



## [Matthew 25:14-30](#)

(14) "For *the kingdom of heaven* is like a man traveling to a far country, *who* called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. (15) And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. (16) Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. (17) And likewise he who *had received* two gained two more also. (18) But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. (19) After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. (20) "So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, "Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them." (21) His lord said to him, "Well *done*, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord." (22) He also who had received two talents came and said, "Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them." (23) His lord said to him, "Well *done*, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord." (24) "Then he who had received the one talent came and said, "Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. (25) And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, *there* you have *what is yours*." (26) "But his lord answered and said to him, "You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. (27) So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. (28) So take the talent from him, and give *it* to him who has ten talents. (29) "For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. (30) And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

*New King James Version*

Following the [Parable of the Ten Virgins](#) ([Matthew 25:1-13](#)), Jesus continues without a

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break in His teaching to His disciples. This continuity of thought makes the [Parable of the Talents](#) (verses 14-30) a fitting complement to the preceding parable. Jesus is careful to balance His instruction by teaching another important requirement for His servants to fulfill prior to His return. He does not want His disciples to assume that the previous parable constituted His entire warning.

In the Parable of the Ten Virgins, Jesus reveals the necessity of developing inward character, but in the Parable of the Talents, He combines that need with the encouragement to manifest good works. The virgins teach us the need to watch and be ready; the talents teach us our responsibility to work until His return.

Jesus knew the human tendency to think that, because He was there in person, His disciples did not have to work, leading to laziness and freeloading as a person becomes dependent on the support of another. Thus, He urges His disciples, not only to be ready by watching for His return, but also to work diligently toward it. The first parable portrays the virgins waiting for their Lord, which requires mental and spiritual preparation and watching, while the Parable of the Talents shows the servants of the Lord working for Him, which entails profitable activity.

The wealthy man (referred to as "lord" by his servants) is "the Son of Man," [Jesus Christ \(Matthew 25:13\)](#). His journey into the far country parallels Christ's departure into heaven after His ascension. The servants stand for the twelve disciples and thus all the followers of Christ down through the ages, and the talents they receive represent the spiritual gifts Jesus passes on to His servants. The absence of the lord from his home pictures the absence of Christ's visible presence on the earth, and his return is Jesus' promised return.

The trading that the servants are expected to do during their master's absence suggests the faithful use of spiritual gifts and opportunities for service that Jesus' disciples are expected to practice. On the master's return, he commends the servants, showing what will happen at [Christ's return](#), when each Christian's service will be rewarded. The judgment on the one servant who failed in his trust is a warning against not using or misusing his gifts. [Note: The phrase, "The [kingdom of heaven](#) is" (verse 14), is in italics, meaning that it is not in the original, but was added by translators for clarity.]

— Martin G. Collins

**To learn more, see:**  
[Parable of the Talents \(Part One\)](#)

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