

BEING PREPARED

Luke 19:11-26

People often confuse two of Jesus' parables, the **Parable of the Talents** and the **Parable of the Pounds**. A close reading will reveal many differences between them. The first parable was delivered on the Mount of Olives three days after Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem (Matthew 24:3). It was apparently spoken only to his apostles who came to him with questions about His prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem. The second parable was delivered in the home of Zacchaeus before a large crowd of people after His enemies said He had gone to the home of a sinner (Luke 19:5-7).

In the Parable of the Talents, each of the three men were given different amounts of talents based upon their abilities (Matthew 25:15). In the Parable of the Pounds, there were ten servants and each was given the same amount of one pound and were told to invest it and make it grow. The one real similarity between the two is that one of the servants in each story buried his money instead of putting it to work, and even though they each saved what they had been given, they were condemned because they wasted their money instead of putting it to work for their master.

There is common lesson in both parables and that is preparedness. Jesus is coming again and so we need to be prepared, and since we do not know when He is coming, we must not idle away our time while we are waiting. We should put our abilities to work and bring more people into the kingdom. The mission of the church – each Christian – is to do our part to fulfill the great commission by using whatever ability we have to accomplish that mission. At the judgement, each of us will be rewarded according to how we have exercised our abilities and opportunities (Matthew 16:27; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 20:11-15). The judgement will not be based up the amount we have done, but whether or not we have used what we have been given. It will be a great day for those who have faithfully discharged their abilities and responsibilities, but it will be a sad day for those who have squandered what they were given.

Sellers Crain