



Biblical Stewardship



Bible Study Series

Using Well What God Gives Me - Youth Biblical Background -

MATTHEW 25:14-30

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. Matthew 25:29 NIV

One of the questions that teenagers most often ask me is, "What can I do?" Churches often want teenagers to be involved in church, but they don't allow places for teenagers to serve. The fact of the matter is anyone who has asked Jesus Christ to be their Lord and Savior has gifts and abilities that can be used for God's purposes.

In this lesson, you will discover what God has given you to use for the Lord and how you can put that to use in your Christian life.

1. What I have been given.

God gives talents to everyone.

For it is just like a man going on a journey. He called his own slaves and turned over his possessions to them. Matthew 25:14-15 (HCSB)

This parable of the talents occurs in the scripture when Jesus is talking about the end of the world and the Second Coming. The man in this parable could be Jesus, who was

about to go to the cross and be resurrected on the third day. Parables had both an earthly meaning and a spiritual meaning. The spiritual meaning of this may be that Jesus, though not presently here on earth, gives us gifts and abilities that actually belong to God. It says the master "turned over his possessions to them." In the same way, we are given possessions from God.

Write how many talents each of the three were given. (See Matt. 25:15)

- To the one he gave _____ talents.
- To another _____ talents.
- To the third _____ talent.

To one he gave five talents, to another, two; and to another, one—to each according to his ability. Then he went on a journey.

A talent was actually a unit of weight. In today's terms, that would be 75 pounds/talent or \$7,800.00 in silver. This meant the first slave got \$39,000

dollars, the second got \$15,600 and the third \$7,800. Anyway you look at it, all of them got “talents” that were valuable! There is no hint in the scripture that any of the three slaves thought what they got was unfair, even though it was unequal in amount and value. We all have gifts and abilities. There are some who have more than others, but because God gives them, they are equal in value. I remember in my high school drama class hearing my teacher say when she was about to hand out parts, “There are no small parts, only small people.” She said it was a quote from a famous Russian drama teacher. One great symphony conductor said, “It is easy to find a violin player to play the first part, but difficult to find a violin player who will play the second part.” What both are saying is that we should not compare how many gifts and abilities we have to how many other people have. We should be thankful because all good gifts come from God.

Barclay says, “Men are not equal in talent, but men can be equal in effort.” (Barclay 1975, Matthew, Vol. 2, pg. 323)

Action: Fill out the left side of the “List My Talents” sheet. (God **gives** talents to everyone.)

2. What I should do with my gifts and abilities?

God expects us to use our talents.

In the same way, we are given “talents,” gifts and abilities that we are to use for God’s purposes. *“The man who had received five talents went, put them to work, and earned five more. In the same way, the man with two earned two more, but the man who had received one talent went off, dug a*

hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.” Matthew 25:16-25

The first two men went about finding a way to use the talents given to them to increase the master’s value. It can be said if you will use your gifts and abilities for God’s purposes, God will be honored and God’s value to others will be increased. If you will discover what gifts and abilities God has given you, then they can be used for God’s purposes. This is what all Christians need to do and the best place that can happen is through the local church.

Eric Liddell says in the movie “*Chariots of Fire*,” “When I run I feel God’s pleasure.” He used his gift of running for God’s purposes. He went to the Paris Olympics in 1924 and was the favorite to win the 100 meter race, but the preliminaries were run on Sunday and Eric Liddell would not run on Sundays because Sundays were set aside to honor God. On Sunday, Eric was preaching in a Paris church. Now, only the 200 and 400 meter races were left, races for which Eric Liddell had not trained. Eric ended up winning a bronze medal in the 200 meter race, but in the longest, the 400 meter, Eric Liddell not only won the gold, but set a new world record! Eric had taken his talent and doubled its value! He followed his missionary parents back to China, was captured and put into a Japanese prison camp in 1943. Eric Liddell died in January 1945 from a brain tumor. Eric’s talent had made him more valuable to God and to others.

Action: Fill out the right side of the “List My Talents” sheet.

Using your talents and gifts for God will make you more valuable to God and others. Giving yourself to doing God’s

purposes is part of what stewardship is all about. God **expects** you to use your talents.

3. Being a good and faithful servant.

God judges how we use our talents for others.

His master said to him, 'Well done good and faithful slave! You were faithful over a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Share your master's joy. Matthew 25:26-30

Action: Fill in the blanks.

"His master said to him, 'Well done _____ and _____ slave!'"

When the master returned, the slaves had to report to him what they had done with their part of the master's possessions. Hebrews 9:27-28 says "*And just as it is appointed for people to die once—and after this the judgment—so also the Messiah, having offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time...*" It doesn't say that only those who don't know Christ will be judged, but everyone will face God, the Supreme Judge, and what a person has done will be laid before God.

If a person uses their gifts and talents for God's purposes, when that person dies, they will be called a "good and faithful servant." There is a great joy in a person's heart when they use their gifts to help others. This is called being a good steward.

Like Eric Liddell, there are some things where you should not use your gifts and abilities, especially if it might hurt someone else, dishonor God, or build you up personally in the eyes of

others. Eric would not run a race because it was on a day that was set aside for God. Many people were angry at Eric Liddell for not running the race he had trained for, but Eric stood firm in his faith. He would only use his gift of running for God's purposes. In the end, his faithful stand had a great effect on others.

Action: Take a moment and think of someone who did something that influenced you. Write it down in the space below:

To this day, people are influenced by Eric Liddell's faith. The movie, "*Chariots of Fire*," won best picture of the year in 1981. No major studio in Hollywood would fund it because it had a Christian theme and Hollywood didn't think anyone would see such a movie. The director and a few others used their own money to finance the film and because of their proper stewardship of their gifts and talents, the film was a great success.

The third slave did nothing with the talent he was given. Matthew 25:25 says, "*So I was afraid and went off and hid your talent in the ground. Look, you have what is yours.*" Too often, Christians do not use their gifts and talents for God because they fear someone might criticize them or call them a name. This is not what God has planned for your life and your talents. He expects for you to use them for His purposes. When you do use them for God's purposes, then you experience

the joy of serving the Lord to whom you have trusted your life.

What happened to this third slave? Look at Matthew 25:28 *“So take the talent from him and give it to the one who has 10 talents.”* It’s a matter of use it or lose it. God wants you to use your talents and if you don’t, then God will find someone else to use and you will miss a great blessing.

What happens when you use your talents for God? Look at the next verse in Matthew 25:29, *“For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have more than enough....”* God will give you more responsibility and more to do for him. How have you felt when you did something and someone praised you, thanked you or recognized you before others?

Action: In the space below, write down a time when you were praised for doing something well.

This is how you will feel when you use what you have been given by God. This is how stewardship works!

It may seem harsh, but we will have to give account to God of what we have done. Take time today to commit yourself to using your talents and abilities for God! God **judges** how we use our talents.

4. Putting it into practice

- Take the “List My Talents” sheet you completed in Bible Study class and begin to find ways to use what you have been given.
- Go to your Bible Study teacher or other Youth Leader and find out some things that need to be done and offer to help.
- Below write down what you might say today if you stood before God and he asked you to give account for what you did with the talents and gifts He gave you...

Conclusion

Stewardship is using well what God gave you. How will you use your talents and gifts this coming week in your life?

*all Scriptures are from the Holman Christian Standard Bible



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Bible Study Series

Using Well What God Gives Me - Youth Teaching Plan-

MATTHEW 25:14-30

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. Matthew 25:29 NIV

Materials

- Bible
- pencils and paper
- “What I Have” skit (Item #1)
- “List My Talents” sheet (Item #2)
- index cards
- poster paper

Preparation

- Read: Matthew 25:14-30
- Enlist two (2) students for the “What I Have” (Item #1) skit
- Make sure the chairs in the room are arranged in a semi-circle

Display the session title and scripture reference on a chalkboard, poster board or some way in which the students will see it. Have some music from Contemporary Christian artists. Give the room an upbeat atmosphere. Greet students as they arrive.

Introduction (5-7 minutes)

When everyone has arrived begin by

saying, “Today we will look at using what God has given me. Watch the following skit called “What I Have.” Let students do skit and then ask the students the following questions:

- What was Jill worried about? [not having any talents]
- What did John tell Jill she should do with her talents?
- Have you ever wondered if you have talents you could use?

Say to the students: “Today we will be looking at what you have been given by God to use for His purposes.”

Options (15 minutes)

Divide youth into groups of 4-5 persons. Give them a sheet of paper with the following questions on it:

- Did the master give all three slaves the same number of talents? Why or Why not?
- What did each of the three slaves do with the talents they were given?

- Why did the slave who hid his talent anger his master?

Have them read Matthew 25:14-30 and write the answers on a large piece of poster paper. After about 10 minutes, call the groups back together and share answers.

Lesson (20 minutes)

Ask: “What are three things in this scripture that God has to say about our talents?” Allow time for students to share their insights. Clarify by sharing the following three things youth can learn from this Bible passage:

- God gives talents to everyone. Matthew 25:14-15
- God expects us to use our talents. Matthew 25:16-25
- God judges how we use our talents for others. Matthew 25:26-30

1. God gives talents to everyone. Matthew 25:14-15

Give a copy of “List My Talents” sheet (Item #2) to each student and ask them to put the talents God has given them on the left side of the sheet. Remind them that sports or music abilities are not the only talents God has given us. As examples, you can use Galatians 5:22-23, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 and Ephesians 4:11-12. Other examples are money and possessions. Give them time to list their talents. After 5 minutes, have a youth read Matthew 25:14-15 again, then ask them to share the **number** of talents they listed, not the talents themselves. **Say**, “Like the Bible passage you read, God gives different numbers of gifts to each person. **Ask**, “Did it surprise you how many talents you really have?” **Say**, “God gives us talents to use, not just

for ourselves, but for others.”

2. God expects us to use our talents. Matthew 25:16-25

Have the youth reread Matthew 25:16-25. Explain that no matter what gifts God has given to a person, they are to use them for God’s purposes. **Say**, “It is not the NUMBER of talents, but the USE of the talents that matters to God.” **Ask**, “If you had a talent to run faster than anyone else, but didn’t go out and run, would you be considered a great runner?” Allow them time to discuss. **Conclude**, “If you don’t use your talents, they will be of no use to anyone, even you.” Have them look at their talent list. Ask them to go back and on the right side of their sheet list ways they can use each of the talents for others.

3. God judges how we use our talents for others. Matthew 25:26-30

Have a youth read Matthew 25:26-30. **Ask**, “What happened to the slave who didn’t put his talent to use?” Give youth time to respond. **Say**, “God judges how we use our gifts for His purposes. If we do not use well what God has given us, then we are not obedient to God’s desire for our life.”

Conclusion (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions:

- What did Jill in the sketch decide to do about what God had given her?
- Does every person have talents given by God?
- What are we to do with the talents God gives us?
- Define what the meaning of stewardship is to you now.

Explain: Stewardship is using well what God has given you. It means using what God has given you for His purposes. Tell students to take their “List My Talents” sheet home and begin to use their talents for God. God doesn’t demand something from them that they don’t have, but He does expect them to use what He **has** given them. Remind them that God gives, expects, and judges us and the talents He has given.

Close in prayer. Ask God to reveal all the talents He has given to the youth and that the youth would use them for God.

*All scriptures are from the Holman
Christian Standard Bible

WHAT I HAVE

(ITEM 1)

Characters

JOHN: an average teenager

JILL: a teenager who doesn't understand the talents she has

[Jill comes onstage. She has index cards taped all over her. They read: LOVE, FRIENDSHIP, MONEY, LISTENING TO OTHERS, GENEROSITY, SALVATION, JOY and KINDNESS. She has a worried look on her face. She paces back and forth. John enters. He walks by Jill. He also has the same things taped to him, but his attitude is one of happiness. He stops and watches Jill pace.]

JOHN: Jill, what are you doing?

JILL: *(Stops pacing for a moment.)* Oh, you wouldn't understand.

JOHN: Sure I would understand.

JILL: Well, I just don't have it! *(She begins pacing again.)*

JOHN: Have what?

JILL: *(Walks up to John.)* See, you don't understand! *(Throws up her hands for a moment, then continues to pace.)*

JOHN: *(Grabs Jill by the arm and stops her.)* Look, there is something bothering you. I'm your friend and you might as well tell me what's wrong.

JILL: *(Looks down, then up at John.)* You won't laugh at me if I tell you?

JOHN: No, I won't laugh.

JILL: *(Pauses for a moment.)* Okay. Here it is....I have no talents.

JOHN: *(Chuckles)* I already knew that!

JILL: *(Upset)* You said you wouldn't laugh! I'm leaving.. *(Starts to walk off.)*

JOHN: *(Follows her and stops her.)* Wait, Jill. I wasn't laughing at you....I was laughing at what you said... You see, it seems absolutely ridiculous for you to say you have no talents when you are in the school play, play in the band, run track and are Junior Class vice president.

JILL: But I have no talents! Don't you see?

JOHN: (*Puzzled*) I guess I don't see. Where did you get the idea you have no talent?

JILL: (*Pulls out her Bible.*) It says right here in Matthew 25 that a master gave his slaves talents. He gave one five talents, another two and the third one talent. It goes on to say since two of them were faithful over a few things; he put them in charge of many things. I have no talents!!!

JOHN: Oh, now I see what you're saying. Everyone has talents! I have them and you have them!

JILL: I do? Where? I mean, I can see that you have them, but I'm afraid I don't have any. (*She looks sad.*)

JOHN: Yeah, I can see them right on you. I see GENEROSITY and LISTENING TO OTHERS.

JILL: (*She looks over herself quickly.*) But I really don't see anything.

JOHN: (*Points to one of the index cards on himself.*) Look, see this one?

JILL: (*Jill looks closely.*) Yeah, it says FRIENDSHIP.

JOHN: Jill, we all have talents. Now look very carefully at yourself.

JILL: (*Begins to look at herself slowly.*) Wait a minute! I think I see something! Here's one that says KINDNESS. Do I really have a talent of kindness?

JOHN: Sure you do. Remember when we were on that construction mission trip last summer and we were all really getting tired and cranky and we started to argue with each other?

JILL: Yeah, I remember that. It bothered me a lot.

JOHN: Well, who was it who got everyone together and had a circle of prayer and asked for each one of us to thank God for something?

JILL: I did. I really wanted everyone to be kind to each other.

JOHN: You wanted everyone to be kind.... (*He emphasizes "be kind."*)

JILL: You mean....?

JOHN: You were using your kindness talent to help others. Jill, you DO have talents God has given you and God asks you to use them for others.

JILL: Oh, I understand now. We must find ways to use our talents God has given us to help others!

JOHN: Right. That's what we call stewardship

JILL: I always thought stewardship was about money?

JOHN: Yes, but it's about much more than that. God gives us money, but he also gives us other talents as well. Whatever the talents are, we are to find ways to use them for God.

JILL: I get it! Thanks, John, I feel better now. I think I'll be going, I have to discover more talents God has given me.

JOHN: Just remember whatever talents you discover, use them for God's purposes!

JILL: *(smiles)* Gotcha! Got to go now. See you in class. *(Jill walks offstage looking at the index cards taped on her.)* Oh! I found another talent! *(exits)*

JOHN: *(Looks at himself.)* Jill has a good idea. I think I'd better keep looking for some more talents in me. *(He exits.)*

Talents I Have

List below the talents and gifts you have.
(See Galatians 5:22-23)

Write ways you can use your talents
and gifts for God's purposes.