

Matthew 25:14-30
Multiply Spiritual Results
Nunawading and Waverley, 15-11-20

Dear friends in Christ,

A very elderly aunty of mine visited during the week and presented me with a bar of gold. "Its worth \$500,000", she said. My aunty informed me of her intention to leave Australia and live her last years in Germany but before she was about to die, she would return to Australia so that she could be buried here. She said that she would be interested in how I invested the gold. What do I do with all this money? How should I invest it?

The Lord of the church is like my aunty; he wants us to make spiritual investments and multiply what he has given us. He likens his atonement for our sins, his forgiveness and the victory of the resurrection to a **bag of silver**. **A talent** was an amount of silver coins, about \$150,000 in today's terms. Five talents were about \$750,000! A question immediately arises from this baptismal gift: how is it multiplying in our own lives? And as God's church, washed, dressed in clothes of Christ's perfection and beauty, how are we multiplying the Spirit's impact in the lives of others?

In this parable of **the talents**, which is not about talents at all, but bags of silver, the tough side of Christ is revealed. He is God, our ascended Lord and King of kings. His sovereignty rests over our lives and because he has given himself to us, he speaks of consequences for laziness and inaction. The third servant who **buried his bag of silver in the ground** walked away and did nothing else. Meanwhile, his colleagues continually worked on their investments, traded, bought and sold and tried hard each day to please their boss. The third guy was definitely **wicked and lazy** because he ignored the task he was entrusted with. **Outer darkness and weeping and gnashing of teeth** were his destiny. The harsh word for the people of the church is that they cannot be inactive when Christ has given us a mission to fulfill. When Christ comes at his final judgement, it is likened to a business owner **settling accounts** with his senior managers. I feel a bit nervous about this because I don't think I have done enough.

Let's think of the gospel, then. Jesus Christ is bringing an amazing future for each one of us. The business owner spoke of the bags of silver as just **a few things!** He still had numerous assets and stores of wealth set

aside. How wonderful is that? Christ has granted us life with him by faith. This glory sits in our hearts now like a bag of gold but the actual transformations of our lives, seeing the face of our Lord, being with all the millions of saints and feeling the power of the resurrection in our bodies, all these things are still to come. Glory is ahead of us and that is an inspiring thought.

Let us also consider the praise and increased openness of the owner showed towards his employees or were they **slaves**? We have been slaves to a past and yet our heavenly Master lifts us up and makes us co-owners of all his property, of his angels, of all the kingdoms of animals and plants, of the planets and solar systems and billions of galaxies. All these things become ours on that glorious day of his second coming. We will no longer be slaves, then, but **royal priests** ruling with our heavenly Father, each of us sitting on a throne.

God will speak at the boundary of his realm and will say to us, **Well done good and faithful servant. Come in here and enter into my joy.** These words contain a very high commendation and are followed with more trust shown towards us. For us Christians, life is more than a test of our fitness to enter his kingdom. It not just about completing responsibilities to mature in Christ, love the church and witness to him. It is about a relationship with our heavenly Father. The two servants loved and respected their master and these actions were the things the business owner was more interested in, more than their actual achievements. So, faith comes first.

Come and enter into the joy of your lord will cement the master's feelings towards us so that the circle is complete: it began with the Lord trusting us with his precious wealth, then our responding to that trust by goodness and faithfulness, and finally, the Lord's open-hearted response to us. For **the joy of the lord** will be way beyond a typical reward for good work carried out. He will bring us into his own home and the bosom of his family. We can get hung up about what we should be doing. Let us start with the image of **the joy of our Lord**. Imagine him delighting over us, wanting to show us off and tell his angels, "Look at this beauty!" Isn't that a great incentive to multiply our spiritual results?