

## Ten Talent Men

*Immediately the one who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and gained five more talents.... Now after a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them (Matthew 25:16, 19 NAS).*

The familiar parable of the talents is a tale of three men. The last man buried the one talent he was given. What the Lord gave him was never used at all - a sad story of a wasted life. God was not glorified. The man's inaction led to condemnation from Him.

The first two men were both commended when they increased their talents. The master's reply was exactly the same to both men. No matter how many gifts the Father gives His children, if they use them well, He will be pleased. The emphasis is not on the number of gifts, but on the heart of the receiver. A grateful and willing servant will be productive and give something back to God - glorifying Him with his actions and receiving a blessing as he does.

Fortunately, many Christians are very careful not only to use the gifts God has given them, but increase them as well. This devotional is about two of those men. They were given at least five talents each. In gaining five more, they became ten talent men.

My husband's father has already entered the presence of the Lord. I believe that when he did, he was greeted with, *"Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master"* (Matthew 25:21).

Pop could and would fix anything, not only in his own house, but also for anyone else who needed something done. He worked hard all his life to provide for his family. After retirement, he worked as a volunteer helping build and maintain churches, campgrounds and renovating widow's homes.

Without complaint, he cared for Mom as she suffered with Alzheimer's. Even after she began ill, he continued his volunteer work - always taking her with him, checking on her in the process. His pastor recounted that when there was work to be done at the church, the foreman would assign something to Pop, turn around in a few minutes to see him behind him, and would ask him if he needed help with the assignment. His answer was always, "No, I'm finished. What else do you have for me to do?"

The other ten talent man is a longtime friend. Having faithfully served as a foreign missionary, he continued to work in the church after he retired. With a goal of learning something new every year, he acquired new skills. He built an elevated garden with an inbuilt sprinkler system; learned how to fly remote control airplanes; flew and built complicated kites; taught himself how to sail and much more - all the while making himself available to anyone in need.

Neither of these men would have ever considered burying their talents. Faithful in the few things, their reward is in bringing joy to the giver of our greatest gift - our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

November 2012  
© Stephanie B. Blake