

Don't waste your talent      Matthew 25:14-30

Students – congratulations on starting another school year....parents, way to go....you survived another year...

The school year starting over is just something that has become ingrained into me as a time to start over.....13 years of school, 4 years of college (ok...like 6).....2 years of grad school.....more like 8....20 something years of student ministry...I used to love the idea of a fresh start in school

We wrapped up 3 John 17, next week we are going to start a series 12....looking at our relationship with God through the lives of the disciples....

But this week I just wanted to take the opportunity to step out of a series and encourage those of you starting school, or teaching, or ....who just need a challenge this morning with Matthew 25 and I've titled this morning's sermon don't waste your life....

We are going to drill down today and look at this parable of the talents.....and how we can use our life our gifts and abilities for the Lord.....lets read together **Matthew 25:14-27**

Lets start with **v. 14**.....FOR IT.... Lets establish our context of what's going on here in this passage...

The it....almost all of chapter 24 and 25 of Matthew Jesus spends answering a very important question asked by the disciples....they were just as curious as some of us and had access to Jesus.....they wanted to know about the end of the world....

And so Jesus begins to explain some stuff to them about the end of the world....and signs, and how bad things will be, and this thing called the abomination of desolation (destruction of the temple), wars and rumors of wars....and the disciples are getting freaked out....but Jesus calms their worries and says listen...

I don't even know when I'm coming back, so let me tell you some stories....and he tells them 3 stories...

1<sup>st</sup>....the parable of the ten virgins.....no, it's not what you think it means....he basically said....don't miss the return of the Lord by not being ready

2<sup>nd</sup>....parable of the talents....where we are going to look today....and it's a message of making sure you don't waste your life....

3<sup>rd</sup>....parable of sheep and goats.....where he basically says there are going to be a lot of surprised people at the final judgment....and it's a huge warning for us that we better be making sure of your salvation....there are a lot of people who think going to church makes you a Christian....and going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than going to McDonalds makes you a big mac....

.....WILL BE like a man going on a journey who called his servants and entrusted to them HIS property...

Whose property?

So....here is the foundation of the parable.....everything you have is a gift from God....the car you drive, the house you live in, the clothes on your back....you don't own any of it....it's all on loan from God....you know how it's true?

Last time I checked the death rate in America hovers right around 100%.....which basically means....one day soon they are going to dig a hole for you, throw dirt on your coffin, and everyone is going to go back to the church, eat potato salad and fried chicken, and talk about how good of a person you were....

Then....shortly after that....your kids are going to take all of your stuff.....and probably sell it in a garage sale, and some other guy is going to be fishing with your fishing pole probably catching bigger fish.....you literally own nothing...

So....establishing this parable....the man going on a journey here is God.....he loans us some talents or money....a talent was equal to about 20 years worth of salary.....and its really not just money, but it also includes abilities

So, everything you have an ability to do.....that is what this parable is addressing.....how we use everything we have an ability to do....

Some of you may think.....I don't have any real talent.....or.....can God really use my talent.....what if its weird....

A few years ago my family started watching agt in the summer.....anyone...? and you see some really crazy talents.....and last year there was this one particular group of guys who came on the show and had a rather unique talent.....

Instead of describing it..... got bro. pat to get a video of it for us.....go ahead....if you need some help figuring out a talent....maybe this will help

So.....all of us have a talent.....some more than others.....as this next verse points out.....

**v.15** to one he gave 5, another 2, and another one.....real quick....a lot of stuff here, but first of all....

Sometimes it gets easy for us to complain about what we don't have.....what we need to remember is God gives as he sees fit

It would have been real easy for these guys to complain, and even compare themselves to one another...

Listen, can I just encourage you....don't ever compare yourself to others....you are uniquely you, each of you are special, you are beyond comparison....

1 of 2 things will happen if you compare.....you will either think.....I'm pretty darn good and get puffed up with pride = sin or.....you will begin to think....poor me and condemn yourself....but the bible says....for those who are his there is no condemnation....

Instead of comparing ourselves, and questioning fairness.....we need to take action, and guard yourself...

How can we do that.....I have One big point of action.....and one big warning

**v.16 and v.17**

the big point of action we need to take here is to **Use what God has given us for HIS glory**

every single one of you have something useful to offer to the Lord.....I know this not necessarily because I have observed anything in particular....

I know this, because every gift, ability, and talent you have was God appointed to you  
Patience with children...talent, teaching...talent, caring for others....talent, good listener...talent....we all hav

Examine your life for your talents, and then use them for the glory of God....if your not sure what they are, ask someone what they think your talents are.....

Finally....lets end up with this one big warning.... **USE IT OR LOSE IT.** True for churches, individuals...

**v.24**.....read it.....let me just say right here.....I believe this verse covers about 90% of Christians in America...

We have been blessed with an abundance of resources, talents, gifts, abilities.....and where the bible challenges us to use them for the glory of God....many Christians have put together a different plan...

Most people have a plan for their life and it goes something like this....graduate hs, go to college, meet a smokin hot spouse, get a high paying job, work for a few years, retire on the beach, and someday when im 90 years old just go to sleep and die a painless death...

Can I just tell you...that sounds great and wonderful....but aside from being a little to unrealistic....that is exactly what the guy with 1 talent is guilty of doing.....he did his own thing

He was fearful, and afraid and he woke up day after day asking....is this it....is this all there is to life....

Meanwhile, the guys with 5 talents and 2 talents figure out how good it is to work for the Lord

Can I just let you know that its not too late....if you are trying to figure out life....