

Stewardship of our Gifts

I. The Lesson

Matthew 25:14-29 is the parable where Jesus discussed the reality of stewardship and being entrusted with talents. A real moment of revelation and maturation occurs when we realize that our gifts and talents – whether musical, technical, artistic, communication, or resources – are not ours to determine how we are or are not going to use them. All of us have been entrusted with a level of gifting and talent that requires stewardship and responsibility.

An accurate way to view the talents and abilities that you have been given is to **see yourself as a manager and not an owner**. This will bring an accurate perspective and help develop consistency in serving. In managing what God, “The Master,” has given us, there are principles and potential traps that we need to be aware of and/or deal with.

1. God has given us the talents and gifts that we possess because he expects us to _____ them in His kingdom.

Matt. 25:27 “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.”

A common error is to assume that we can use or not use our talents based on our level of interest, passion, and sense of fulfillment. It's that attitude of, “Yeah, I can sing. But I'm just really not into it.” This is the wrong way to view your God-given abilities. For someone with an incredible voice, teaching gift, ability to create graphic art, or someone highly gifted in sound engineering to not invest those gifts for the cause of Christ is to **position themselves as the owner instead of the manager**.

2. The lack of investment (consistent usage for the Master's work) will not only cause our talents and gifts to lie dormant, but will actually result in the diminishing or _____ of the gifts. What happens when an athlete quits working out for a year or two? What about someone learning a foreign language that makes progress and then quits for a couple years? You don't just go back to the place you were when you stopped! Can you think of someone you know who has experienced this principle?

Matt. 25:28 “Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents.”

3. There will always be someone who has “more talents” and a higher level of gifting than you do! A consistent and predictable trap for musicians, singers, and those in performing arts is to compare our talents and gifts with those around us. This results in either the sin of _____ or the debilitating effects of _____.
(more on this in the lesson “The Snare of Comparison”)

Matt. 25:15 “To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey.”

4. Good stewards have _____ what their talents are and have committed to the process of _____ those talents. This process of development is very practical, even predictable, and in the arena of worship ministry includes:

- i. Weekly rehearsals
- ii. Private lessons and practice time
- iii. Attending conferences and seminars
- iv. Submitting to those who lead the worship ministry
- v. Punctuality and consistency
- vi. A high level of local church commitment/involvement
- vii. Being faithful in the “small things”
- viii. Serving wherever needed
- ix. Listening and viewing new music
- x. Staying current with gear and technical advancements
- xi. Finding mentors and instructors to learn from

1 Cor. 4:2 “Moreover (firstly, above all other requirements) it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.”

5. **Stewardship _____ and affects all of life!** One area of mismanagement of our time, talent, and treasure has huge impact on other areas, even if they are seemingly disconnected. The way we manage our bodies through discipline or neglect has a direct impact on our gifts and talents. For example: If I stay up Saturday night playing video games until 3:00 a.m. when I have to sing tenor at the 8:30a.m. Service, then... get the picture?

6. Desire, personal fulfillment, and/or fun are not the highest and most accurate motivations in developing our gifts and talents for God. Ultimately, we will stand before Him and give _____. This is a sobering reality as well as an awesome privilege and responsibility.

Luke 12:48 “To whom much is given, from him much will be required.”

II. Discussion

- 1) How can we be good stewards of our time, talent, and resources without getting burnt-out or out of balance with life and ministry?
- 2) What could responsible stewardship look like for worship team members of a local church, our church?
- 3) What are some practical and effective ways to discover your gifts and talents?
- 4) What is the greatest test for a “one-talent” person?
- 5) How could we see a greater return on what God has invested in our team? Is poor stewardship in any area limiting our potential?
- 6) How can poor stewardship in the areas of our time, diet, exercise or entertainment directly affect the return on other gifts and talents? (What would be some common abuses?)
- 7) What will you personally have to stand before God and answer for in regards to the talents and gifts that you have been given? How would you do if today was that day? (*perhaps a couple brave people could give a response*)

III. Prayer Points

- 1) Pray that everyone on the team, and those who will be added, will live with a revelation that we are managers and not owners of our gifts and talents.
- 2) Pray for a spirit of wisdom and revelation regarding how to invest what we have been given in order to see the greatest return for our church and for eternity.
- 3) Pray for protection from comparison and repent of any jealousy, discouragement, or pride that might be present as a result of differing levels of talent.
- 4) Pray for a greater revelation that the “Owner” is coming back for a return on His investment!