

PARABLE OF THE TALENTS.

TEXT: MATTHEW 25: 14-30.

THEME: Do not waste what has been given to you by our Father in heaven.

Grace, peace, and mercy, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

For the sermon today, I just want to concentrate primarily on one verse and centralize the sermon on this verse, *29. For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him.*

I guess that when we look around us in the current worldwide economic climate and crisis that we are in at present; one would have to say that we can be

living in pretty frightful circumstances indeed, if you are worried are the future financially!

Many people are worried about what is going to happen to their hard-earned cash? I for one am one of them. What's nagging me, is, will it disappear into nothingness; and how my come money is vanishing this and other institutions.

I don't understand any of what is happening at the moment, and I find it hard [mind-blowing] to believe, along with many other millions of people, that through the worldwide markets; the money you worked so hard for during your working life, can disappear in an instance.

And the reality is, many people's hard-earned cash have been swallowed up, perhaps, never to be seen again. You may have read about it, or heard it on the news, that the banks and building society's are taking preventative measures trying to stop people

from taking out their superannuation from these places before it's all gone [people are definitely worried]. These are some of the stop gap measures that these institutions are doing to people at the moment: in trying to instil confidence into people that things will get better and that their money will still be there after this crisis is long gone.

Even whole countries have gone deeper into debt even while they are deep in debt as it is. And there doesn't seem to be any solutions or relief in sight as yet. Many nations have tried to help fix their national economies through their governments.

They are lending a hand and giving huge financial gifts, such as the USA, to help make their national economies better. But no sooner is there some relief given that the markets crash and dive once again. I don't understand any of this but you learn as you go.

But what I do know, is that it had long been said that, 'the rich will get richer, and the poor will get poorer', and that may be the reality that is staring us in the face at the moment.

In fact, we have the super rich and the super poor amongst us these days. The super rich people are still super rich by anyone's standard [but they scream poor] even though their fortunes in some cases have even been halved or less [someone like James Packer for instance]. What's the loss of a coupla' billion!

The ordinary layman like you and me, who has saved up all his life with his superannuation, is hoping that these savings will remain in tact, so that when the time to collect and spend this money becomes available, that it may be worth all the effort that one has was put into it.

The world tells us that we need to enjoy the fruits of our labours because we have worked hard for it, and not to spare any expense in rewarding yourself for what we have achieved. After all, we deserve it, and no one can deny anyone their just desserts.

Who would argue with those sentiments: I mean no one would begrudge anyone doing the right thing with their lives. That is just a basic human ethic and belief. No one should ever condemn anyone for doing the right thing, we all live believe that.

Now in relation to our gospel lesson for today, re; the Parable of the Talents, the challenge is to try and help us make sense of what is happening in our world today in relation to what Jesus is saying and how the Bible comes alive in helping us to live our lives according to God's commands and plan.

So in relation to the opening hook I just gave you; the state of affairs is that we've put our money to

work in these financial institutions waiting for it to mature so that one day we may eventually enjoy it later on in our lives. In this parable, the master entrusted money to his three servants of one, two and five talents and expected them to earn more with it while he was away, even though he never said that was what he would like.

And as we know with the parable, which we've heard so many times before, it was those who were entrusted with the two and five talents that gained the desired result of which the master approved of. The servant with the one talent did not gain or put it into work or use of any kind, to make interest on it, at all.

Now what do you think? Think about this: in this current worldwide situation that we're currently in, you'd just about be doing what the servant with the one talent had done. Perhaps, go into some back paddock somewhere and dig a big hole and put your

hard earned in there, that would be the safest place of all, especially now, wouldn't it?

That way you know for sure that your money won't be taken from you. Just remember where you put it, X marks the spot. * I've heard some stories, that some people have done that before, money disintegrated, money became worthless, etc. in fact I don't recommend doing any of these things anyway.

We've seen from the media how James Packer's fortunes have plummeted drastically, which is telling us that financial institutions may not be the safest places to have our money in at present. Hopefully it will get better, when, is the \$64,000 question?

So, in comparison to our gospel lesson, those servants who were entrusted with multiple talents put their talents to work [v 16] so that they doubled

what they originally had. And the lesson is there for us to learn from. The Bible said, 'they put their money to work,' and that doesn't specifically mean putting it in a bank to mature. Perhaps they gave out loans and received interest from that?

But money is a commodity that is very important to all of us in our lives; without it we would all struggle to live and cease to exist. Yet we do exist in other ways apart from being financially viable.

We can exist spiritually, but how many people are yearning for this commodity? God's word is very important, it is very accessible: yet we don't see many people clambering over each other on a Sunday morning to fill the pews?

I guess that when you think about it you don't have to be rich to be happy. Many people think that way, as long as they are happy just to live comfortably, by having their basic needs met, then that's okay!

If they have a roof over their heads, they aren't starving, they drive a reasonable vehicle and they can get from place to place, have family or interact with other people socially, then what more would you want?

This seems much like the servant with the one talent. People don't need to go out of their way too much, because like the servant, they can find all sorts of reasons for keeping things at a constant level, so that if nothing changes, then be content with how things are.

I guess the trouble with people being content with the way they live is that we can defend the situation that they're in. isn't that what the lazy servant did? Didn't he start accusing or telling the master that he knew he was a hard man and that he would start harvesting where he has not sown and gathering where he had not scattered seed [v 24].

To me that sounds like it's a bit too much hard work; people may have to do something for the master. Is that why people stop coming to church, in case they may be asked to do something and don't want the responsibility in doing so? Or people have been given the responsibility to do something and they messed it up and that have ruined their relationship with the church.

The end result is that many people's spiritual lives can become poor, in contrast to be rich in his love, spirit and goodness. Many people mightn't see it that way but to God's called and elect which is anyone who wants to be his called servants, being his child makes people free to do his will and help in building his kingdom without argument or stubbornness. Are you content with how things are in your lives?

And people do become envious of Christians for the wrong reasons. Some people become Christians believing that God will automatically bless them with material things. They forget that God blesses those whom he wants to bless. At other times Christians feel that God is punishing them, because they don't get what they expect from him. You can read those sentiments in the Psalms.

But in today's gospel lesson, a simple statement of truth has been let known. V 29. For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. The obvious for all Christians is that, being God's child is the most important issue for all. He wants to give you everything he has in his kingdom.

The best gift that he is still offering to the whole wide world is his beloved Son Jesus. And when

people take Jesus as their Saviour they inherit God's kingdom.

And those who don't accept Christ as their Saviour do indeed become spiritually poor and spiritually destitute. They desire the world and what that offers, but even if they gained the world they will still crave for more and will not be satisfied. People just want, want, want, just for the sake of wanting. They don't want to gain what is spiritually filling in their lives. The Devil wanted it all, even though he had it all, but his envies gained him nothing but rejection from God's kingdom.

So what do we learn from today's lesson? Simply this, that as we live in the world and that if by some bad luck and chance we suffer financial loss hugely, remember this, it is only money. The big bonus for our lives is that we already have gained Jesus in our lives through our beliefs and through our baptism.

In reality, the world could come to a crashing fiery end tomorrow, but through it all God will keep us safe and carry us through these tribulations. We will then be safe in his eternal home where no moths or rust can corrupt or destroy. We have gained heaven, and eternal life to reign with him and all the saints for all eternity. Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.