

In the gospel book that Matthew wrote, he tells a story about a day when Jesus was teaching his disciples about the Kingdom of Heaven. As believers in Christ Jesus, we get to partake in the Kingdom of Heaven spiritually now and will one day enjoy the physical Kingdom of Heaven.

While we wait for that day to come, Jesus has entrusted us with gifts, talents, and assignments to complete before he returns to establish the physical Kingdom on this earth. In the Gospel written by Matthew, Jesus tells a parable to emphasize the importance of our responsibility to use our God-given gifts and talents until His return. Jesus tells his followers “The Parable of the Bags of Gold.”

### Entrusted Wealth

**Matthew 25:14 “Again, it (the Kingdom of Heaven) will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them.**

An estate owner is preparing for a journey, but to keep things going while he is gone, he turned his assets over to three of his servants to manage in his absence.

### Be Thankful for What You Have Been Given

**Matthew 25:15 To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey.**

Some versions of the Bible use the term “talent” instead of gold.

- A talent is simply a measure of money, silver, or in this case gold. It was the highest known denomination of currency in the ancient Roman Empire.
- Today, we call a person's abilities or giftings “talents” because of this parable.

Notice, the Master gave each servant a number of talents or bags of gold “according to his ability.” He knew what they were capable of doing.

- God has given us all talents, skills, abilities, and gifts. We are all uniquely and wonderfully made and we are all created for certain good works even before we were born.

**Ephesians 2:10 For we are God’s handiwork (workmanship), created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.**

- Therefore, you and I are able to use our gifts “according to our abilities”.
- For example, I don’t have the gift set that Joe has been given, so I won’t be entrusted with leading Praise and Worship. It’s not according to my abilities.

It’s my responsibility to discover what my abilities are and what gifts that I have received and develop those gifts to be the very best at what I can do, rather than try to be something that I’m not.

Never be jealous of what others have been given. Don’t envy their gifts and talents.

Rather let’s all take a moment and be thankful for what we have received. Thankful for what has been entrusted to us.

### Be Thankful and Take Advantage of the Opportunities Given to You

**Matthew 25:16 The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more.**

**Matthew 25:17 So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more.**

These two servants put their gifts and talents to work to produce fruit and double what they had been given!

- I believe it didn’t matter what or how much they had been given, they were going use whatever they had, whatever they had been given, and put it to work.

**Each of you** (that's everyone in this room today and watching online) **should use whatever gift you have received...** You have received at least one gift, a "whatever gift".

The question is, "What are you going to do with your gift?"

The answer... **You should use whatever gift you have received to serve others,**

Do you realize that other people need your gifts and talents? Not only do they need them, but you need to use them. You need to use your gifts just as much as they need your gifts.

**serve others as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10**

I like how Peter refers the gifts God has given us, as "faithful stewards of God's grace".

In other words, "Grace Gifts".

You have been GRACED with a gift. Grace is not only God's favor but also **"God's enabling power"** given to you or comes upon you. God graces you with special gifts, power, strength, and ability to do all that he has commissioned you to do.

- Think of your gifts, talents, abilities as given to you as an act of God's grace.
- This perspective will keep you humble and thankful for what you have been graced with.

But don't forget that we are to steward, be good stewards of these grace gifts. We are not to use them for our own selfishness but use them to serve others.

### **There's Always One That Thinks They Know a Better Way**

**Matthew 25:18 But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.**

If you don't know what your gifts and talents are, if they are hidden away, or buried by the rush and busyness of life, let us help you dig them up. Take a Spiritual Gifts Survey, join us for Next Step Teams, and we will help you discover your spiritual gifts and talents. We will help you find a place to steward your gifts and talents well. Everyone wins when you do this!

But please don't be like this man. Even though you know what your gifts and talents are, you know what you are good at, your choice is to dig a hole in the ground and bury those talents.

If you bury the grace gifts of God that He entrusted you with, nobody wins.

### **The Day of Accountability Will Come**

**Matthew 25:19 "After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them.**

If we received notice that Jesus was showing us Monday to settle his account with us, to find out what we have done with what he entrusted us with, would you be ready to give a good report?

### **The Servant Who Used His Five Bags of Gold**

**Matthew 25:20 The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.'**

**21 "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'**

### **The Servant Who Used His Two Bags of Gold**

**Matthew 25:22 "The man with two bags of gold also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.'**

**23 "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'**

## The Servant Who Buried His Talent

**Matthew 25:24** “Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. (If the Master in this story represents Christ Jesus, this man has it all wrong? Hid wrong perception led to an unhealthy fear of the Master.) **25 So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’**

**Matthew 25:26** “His master replied, ‘You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed?’

**27 Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.**

### If You Don't Use It, You Can Lose It

**Matthew 25:28** “So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags.

**29 For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. 30 And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’**

**What happens when you faithfully use your gifts and talents to serve others?**

**1. What you use and steward well will multiply.**

**Matthew 25:20** ...you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.’

**2. Jesus, your Master, will be pleased and say, “Well done”, and refer to you as a “good and faithful servant”.**

**Matthew 25:21** “His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant!

**3. As you are faithful with what you have been given, you will be given more.**

**Matthew 25:21** ...You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things.

I heard and taught about all three of these positive results of serving and using our gifts and talents other many times. But this year in 2021, the last two positive results of serving really stood out and came alive to me.

**4. Your Master, Jesus, will be happy when you use the gift He has given you!**

**5. You will be invited to share in Jesus’ happiness!**

**Matthew 25:21** “**Come and share your master’s happiness!**” (NIV)

**Enter into the joy of your lord.’ (NKJ) / Let’s celebrate together!’ (NLT)**

We are invited to share in Jesus’ happiness, which He feels when we serve.

You might say using our gifts and talents are “the gateway” into the joy of the Lord.

- We have the privilege to celebrate together with Jesus! For this I am thankful!
- I am thankful for my gifts and talents that I can use to serve others.
- I am thankful to be able to enter the joy of the Lord.

So, I will continue to thankfully serve with joy! What about you?

**Bold Next Step: I will take a spiritual gifts survey and attend Next Step Teams on Wednesday Night, 11-17-21** (Take the survey online by visiting the “Get Involved” page on our website: [www.believersstatesboro.com](http://www.believersstatesboro.com))

**Bold Next Step: I will begin to “First Serve” on one of the Believers Teams, knowing that when I use my gifts and talents I will share in Jesus’ happiness!**