

A Different Path to Success

The Blessed and the Cursed

Matthew 25

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory...[a]ll the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.”

Matthew 25:31–32

1. Read Matthew 25:1–13. What do you think the foolish virgins have assumed about the bridegroom’s arrival? What makes the difference between the wise and foolish virgins?
2. What happens to the virgins who are ready for the bridegroom’s arrival? To the virgins who are not ready?
3. Who is the bridegroom? (9:14–15; Revelation 19:6b–9)
4. What is the point of this parable? (verse 13; 24:44). Think of one way you can apply this parable to the way you live.
5. Read Matthew 25:14–30. What do the first two servants do with the talents (units of money) entrusted to them? What does the third servant do?
6. How does the master respond to the first two servants when he returns? What do they receive?
7. How does the third servant’s view his master? How does that affect what he does with the talent he was given? How might the actions of the first two servants tell us how they view the master?

8. Read Matthew 25:14–30. “Talents” in this parable stand for anything we’ve been given, possibly including our talents and abilities, but certainly including the blessings and opportunities we have as heirs of the kingdom of heaven.
 - a. Name some of the blessings and gifts you have been given.
 - b. How can you invest these blessings or gifts to honor the Master?
9. Our culture tells us to develop our talents and abilities as a means of self-fulfillment. What motivates servants in the kingdom to be faithful? (Philippians 2:1–2; Colossians 3:23–24)
10. Read Matthew 25:31–46. What is the scene in this passage? (verses 31–33; Revelation 20:11–15)
11. For what does the King commend the sheep? For what does the King condemn the goats? What happens to them?
12. After reading these three parables, try to write one sentence that explains the message Jesus wanted to share with his disciples. How are you challenged by these parables? How do you think Jesus want us to respond to these parables?