The Unprofitableness of the One Talent Man

Matthew 25:30

Introduction:

A. Jesus’ earthly ministry prepared followers for the imminent kingdom. (Cf. Matt. 4:17; Mark 9:1)
   1. “The kingdom of heaven is like” in eleven parables in Matthew.
   2. The parable of the talents one of 3 judgment parables in Matthew 25. (Tell story)
B. Jesus anticipated four things about the kingdom in the parable of the talents.
   2. His work given to his servants (v. 14b)
   3. His fairness in dealing with his servants (v. 15) — All commands assume capability.
      a. Infants, little children, mentally incompetent not responsible for first principles.
      b. “Confess with mouth” only applies if one has power of speech (cf. Chappalear’s foolishness).
   4. His return to settle accounts (v. 19).
C. Jesus called the one-talent servant “unprofitable” (v. 30).
   1. He was unprofitable to: God, fellow-servants, and self.
   2. His unprofitableness is seen in four other suitable descriptions:

Discussion:

I. He Said He Was Afraid (Verse 25).
   A. Not all fear is bad. (Prov. 1:7; 9:10; Matt. 10:28; Heb. 5:7).
   B. Fear is no excuse for shirking duty. (1 Cor. 2:3; Phil. 2:12)
      1. Fear should beget caution, but not cowardice. (Cf. Rev. 21:8).
      2. Afraid to preach, but more afraid not to.
   C. Professed fear often covers for laziness. (Vv. 24-26; cf. Prov. 26:13).

II. He Is Said to Have Been Lazy (Verse 26).
   A. The Lord’s judgment, not man’s.
      1. Men sometimes judge others lazy because they fit their idea of work.
      2. God knows both the hearts and the activities of a man.
   B. The Lord condemns laziness — Physical and spiritual.
      1. Physical laziness (2 Thess. 3:10-12).
      2. Spiritual laziness (Rom. 12:11; Heb. 6:12).
      3. Possible to be physically diligent and spiritually lazy.
   C. The Lazy servant did something — “went and hid”.
      1. Likely thought he had done enough: “Look, you have what is yours.”
      2. Just enough to keep from losing what he had — no more.
   D. The Lazy person often knows just how everything should be done (cf. Prov. 26:16).

III. He Is Said to Be Wicked (Verse 26).
   A. From poneros (pon-ay-ros’) = “evil (properly, in effect or influence, and thus differing from kakos), which refers rather to essential character.” — Strong.
   B. The Lazy servant more guilty of wicked neglect than wicked deeds.
      1. Not charged with many sins of that “wicked and adulterous” generation.
      2. Not same as prodigal son — wasteful and squandering.

IV. He Is Portrayed as Being Lost (Verse 30).
   A. The darkness of hell.
   B. The sounds of hell. (cf. Matt 13:50)
   C. The fire of hell. (V. 41)

Conclusion:

A. Is it possible that we have become lazy in our areas of responsibilities?
   1. To carry the gospel to the lost?
   2. To care for those who need care?
   3. To edify ourselves and the church?
B. Is it possible that we need to repent of being wicked and lazy to avoid being lost?