otherwise we could not be viewed as "co-workers together with God."

We cannot be servants if we have nothing wherewith to serve; we could not bring forth fruitage, either in ourselves or others, without some ability and opportunity. It therefore becomes an important matter to each to recognize the fact that he must have had given him at least one talent, and that he will be held responsible for the use of what he has. **page 252**

## NOT MANY WISE, MIGHTY, NOBLE CALLED

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In the case of some of the Lord's people it would seem wise to call attention to the propriety of making sure what talent they have, and to make sure that they are not trying to use one that they have not. It seems to be a general weakness or failing amongst mankind to try to do something they cannot do, and to scorn that which they are able to do. The Apostle Paul (I Cor.

1:26) said, "Not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble are called" – not that God objects to those having many talents serving his cause, but not many of these accept his call. Those who have many talents find many ways of using them and many people in the world to desire them; and, ambitious for place and preferment, they have an abundance of opportunity to shine before men; but in the Lord's service they would not, perhaps, find so good an opportunity for the display of their talents and, therefore, they would not gain the renown that might be theirs in the earthly pursuits. They would be accounted foolish by the world should they be very energetic in serving the Lord and seeking to glorify his name. "Why do you not become rich? Why do you not live in style and hold up your head among men and get a great name, etc.?" are suggestions which attract those who have many talents; therefore few of that class are disposed to accept the Lord's call; while those who realize that they never could make a name for themselves in the world, appreciate more, perhaps, the great "High Calling."

However, many of these of small talents increase them by use and become quite proficient in the Truth in various lines in proportion as they are faithful in the use of the talents they possess. The Truth seems to have a brightening and clarifying effect upon all minds, great and small.

One of the important lessons, then, for the Lord's people to learn is to notice what talents the Lord has **[R4660 : page 252]** given them, whether time, or education, or special opportunities for service; and to keep them in use, that their brilliancy may increase and not become dimmed by neglect.

We can readily see that there would be, as already expressed, more difficulty with one of five talents, in making a consecration, than in the case of a one-talent man, although the man of one talent might have much cause for discouragement in

feeling that his gift is insignificant and poor in proportion to what many others have. The man of five talents would have the opposite experience and be in danger of being puffed up, "heady and high minded." We might well reason that the Lord in these varying conditions would make his grace sufficient; indeed, he has promised so to do for all those who put their trust in him.

### **"GIVE ME NEITHER POVERTY NOR RICHES"**

The man with the one talent has in some respects a better opportunity for making his "calling and election sure." However, Solomon undoubtedly was wise in requesting of the Lord, "Give me neither poverty nor riches." (Prov. 30:8.) In other words, probably the two-talent man would have a natural advantage, in that he would be neither so likely to be discouraged nor to be puffed up.

These conditions are not of the Lord's making. If the Lord made a man with one talent, and made another with two talents, and another with five talents, he would in some way doubtless have equalized the matter so that the talents of one would offset those of another. But he has not given our talents in such a way. These are merely what we have by nature and what we bring to the Lord in consecration and devote to him, though they are, in another sense, all his gifts. The Lord, therefore, is not responsible for a man's having but one talent, nor for his having five, but at his consecration the Lord makes him steward over his possessions to do the best he can with them.

The force of the argument would be, then, that the man with the five talents would have more difficulty in keeping them fully employed, fully devoted and fully separated from worldly ambitions, etc., than would the man who had fewer. So if any of us were given a choice, it would, perhaps, be wise to choose the medium, because of the increase of responsibilities to those possessing more.

