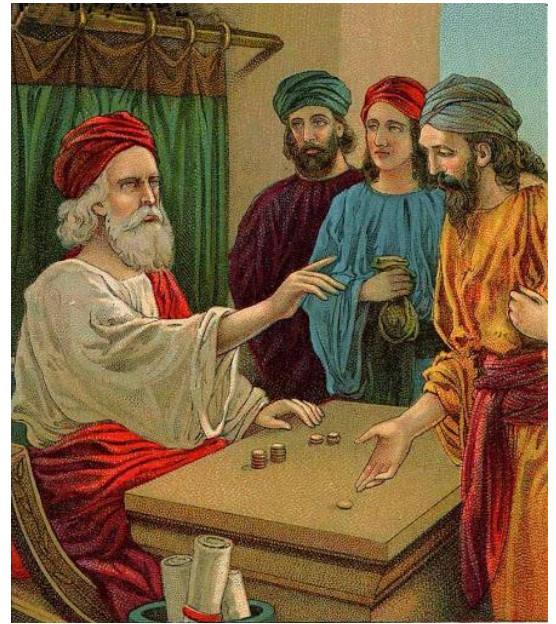




## Lesson 23

# Parable: The Bags of Money

*Matthew 25:14-30*



## Parables of Jesus

*Earthly stories with heavenly meanings*

The things in nature that are found in Jesus' parables do not in themselves lead us to God. The stories in themselves do not lead us to God. In fact, Jesus said of some of His parables so that in the case of unbelievers the result was a hearing without understanding (Matthew 13:11-17).

God Himself must give us the key of understanding and He does give the key to His disciples through His Word. The more we learn to know Jesus Christ and His Word, the better we shall be able to understand Jesus' parables and present them properly.

There are three parts to most parables:

1. The background information or situation.
2. The narrative that tells of earthly things that really happen.
3. The spiritual lesson.

Some parables Jesus Himself explained to His disciples in clear language—for example, the Sower and the Seed (Matthew 13:1-23) and the Tares Among the Wheat (Matthew 13:24-43). In other cases, we are left to discover the meaning through studying the context and the rest of Scripture.

The following observations concerning parables can be made:

- A) Parables have many details but one intended meaning and lesson. Find the one Spirit-intended lesson.
- B) Be aware of local color to help in the understanding of the "every day" part of a parable.

- C) No parable should be explained in any way contrary to the clear teaching of the Word of God elsewhere in Scripture.
- D) No parable should be used as a starting point for doctrine, but rather to confirm and illustrate doctrines taught in plain language elsewhere.
- E) Before we attempt to explain the individual parts of the parable, we should try to grasp the central truth of the parable.
- F) Almost invariably, Jesus' explanations of His parables, His introductions to the parables, His summary statements, or the general context in which a parable is spoken, supplies the key to proper understanding.
- G) If we are perplexed about the meaning of a parable, we should grasp/teach it as best we can, acknowledging our ignorance. "Sometimes, one may carry an obscure passage around for years when suddenly it begins to shine."

**Preceding context:**

- Destruction of Jerusalem
- Judgment Day
- Like a thief in the night
- Parable of the Ten Virgins – readiness!

## **Matthew 25:14-30**

“For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. To one he gave **five talents**, to another **two**, to another **one, to each according to his ability**. Then he went away.

He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more.

So also he who had the two talents made two talents more.

But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money.

Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'

And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'

He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.' But his master answered him, '**You wicked and slothful servant!** You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest.

So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.

And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

## **Romans 12:3-8**

*For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. <sup>4</sup>For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, <sup>5</sup>so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. <sup>6</sup>Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; <sup>7</sup>if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; <sup>8</sup>the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.*  
(cf. 1 Corinthians 12)

## **1 Corinthians 3:5-7**

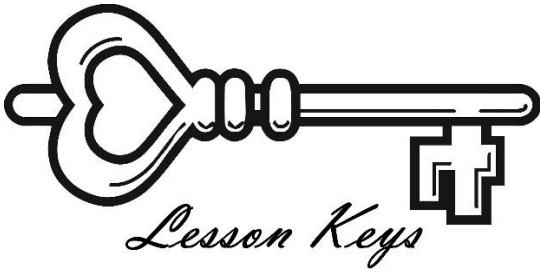
What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. <sup>6</sup>I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. <sup>7</sup>So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.

## **1 Corinthians 4:1-2**

This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.

## **Application**

- "I can't do anything!"
- "I wish I could do what she does!"
- Career choosing
- Ways to serve in the work of God's kingdom
- Encouragement in a frustrating job; hard work
- More!



1. Note the context of Jesus' earlier discussion concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, Judgment Day, and being ready for His return (parable of the ten virgins).
2. This parable teaches faithful stewardship while we await Jesus' return.
3. There is no room for comparison with others in faithful stewardship—each of the servants was entrusted with money according to his ability and the amount of return is not the reason for the reward, but rather the faithfulness in its use.
4. Many applications for daily life and lifetimes