

“My Personal Ministry”
By Parrish Lee
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Matthew 25:13-30 (The Parable of the Talents)

At the beginning of our text, we the Lord of the servants went to take a journey, and before He left He gave His servants talents to be used until He got back. We go on to see that some of the servants used their talents, but some did not. The Bible says that after a long time the Lord came back and asked them to give account of what He had given them. In verse 20, the one with the five talents says, Lord, you gave me this, and this is what I did with it. In verse 22, the one with two talents says, Lord, you gave me this, and this is what I did with it. And in verse 24, the one with one said, Here, Lord, I didn't do anything with it, I just kept it nice and safe. The Lord wasn't too happy with that servant. So, where did he go wrong? Well, for one thing, he forgot that he was a servant; after all, he said in verse 14, “I knew thee,” and that should have been his key. I'm sure that he saw the other servants doing their best. If the Lord didn't want him to do something with it, then why give it to him? And the question this morning, to us, and all who name Jesus as their Lord, “What are Christians doing with what the Lord has given us?” And if we find ourselves saying, “Not a whole lot,” well, it's time to change that. If we do find ourselves busy, let's continue that we may receive our reward.

1 Corinthians 7:17 But as God has distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called...

The Bible here says that God has distributed to everyone, and that we are to walk in what he has given us. Apostle Paul finishes the verse by saying that's what we've been ordained to do.

How many of you like Burger King? Burger King used to have a slogan, “Have it your way.” A very nice thought—it's appealing. After all, who wouldn't want to have it their way? But when God calls us to minister, He doesn't call us to have it our way. You know why? because He knows better than we do, that's why. You'll find that people who love someone look for ways to please the one that they love. Can you imagine someone trying to make you happy, and never considering your likes? A husband getting his wife ‘NFL Ticket’ or power tools for their anniversary. Can you imagine a wife taking her husband shopping for his birthday. When you really want to please someone, the question becomes, “What do you want?”

And when I went to look up the word, ‘minister,’—I knew it didn't mean to be more important than anyone else around you (though some who desire the title may act like it), but I thought it meant helper. Imagine my surprise when I looked it up and found it actually means ‘to serve,’ and ‘to wait on.’ You are to wait on those around you. If you find yourself called to minister, to preach, to pray, to help those in need, to be a listener, to be a supporter, you will find that you are always waiting on (that is, serving) the Lord. And don't be silly enough to think that we are the only ones waiting: for God is also waiting on us, in many cases, to get where He wants us so that He can use us.

Which brings me to another point:

The Enemies of My Ministry

What do you mean, the enemies of my ministry? My ministry has enemies? Oh, yes, saints, and it is very important that we recognize them. The Bible says:

Philippians 2:5-7 *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus...*

1. So, what if, instead of the mind of Christ, I instead want to have the mind of Parrish? Or the mind of my parents? After all, I don't think I'm a stupid person, nor my parents; well, I would be if I chose any other mind over the mind of the Lord.
2. Pride. Pride is an enemy to our ministry. The Bible says that when I desire the praises of man more than the praises of God, then that's all the reward I'm going to receive. I don't know about anyone else, while a pat on the back on the back is nice, it doesn't compare with what my Lord will have for me—I'm storing up treasure on the other side (Matthew 6:19-20).
3. Lust. Lust is an enemy to our ministry. Just wanting what I want no matter what. Letting my desires run rampant and out of control. This has been the downfall to many. But you know who loves it? credit card companies. They know you can't afford it now, but go ahead and mortgage your future for something right now. In ministry, you know what suffers? My time, my energy, and the love that I would have spent on something to bless others. Yes, that's an enemy.
4. Jealousy. Instead of wishing good on someone or thanking God for how He's blessing somebody else, just wanting it to be me, and thinking that I deserve it just as much as they do.
5. Yes, there are other enemies, but that's what the Holy Ghost is for—to show us so that we can give it over to God.

1 Peter 2:9 *...a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people...*

If you're here today and you feel like your sacrifices go unnoticed, the times when you do good and get evil in return; maybe you help somebody and don't even get a thank you; let me tell you, you are in good company. The Bible gives you a promise, that our God is not unrighteous to forget your labor of love (Hebrews 6:10)—every card, every visit, every glass of water, every meal, saints, every prayer—every single labor of love, God remembers them all. But, brothers and sisters, that sword is two-edged. When God lays it on our heart to do good, to visit some discourages, to call someone we have a problem with, to clothe the naked, love the loveless, and we tell God, "I don't have time for that," well, there's a reward for that, too.

If you are anything like me, then you're probably wondering, "Who can do all that?" because I don't feel like I can. That's why God is there. Ask God for help doing what He would have you to do, and He will in no wise cast thee out (John 6:37).

For those of you who have found yourselves hungering for a more loving relationship with the Lord, and found yourself loving God with the type of love that people around you just don't seem to understand—let me tell you this: You're in good

company. King David was talking about Him when he said He is my rock (Psalms 18:2); after Ruth came to know Him and was told to go home, she said, “thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.” (Ruth 1:16) Job said that he had esteemed the words of His mouth more than his necessary food (Job 23:12), and that all the days of his appointed time would he wait until his change come (Job 14:14). When Jeremiah tried to stop talking about that love, he said that His word was in his heart like a fire shut up in his bones (Jeremiah 20:9). Isaiah said that we will mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

2 Timothy 4:5-8 ...Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness...

