

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

STEWARDSHIP QUARTERLY REVIEW

A message from Pastor...

Things are not always what they seem—including Jesus' parables, or stories. What is the point of the story of the talents in Mathew 25? The easy answer is that Jesus wants us to use what is precious for his work. That's probably why the word *talent* has moved from describing precious money in New Testament Greek to describing precious abilities or skills in American English. But there is also a deeper meaning to this parable.

A talent was the largest measure of money in Jesus' day and equaled the total wages of an ordinary person from between 15 to 38 years. Yet two of the servants went out and risked that money by making investments. What if they had lost the money? What would their boss have said then?

But it is the last servant, the one who does nothing with his boss's money, who gets punished. Often you and I are most like that person. *We may not take risks for God with our abilities, because we are afraid, first of all, that we may fail.* The condemned servant says in v 25, "I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you." By burying the money, the servant thought it was at least safe. But he was disobeying his boss. The servant had been given the talent to use it.

The servant was afraid, second, that he would have to work. In v 26 the boss says, "You wicked, lazy servant!" Does either adjective sound familiar? You or I won't try to use a skill or ability that God gave us because we may fall flat on our face, and we don't like to be embarrassed if we fail. Or we may simply be lazy and want always to receive rather than give. For those and other reasons we may not take risks with our talents, our abilities. As a result, they don't get used very often. That's our problem. God has given them to us to be put to use for him. When we don't use our talents, our abilities, for the Lord, that's sin.

Jesus calls us to be faithful and follow him. When Jesus returns as our Master, whether that is on the Day of Glory or the last hour of our own lives on this earth, we shall be gladdened to hear him say to us, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness" (vv 21, 23). Like the faithful servant and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we are able to do what we know Jesus wants us to do with our abilities, even though it means taking a risk.

Helping people live life with Jesus every day,
Rev. Dr. Brent L Parrish



Please find enclosed your second quarter giving statement for 2023. Thank you for your generous support! You are receiving this quarterly giving statement because you are listed as a congregation member of Immanuel Lutheran Church. If you need to change your church membership, please contact the church office. If you have any questions regarding your giving statement, please contact Gayelee LaGrange at (952) 447-4837 or contact the church office at (952) 492-6010.

The Thrivent Financial information on the back is being provided to inform you of the financial services they offer. Please contact your local Thrivent office if you would like more information regarding their different financial service options.

A message from the Finance Ministry Team...

We would like to thank everyone for your continued generous giving during the second quarter of 2023. Here is the General Operating Account financial information:

Deposits of \$92,210.90 were made during the second quarter.

Expenses of \$92,568.59 were paid during the second quarter.

God is good!





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