

QUESTIONS CHRISTIANS ASK
WHAT IS MY RESPONSE TO GOD'S BLESSINGS?
MATTHEW 25:14-30



The Heart of the Matter

Jesus's favorite method of communication was storytelling. And He was a master at it! His stories aren't fairytales or pointless pieces of ear-tickling fiction. They are stories that carry strong and penetrating messages. To this day, some of the deepest theological truths ever taught are wrapped within the plot of a parable once told by Christ. The parable we are considering today appears on the surface to be about a man and his slaves, but in actuality it symbolizes the Savior and His followers. Read it closely. Think it through. See if you don't agree that it has a great deal to say about how we are to respond to the blessings of God.



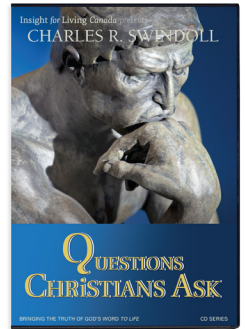
Discovering the Way

1. Reminders Regarding God's Blessings

In the Christian life, we have the option of stewarding the blessings God has given us or using them with only our own aims in sight. We have the freedom to choose either response, and each response has a set of corresponding consequences. But only one option truly reflects God's heart. Let's first review a few general truths about God's abundant blessings and how He wants us to use them.



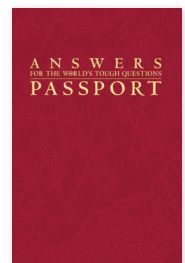
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2. A Story: Right and Wrong Responses (Matthew 25:14–30)

God blesses us in order to draw attention to His grace and mercy. He blesses the just and the unjust. Matthew 25 records a story told by Jesus that shows how different people respond to God's blessings and how their responses impact their lives. As we turn to this story, we need to step back in time, slip on some sandals, and listen to Jesus speak. Jesus shared this parable not long before He was arrested, taken to court on trumped-up charges of blasphemy and treason, and finally crucified. As He faced imminent death, Jesus wanted to prepare His disciples for His absence and return.



DIGGING DEEPER
Christians: A Talented Group

While many people believe that Jesus's parable of the talents in Matthew 25 refers to the abilities or "talents" God gives us, it teaches us about stewardship—how we manage the resources God has entrusted to us.

In this parable, Jesus tells about three servants, to whom their master apportioned his money before leaving on a long trip. The master gave each servant a different number of talents—or "bags of silver" (Matthew 25:15 NLT).

The talent was the largest unit in Hebrew currency. The Hebrews used the talent to measure gold, silver, bronze, and other metals.¹ While most Christians don't live their lives with multiple bags of silver lying around, we must take responsibility to steward and *multiply* the riches we have received, whether we have one bag of silver or five.

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So how can Christians who may not go to work as investment bankers *multiply* the Lord's talents? We must work hard for the money we earn and develop an attitude of generosity (Ephesians 4:28). We must make responsible purchases within our means and extravagantly invest in eternal things (Matthew 6:19–21). Remember—God doesn't bless us so we can build bigger barns, climb ladders of social status, and live at ease (Luke 12:15–21). As we prayerfully give to our churches, to brothers and sisters in need, and to ministries and charities, God multiplies His resources and changes people's lives for eternity.

Though many Christians may not *feel* rich—with little silver to spare after paying bills—many of us have more discretionary cash than we think. God expects us to know how we are spending His resources, so that we can maximize them to further His kingdom.



Starting Your Journey

Just like the men in Jesus's parable, we're all the Lord's servants. God has assigned all Christians various responsibilities that correspond to the talents He has given us. Some of us are two-talent people, some are four-talent people, and most of us are one-talent servants. God always gives us exactly what we can handle and enough to fulfill the role He wants us to fill. But it's our choice whether we share His blessings and talents with others or hoard them for ourselves.

Do you have a particular possession, ability, or relationship that you want to keep hidden from God because you're afraid of what He will ask you to do with it? Will you choose to release control of that blessing so God can use it to bless others?

ENDNOTE

1. Merrill F. Unger, "Metrology, Measures of Weight," in *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, ed. R. K. Harrison (Chicago: Moody Press, 1988), 844.