

Who's Got Talent? (Matthew 25:14-30)

Entrusted sermon series

By Charlie Lehardy, 11.12.17

BIG IDEA: The talents and opportunities God has entrusted us with probably won't make us famous, but they will make an eternal difference in God's Kingdom.

Who's Got Talent?

1. My talent is juggling bags of money. (Exodus 35:30-35; Daniel 1:17)

The responsibilities and work we will be given in Heaven will depend on how well we handle the things God has entrusted to us here and now.

In Matthew's parable, Jesus is not literally talking about bags of money, nor is He specifically talking about talent as we think of it. The parable of the talents is about the resources, responsibilities, and opportunities that God has entrusted to you and me so that we can serve Him until He returns.

2. Stage fright (2 Corinthians 3:2-5; 2 Timothy 1:7)

It's easy to let fear defeat us even before God has a chance to put our talents to use.

Paul reminds us, in 2 Corinthians, "It is not that we think we are qualified to do anything on our own. Our qualification comes from God."

3. Pay it forward. (2 Timothy 2:2)

The parable of the talents tells us that until the Master returns, we are to be busy paying forward the grace and love that Jesus has so richly and generously given to us. We've been given this treasure and we've been given a life context in which to serve God, bodies and voices with which to love others, talents and skills with which to build God's Kingdom. As good servants, God wants us to use these things generously, boldly, without hesitation and without fear.

MY NEXT STEP: *As we've talked about talents today, what people or circumstances or areas of service has God brought to mind? Where do you hear the Lord encouraging you to invest your talents?*

QUESTIONS FOR MY TIME WITH GOD:

1. Reread Matthew 25:14-30. This is a difficult parable. There are aspects of it that can strike us as harsh or unfair. Keep in mind that for Jesus' listeners, God was a harsh and demanding judge. The lesson of the cross -- that God would lay our failures on Jesus and forgive us -- was still to come. Make a list of the "talents" God has entrusted to you. Some may be relationships, some may be opportunities for service and ministry, some may be skills or gifts. Ask God to reveal to you what your investment priorities should be in each of these areas.
2. Think of a time when you stretched yourself to do something out of your comfort zone. When it was done, how did it turn out? How did you feel? If you put yourself in the shoes of the first servant in Matthew 25:14-30, has there ever been a time when you risked a great deal in response to God's leading? How did that turn out? How did it affect your relationship with God?
3. The third servant in Matthew 25:14-30 was afraid of failing. What sort of fears hold you back from using the talents God has given you?
4. In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul urges Timothy to entrust what he has learned to others. Thinking back over your Christian walk, who are the people who brought you along in your faith by teaching you what they had learned? Spend some time thanking the Lord for those people who lit the spark of faith in your life.
5. Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-25 where Paul talks about the way God has constructed his church. He speaks about unity of purpose and action through diversity of function. This means, of course, that we have different gifts and talents, different opportunities to serve, different ways to support God's work and God's church. How has God used your unique talents in the past, and what sort of service do you sense him leading you towards right now?
6. Next week in our series Entrusted, we will discuss God's perspective on the material goods he has provided for us. Get a head start by reading Matthew 6:19-21. How does this passage of Scripture speak to you? Share your thoughts and experiences with Pastor Dave in the comments of the "Hello" card at www.myGrace.church!

PRAYERS FOR MY TIME WITH GOD: Disabled/Disabled Veterans

Pray for those in our community, including veterans, who live with disabilities and often face discrimination, abuse and neglect. May God grant compassion to those who are able to provide assistance, and may we all offer prayers of thanksgiving for the diverse gifts God has granted each of us. Amen.