



Nov. 15, 2020 Mt. 25: 14-30 & Judges 4:1-7

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#### ENTERING THE SCENE:

“In first-century Mediterranean culture people believed that all goods already exist and are already distributed. There is no more where this came from, and the only way to get more is to defraud another. Anyone who suddenly acquired something “more” was automatically judged to be a thief. Wealthy people were especially under suspicion. How could they honorably increase their wealth? They commissioned slaves to handle their affairs. Everyone knew slaves were shameless, and dishonorable behavior was all one could expect from them. ... The third slave did what the rabbis would later commend as the safest and therefore most honorable course of action for a freeman.

Pilch, John J. *The Cultural World of Jesus-Cycle A*. The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, MN. 1995. Page 164.

Mt. 25:14-30

14 Again, it will be like a man going on a **journey**, who called his servants and **entrusted** his property to them. 15 To one he gave five **talents** of money, to another two **talents**, and to another one **talent**, each according to his **ability**. Then he went on his **journey**. 16 The man who had received the five **talents** went at once and put his money to **work** and gained five more. 17 So also, the one with the two **talents** gained two more. 18 But the man who had received the one talent went off, **dug a hole** in the ground and **hid** his master's money. 19 After a **long time** the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. 20 The man who had received the five **talents** brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you **entrusted** me with five **talents**. See, I have gained five more.' 21 His master replied, '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**!' 22 The man with the two **talents** also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you **entrusted** me with two **talents**; see, I have gained two more.' 23 His master replied, '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**!' 24 Then the man who had received the one **talent** came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a **hard** man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. 25 So I was **afraid** and went out and **hid** your **talent** in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.' 26 His master replied, 'You **wicked**, **lazy** servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? 27 Well then, you should have put my money on **deposit** with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with **interest**. 28 Take the **talent** from him and give it to the one who has the ten **talents**. 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. 30 And throw that **worthless** servant outside, into the **darkness**, where there will be **weeping** and **gnashing** of teeth.'

**DISCUSSION QUESTION:** Jesus teaches we are to live our lives without fear of failure. How am I doing with this?

**PRAYER:** Lord, I can identify with each of these servants since I have responded in various ways to the opportunities you have given me to just do the right thing. When I am feeling empowered, I am willing and able to be creative, but when I am afraid I want to ‘bury’ my talent to protect it. Help me to rely on your promise of unconditional love in such a way that the creative times outnumber the fearful ones. Amen.