



[Matthew 25:24-27](#)

(24) Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: (25) And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. (26) His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: (27) Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

King James Version

The tragedy of the story and the focus of the parable is the man who hid his talent. From him we probably learn the most. First, the talent was not his in the first place; it was on loan. Second, [Christ](#) shows that people bury their gifts primarily out of fear. Third, the whole parable illustrates that regarding spiritual gifts, one never loses what he uses. That is a powerful lesson: If we use the gifts that [God](#) gives us, we cannot lose! The one who was punished never even tried, so God called him wicked and lazy. His passivity regarding spiritual things doomed him.

Comparing this parable to the [Parable of the Ten Virgins](#), we see a few interesting contrasts. The five foolish virgins suffered because they let what they had run out. This servant with one talent apparently never even used what he had. The virgins failed because they thought their job was too easy, while this servant failed because he thought it was too hard. On many fronts they seem to be opposites.

The servant's true character comes out in his defense before the master and in the master's condemnation. In verse 24 he claims, "Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed." That is a lie! Not having this belief, the other two servants immediately go to work, never suggesting that they think their master is harsh and greedy.

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for Matthew 25:24-27 (<http://www.theberean.org>)

The wicked servant justifies his lack of growth by blaming it on God. "It was too hard, Lord." He accuses God of an insensitive and demanding evaluation. That is why Christ calls him wicked. He calls God a liar and accuses the master of exploitation and avarice. If he did work, he says, he would see little or none of the profit, and if he failed, he would get nothing but the master's wrath.

The master then asks, "Why didn't you at least invest my money so that I could receive interest?" The servant, in his justification and fear, overlooks his responsibility to discharge his duty in even the smallest areas. Blaming his master and excusing himself, this servant with one talent fell to the temptations of resentment and fear. Together, the two are a deadly combination.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

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