

**Parable of the Talents (1)**  
**26 September 2004**

**I. Introduction**

**A. Interpreting Scripture**

1. The “**literal**” interpretation fad
  - a. Not everything in Scripture is literal
  - b. Some passages, kinds of statements require **special handling**
  - c. For proper interpretation, must understand various “**devices**”
  
2. **Smaller devices** (word, phrase)
  - a. **Hyperbole** (exaggeration)

John 21:25 And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.
  
  - b. **Other figures of speech**

Ecclesiastes 1:5 The sun also rises, and the sun goes down, and hastens to the place where it arose.
  
3. **Larger devices** (an entire prophecy or narrative; even bigger)
  - a. **Type** (gr. tu-pos)
    - i. **Symbol**

Romans 5:14 Yet death exercised dominion from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who is a **type** of the one who was to come.
    - ii. Can be a person, thing or event
    - iii. Usu. of a specific future thing; once anti-type comes, type passes away
    - iv. **More than** just a “**lesson**”
      - (1) Sacrificial system taught guilt, necessity of atonement, etc.
      - (2) Specific elements typical (scapegoat, once-a-year atonement for nation)
  
  - b. **Allegory** (gr. al-ley-go-re-o)
    - i. **Symbols** (again), but using a **narrative** form; **elaborate**
    - ii. Usu. for **abstract concepts**

Gal 4:21 Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, which things are an **allegory**. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar -- for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children -- but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all...(theological reasoning follows).
  
  - c. **Proverb** (gr. par-oi-me-a)
    - i. Short **saying** that expresses some **commonplace truth** or useful thought
    - ii. Book of Proverbs - straight proverbs
    - iii. Also, used **illustratively**

2 Peter 2:20 For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. It has happened to them according to the true **proverb**, "The dog turns back to its own vomit," and, "The sow is washed only to wallow in the mud."
  
  - d. **Parable** (gr. par-ab-o-lay)
    - i. Short and often allegorical story designed to convey a truth or moral lesson
    - ii. Key fact: always based in **reality**, a **possible** happening
    - iii. But, not necessarily a **literally true** account

**Parable of the Talents (1)**  
**26 September 2004**

- (1) Unlike “**fables**”
  - (a) Short morality tale, usu. with animals or objects as characters
  - (b) **Not** founded on **fact** or **possibility**
  - (3) “Tortoise and the Hare”
  
- (2) Unlike “**myths**” (gr. mu-thos)
  - (a) Legendary stories, tall tales, pagan mythology
  - (b) Usu. mistranslated “fables” in NT versions
  - (c) Considered to be the opposite of truth, opposite of fact
    - (i) “Cunningly devised myths”
    - (ii) “Jewish myths”
    - (iii) “Profane and old wives’ myths”
    - (iv) They “minister questions” and are sought by people who “turn away from the truth”

**2. Jesus taught with parables. Why?**

a. To **fulfill a prophecy**

Matt 13:34-35 All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in **parables**; and without a parable He did not speak to them, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: "I will open My mouth in **parables**; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world."

Psalm 78:1ff A Contemplation of Asaph. Give ear, O my people, to my law; Incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old, which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.

- i. Without specifics, a **prophecy** that Messiah would speak in parables
- ii. Parables would concern **spiritual truths** (not life lessons, or good advice)
- iii. Parables would contain **new revelations** -in another place, “mysteries of the kingdom of heaven”

b. ?? To **teach effectively** by using illustrations ??

- i. Preacher “**communication**” **classes** - Jesus the great communicator
- ii. **Limited** truth - the case with some; and all certainly **memorable** teachings
- iii. But memory and understanding **not** the same...
- iv. Key fact: only **stated** reason for parables is exactly **opposite**

c. To **limit understanding**

Matt 13:10ff And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given....Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive; for the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them.'

i. **Doctrines of grace** in lesson about teaching methods of Jesus....

- (1) **Special Election** - “to you it has been given, but not to them”
- (2) How much clearer can particular grace be?
- (3) Stated reason - to limit and confuse the understanding of those not chosen by God, so that they will not repent and be converted.

ii. **Not just NT** - this purpose for parables taught in OT as well

Ezekiel 20:46-21:5

iii. **Complicating factor** - parable **not meant** to be perfectly clear

**Parable of the Talents (1)**  
**26 September 2004**

**B. Interpreting Parables**

1. Start with the **context**
  - a. Usu. **given in response** to question, situation, something Jesus observed
  - b. **Understanding occasion** gives a good start on **understanding** the **parable**
  - c. DO NOT **excerpt** them out of surrounding context, or battle is much tougher
  
2. **Understand** the **story** before you try to interpret or apply
  - a. Parables symbolic, so, Get the story wrong = get the lesson wrong
  - b. Stories sometimes include **details** related to **1st century** Near Eastern **culture**
    - i. **Obvious** or understood things for Jesus' hearers may not be to us
    - ii. Imagine **describing** something in your **life** to **1st century Jew**...
    - iii. Don't assume you have the **whole story** from a **surface** reading
    - iv. May **not** be **necessary** for **basic** understanding, but **is** for **full**
  
3. **Ask** these **questions**
  - a. Is there a **stated lesson** (usu. editorial)?

Luke 18:1 Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart  
Luke 18:9 Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others
  
  - b. Is an **interpretation provided**?

Mat 13:36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field." He answered...
  
  - c. Is there a **one-to-one correspondence**?

Matt 13:38 "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.
  
  - d. Or merely a **general theme**?

Luke 18:1 Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, saying: "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.' And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.' "  
Then the Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge said. And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily.

**C. Text - Parable of the Talents - Matthew 25:14-30**

"For (the kingdom of heaven is like) a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.'  
His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.'  
His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

**Parable of the Talents (1)**  
**26 September 2004**

Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.'

But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

## II. Interpretation - The Context

### A. Matthew 21-25: Final ministry

1. **Setting** for parable: **Jerusalem**, 3 days before the Passover
  - a. He has already **cleansed** the **Temple** (21)
  - b. He has **debated** the Pharisees, Saducees, and Herodians (22)
  - c. In the Temple, he **denounces** Pharisees, prophecies the **judgment** of Jerusalem (23)
  - d. Leaving the Temple, he prophecies the **destruction** of the Temple  
Matthew 24:1-2 Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down."
2. Prophecies which **prompt a question**  
Matt 24:3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"
  - a. How **many** questions?
    - i. Disciples think **one** - all this will occur together
    - ii. Most say **two**, since Jesus did not return at Jerusalem's judgment
3. Jesus **Answers**
  - a. A description of **events**; A series of **parables**
  - b. A brief **preface**
    - i. **Question**: Line between judgment of Jerusalem and Last Days?
    - ii. Highly **debated**; not **germane** for our purpose
    - iii. What is important: a series of admonitions, commands
4. **First Instructions** (Matthew 24)
  - a. **Do not be deceived by false prophetic claims**
    - i. All kinds of claims will be made about Messiah's return: v. 4-5; v. 23-26
    - ii. But Messiah's return will be **unmistakable**: v. 27-28; v. 29-31
  - b. **Do not be deceived by the general tribulations in the world**
    - i. Many bad things will happen in the world, but this is not the end: v. 6-14
    - ii. Tribulations for judgment of Jerusalem, return of Xst very specific: v. 15-22
5. The **Short Parables and their Lessons**
  - a. **Parable of the Fig Tree**  
Matt 24:32 "Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near -- at the doors!"
    - i. Budding fig tree **forecasts** coming of **Summer**
    - ii. These events **forecast judgment**, return, fulfillment of prophecies
    - iii. By **watching** events, they can know that the time (at least, of Jerusalem judgment) is **near**...but...

**Parable of the Talents (1)**  
**26 September 2004**

**b. Historic Example - Times of Noah**

Matt 26:36 "But of that **day and hour no one knows**, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. But as the days of Noah *were*, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. Then two *men* will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. Two *women will be* grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming."

- i. While the **season** is predictable (see fig tree), the **exact time** is not
- ii. The coming events will be sudden and for people of the world, unexpected
- iii. So (commandment) **watch**: (grey-go-ru-o: lit. "stay awake")
- iv. **Exactly** what this "awakeness" involves not yet explained

**c. Parable of the householder and the thief**

Matt 24:43 "But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

- i. Exact time is unpredictable, **but** you have been warned
- ii. World = sleeping owner: doesn't know about thief; surprised; suffers loss
- iii. We = warned owner: don't know when, but know will; behave accordingly
- iv. So (commandment - Like the BS motto) **Be prepared** (he-toi-mos: "be ready, be prepared"; getting a room ready; completing wedding preparations)

6. Sudden judgment - a Biblical concept

a. For **seasons of judgment**

Revelation 3:1ff "And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, ' These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: "I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God. Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you. You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." '

b. For the **Last Days**

1 Thessalonians 5:1ff But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

Revelation 16:15 "Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame."

**Parable of the Talents (2)**  
**3 October 2004**

**I. Introduction**

**A. Text - Parable of the Talents - Matthew 25:14-30**

"For (the kingdom of heaven is like) a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.'  
His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.'  
His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.'

But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

**A. Interpreting Scriptural Devices**

**1. Parables**

- a. Short (allegorical) story, based in **reality** but not literally true, with truth or moral
- b. **Purpose**, by Jesus, was to **limit understanding** to the elect  
Matt 13:11 "Because it has been given to you to know(understand) the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given...."

**2. Interpreting parables**

- a. Start w/ the **context**
- b. Understand the **story**
- c. Is there a **stated lesson** or **divine interpretation**?
- d. Is there a **general theme** or a strict, **one-to-one** correspondence

**B. The Context - Part One**

- 1. Jesus prophecies **destruction of Temple and Jerusalem**; disciples ask when
- 2. Jesus' **Instruction - Disaster Preparedness 101 - The FEMA Sermon**
  - a. **Do not be deceived...**
    - i. ...by false prophetic claims, because Messiah's return will be unmistakable
    - ii. ...by the general tribulations, because "end" tribulations will be specific
  - b. **Parable of the Fig Tree**
    - i. As the budding fig tree forecasts coming of Summer, these events forecast judgment, return, fulfillment of prophecies
  - c. **Time of Noah**
    - i. Exact time is unpredictable and sudden
    - ii. So, Watch (lit. "stay awake")

**Parable of the Talents (2)**  
**3 October 2004**

**d. Parable of Householder and the Thief**

- i. Exact time is unpredictable, but you have been warned
- ii. So, Be ready, Be prepared

e. **Sudden judgment** and the corresponding **need for “alertness”** a basic NT theme

**C. Remaining Questions**

1. What, specifically, **characterizes** this **watching**?
2. What is it to **“be prepared”** for Xst’s coming (whichever one)?
  - a. In Jerusalem, specific and limited command - “Watch, then run”

Matt 24:16-18 “then let those who are in Judea **flee** to the mountains. Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes.
  - b. What about in The End? What is the command for us?

**II. Exposition**

**A. Parable of the faithful and unfaithful servants**

Matt 24:45ff “Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master appointed over his household servants, to give them food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. Assuredly, I say to you that he will appoint him over all his goods. But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour that he does not know, and will cut him in two and appoint his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

**1. The Master**

- a. Three **key traits** (in the parable)
  - i. A man of **authority**
    - (1) *kurios*: sir to sovereign of universe, but here, authority (Lord)
    - (2) Commands and delegates
    - (3) Judges, rewards and punishes
  - ii. A man of **property**
    - (1) *doulos*: servants or slaves
    - (2) *huparchonta*: possessions, wealth
  - iii. A man of **travel**
    - (1) Goes away...
    - (2) ....and his return is delayed
    - (3) Absence sets stage for entire story

**2. Delegation: Trust and Responsibility (key concept - not in previous story)**

- a. The Master has a **group of servants**
  - i. *the-ra-pai-as; oi-ke-tai-as*
    - (1) Not “household” = family, but a group of **household servants**
    - (2) “The Domestic Staff”
    - (3) **Not** the estate, or his business, or even all his douloi
  - b. The Master **delegates authority** to another in his absence (act of **sovereignty**)
    - i. *kathistami*: set over; placed in charge of
    - ii. Given a job
      - (1) **Feed** them - “appointed over his household servants, to give them food”
      - (2) At the **proper time** (en xairos, but sounds like the zoo!)
      - (3) Perhaps more, but this the only **specific**, thus the **main**
      - (4) Manage the **timely** and **appropriate distribution** of assets

**Parable of the Talents (2)**  
**3 October 2004**

- iii. Not complex, but still a **position of trust**
  - (1) Access to Master's **goods**
  - (2) Position of **authority in the Master's name**

c. Unstated Lesson: **Unsupervised behavior a test of true character**

- i. Management, parents on vacation - **a universal fear**
  - (1) "What are they doing when I'm not there...?"
  - (2) Only one test: unannounced inspection

**3. Two kinds of servant**

- a. "**Good**" servant: though, **not** specifically so-called here
  - i. **Faithful** - does what he is **supposed** to do; does it **consistently**
  - ii. **Wise** - prudent, understanding (key word - will appear again)
  - iii. Why is he commended?
    - (1) "Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing."
    - (2) Nothing complicated, nothing dramatic; in fact, **mundane**
    - (3) **Doing** what he was **supposed** to be doing
- b. "**Evil**" Servant: **specifically** so-called
  - i. A **wicked** man
    - (1) **Cruel** - "begins to beat his fellow servants"
    - (2) **Irresponsible** - "and to eat and drink with the drunkards"
    - (3) **Opportunistic** - Uses his position of authority not to fulfill the Master's wishes, but to indulge his own lusts and ego
  - ii. **The World of Crime - Aggravating factors**
    - (1) "I trusted you..." - he **alone** selected
    - (2) **Greater authority - no recourse** for the other servants
  - iii. **Three Classic Mistakes**
    - (1) **Confuses delegation with elevation**
      - (a) Not the Master, or even an heir
      - (b) A "fellow-servant"
    - (2) **Confuses stewardship with ownership**
      - (a) What does he have on his own? Nothing
      - (b) No goods, no money, no servants, not even his life
    - (3) **Confuses delay with abandonment**
      - "...that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming'"
      - (a) "I can do anything I want to do, because nothing will ever happen to me..."
      - (b) Bad behavior **promoted** by an erroneous belief in **personal security**

c. **Security and sin**, or, Why do otherwise law-abiding people loot in a blackout?

i. **Israel**

Exodus 32:1 Now when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, "Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him."

ii. **World**

2Peter 3:3-4 ...[S]coffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming?" For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."



**Parable of the Talents (2)**  
**3 October 2004**

d. The **True Contrast**

i. **Faithful vs. faithless**

- (1) **Faithful**: Not just in fulfillment, but in **belief** of his promise (return)
- (2) **Faithless**: Fails in duty, because he **doubts**

ii. **Wisdom vs. folly**

- (1) “Wise”? Because he believed, and so “prepared”
- (2) He **knew** the Master would return, and acted so, even with delay
- (3) His preparation - To be found doing what he was commanded
- (4) Doubt his wisdom? Look at the **result** for the evil servant.

4. “**The End**”

a. **Sudden return** (returning element)

Matt 24:46 Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.  
Matt 24:50 ...the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour that he does not know...

b. **Judgment** (new element)

- i. Before, **consequences** (loss of goods by thief)
- ii. Now, judgment with blessing or curse
- iii. Again, an act of sovereignty

c. **Good servant** assessed and **rewarded**

- i. **Assessment**: Found “so doing” when his master came
- ii. **Blessing**: Was “over” household servants, now “over” all property
- iii. Faithful fulfillment of a trust given led to reward and a greater trust
- iv. Unstated lesson - “For to everyone who has, more will be given...”

d. **Evil servant** assessed and **cursed**

i. **Caught in the act** - the original sting operation or hidden camera

Matt 24:50 ...the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour that he does not know...

ii. The **Standard of Evidence** for Divine Judgment

- (1) Not **preponderance** of the evidence (51%) - US civil
- (2) Not beyond a **reasonable** doubt - US criminal
- (3) **Absolute** proof (because, there is no appeal)

Rev 20: 11-12 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

Daniel 7: 9-10 " I watched till thrones were put in place, And the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment was white as snow, And the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, Its wheels a burning fire; A fiery stream issued And came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.

iii. **Physical punishment** - “[And he] will cut him in two...”

- (1) *dichotomeo* - lit., to cut in two (a kind of death penalty);
- (2) Fig., an extremely severe punishment (prob. whipping)

iv. A **Just Reward** for **Services Rendered**

“[And he will] appoint his portion with the hypocrites”

**Parable of the Talents (2)**  
**3 October 2004**

- (1) **Irony** - before, appointed over what belonged to another, now appointed to “**his** portion” (which turns out to be...nothing)
- (2) **Irony** - before appointed over the other servants, now, not even counted among their number
- (3) The ultimate example of “**you’ll get yours**”
  - (a) Person of his nature usu. has the “I deserve this” mentality
  - (b) TZone-like, he actually **gets** exactly “what he deserves”
- (4) The faithful servant did not presume to use the Master’s goods as his own, so received more of them; the evil servant regarded himself as entitled to them, so even what he had is taken away, and he receives his rightful reward - nothing
- (5) Unstated lesson - “...but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away.”

v. **Cast out and without hope** - There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

- (1) Common language for the **reaction** of those **judged**
- (2) **Outer darkness** (outside house); **Furnace of fire**, and this...

Luke 13:28 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.
- (3) **Character** of the **judged - anguish** (“weeping”)
- (4) **Character** of the **judged - wrath and hatred** (“gnashing of teeth”)

Job 16:9 He tears *me* in His wrath, and hates me; He **gnashes** at me with His teeth;

Acts 7:54 When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they **gnashed** at him with *their* teeth.

  - (a) **No moral improvement**
  - (b) They **hate** the Master even more after judgment
  - (c) Eg, fired for cause, more bitter than ever
  - (d) Why? Remain as before...

4. Interpretation of the Parable

a. Xst as Master **obvious**

Authority, property, travel, delegation, return, judgment

b. **Who** is the **servant**?

i. In Jerusalem, a **parable against** the **priests**, scribes, and Pharisees...

- (1) What had been their behavior? Their care for fellow servants?
- (2) Priests robbing at Temple; Scribes/Pharisees using position for prestige, and to impose cruel and unjust laws
- (3) “...with the hypocrites”
  - (a) In Luke, unbelievers, here hypocrites
  - (b) Speaking against Scribes/Pharisees (7 times in Mat 23)

ii. ...and a parable **for** the apostles

B. All Times Lessons

1. The Lord will come in judgment suddenly
2. While the signs of times may/ought to be discerned, the day and hour no man knows
3. The people of God ought therefore to watch and be prepared
4. Those who abuse Master’s trust, take advantage for personal gain, will find themselves caught red-handed, judged, condemned, and punished
5. Those who live in an awareness of his return, marked by obedience, and especially by a faithfulness in whatever responsibility or trust we find committed to us, will find a gracious reward at his return (Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 26-28, 3:5, 12, 20-21)

**Parable of the Talents (3)**  
**10 October 2004**

**I. Introduction**

**A. Text - Parable of the Talents - Matthew 25:14-30**

**B. Context**

**1. The Question**

Matt 24:3 ...the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

**2. Matt 24 discourse: destruction of Jerusalem, judgment of Israel, return of Xst, end of world**

- a. Messiah's **return unmistakable**
- b. **Tribulations** of this judgment (or judgments) **specific** and **identifiable**

**3. Parables** to reveal/conceal truths regarding the nature of divine judgment

- a. The **Fig Tree**
- b. The **Time of Noah** (not a parable)
- c. The **Householder and the Thief**
- d. The **Faithful and Unfaithful Servant**

**4. The Main Points**

- a. The Lord will **come** in judgment **suddenly**
- b. The **wise** will **discern** that the time comes, but **day and hour no man knows**
- c. The people of God ought therefore to **watch**, and to be **prepared**
- d. "Watching" - live one's life **aware** that these events must some day come to pass
- e. "Preparation" - live **obediently**, and to faithfully **steward** whatever responsibility God has providentially brought to your hands
- f. The servant who **abuses** the Master's trust will be **caught, judged, condemned**
- g. Those servants who live **faithfully** will find a gracious **reward** at his return

**5. Moral Principles**

- a. **Unsupervised behavior the true test and revelator of character**
- b. God's **judgments** are 100% **right**, his **punishments** and **rewards** perfectly **suited**
- c. "To him who has shall more be given, but to him who does not have, even that which he has shall be taken away"
  - i. Faithful receives a **greater** trust; wicked **loses** even place as a fellow-servant
  - ii. **Spiritualized**: In the End, God's chosen showered with further blessing, while reprobate cut off from all they enjoyed (and abused) in this life

**II. Exposition: The Parable of the Ten Virgins**

**A. The Text**

Matthew 25:1-13 "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.' Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming."

**B. A Gaggle(?) of Interpretations**

- 1. Said to be "the **most difficult** of all the parables to interpret"
  - a. Maybe if people would stop their **wild spiritualizing**
  - b. **Danger** of one-to-one interpretation w/o Jesus: how prove right or wrong?  
**Witness** the following...

**2. Interpretations - Elements**

- a. **Bridegroom**: Xst - **Only** universal point of agreement

**Parable of the Talents (3)**  
**10 October 2004**

**b. Ten Virgins**

- i. Jews of Jerusalem
- ii. believers; church members; individual churches; church as whole entity
- iii. not the church (non-applicable)
- iv. post-tribulation pre-millennial reign peoples; post-millennial reign peoples
- v. 10 tribes of Israel; Anglo-Saxon nations; humanity

**c. Lamp**

word of God; HS; church members

**d. Vessels**

human body; angelic teachers

**e. Oil**

- i. word of God; “combustion” of the Word of God; HS
- ii. God’s reproof; ...will that we rejoice over sinners salvation; ...will that all men shall live
- iii. joy over the suspension of judgment penalties

**f. Sleeping of virgins**

- i. departure from reality
- ii. spiritual fault; spiritual indifference; spiritual backsliding
- iii. national abandonment of God’s moral laws

**g. Coming of the bridegroom**

- i. coming of Jesus to his vineyard to inspect the fruit and teach
- ii. judgment of Jerusalem; ...of nations; ...of Anglo-Saxon nations
- iii. judgment of churches; final return of Xst

**h. Trim the lamp:** improve character with holiness

**j. Them that buy and sell**

- i. Sell: those who sell Christian and religious doctrine and merchandise
- ii. Buy: religionists of today who buy this merchandise

**k. Marriage feast**

- i. family reunion and formal education about what God is doing
- ii. end of the world; a day of judgment (pick one)
- iii. the kingdom; salvation

**l. Door shut**

- i. refusal of teachers to teach
- ii. a judgment of people; a judgment of nations; damnation (of the reprobate)
- iii. loss of salvation; loss of reward or honors

**3. Interpretations -Broad**

- a. **Preterist:** Jerusalem only
- b. **Dispensationalist:** Jews; post rapture peoples; post millennial reign peoples
- c. **Arminian:** Loss of salvation
- d. **Cheap Grace:** loss of reward or honors
- e. **British Israel**

**4. My favorite wacko translation (i.e., why you should **not** use Internet for Bible study)**

Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten churches, which took themselves, and went forth to meet the Jesus. And five of them were wise, and five foolish. They that were foolish took themselves, and were void of corrective reproof for edification, could not rejoice against suspension of judgment penalties, and could not rejoice with the Father over salvation of all

**Parable of the Talents (3)**  
**10 October 2004**

sinners: But the wise took the Word in their angelic teachers who were with them. While the bridegroom tarried, they all departed from reality into a fantasy dreamland. And at midnight there was a cry made, 'Behold, Jesus is coming to visit his vine; go out to meet him.' Then all those virgins arose, and improved their character and tried to live holy. And the foolish said to the wise, Give us of your Word of God; for the Spirit is not speaking to us. But the wise answered, saying, No, lest there be not enough for us and you: but rather go to those Jesus cast out of the temple and away from him and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the family reunion: and the angelic teachers refused to teach the others.... [sadly, translation stops here]

**C. Cultural Background**

**1. Jewish Marriage** (3 or 4 steps)

**a. Engagement**

- i. **Formal settlement** made by fathers of bride and bridegroom
- ii. Might be made when parties quite young
- iii. Often involved **financial agreements** (bride price, dowry)

**b. Betrothal** or Espousal

- i. **Ceremony** held at **bride's house**
- ii. **Exchange of vows** and **gifts** for the bride
- iii. Followed by **Waiting period**
  - (1) Could last a year or more
  - (2) Bride continued to live with parents

- iv. Not marriage, but **required divorce** to break

**c. Wedding** (and consummation)

**2. The Wedding** (3 parts)

**a. Procession**

**i. Basic** tradition

- (1) **Bridegroom traveled** to house of bride's Father
- (2) **Escorted her back** to own house or to a larger hall
- (3) **Entered** hall or home with bridal company to begin festivities

**ii. Secondary** tradition

- (1) **Bride** already **brought** to his house or hall
- (2) **Bridegroom processed** from home of relative or friend

**iii. Common details**

- (1) Typically at **night**
- (2) **Began at time of bridegroom's choosing**
- (3) **Procession** involved a **crowd** of people
- (4) **Herald** to lead: either crowd or a specific person ('Behold, the bridegroom. Come out to meet him.')

**iv. The Crowd**

- (1) **Bride** and bride's **attendants** (basic tradition)
- (2) **Bridegroom** and "**friends** of the bridegroom"
- (3) **Family, friends, community** waiting to join **along the way**
- (4) Some **waiting at the home** or hall

**b. Signing of Contract**

- i. Officialize the marriage
- ii. Not germane to our story

**Parable of the Talents (3)**  
**10 October 2004**

**c. Party**

- i. Wedding Supper or Feast: eating and drinking
- ii. Cana; also, a frequent image for the final day (blessing)

**D. The Story**

**1. Scene 1**

Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. Those who were foolish, having taken their lamps, did not take oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. But while the bridegroom delayed, they all grew drowsy and slept.

**a. The Setting**

i. “ten virgins”

- (1) *parthenos* - virgin (as we mean it); also, maiden
- (2) Paul, analogous to unmarried woman
- (3) Ten...?

ii. **Waiting** for the bridegroom - “...went out to meet the bridegroom”

- (1) Outside house or along procession route
- (2) Evening: so, lamps with them and likely lit
- (3) Civil law: must have lamp to be out past dusk

iii. A **discriminating feature**

(1) **All** have “**lamps**”

- (a) Clay “Herodian” lamps holding olive oil with a wick
- (b) Quantity sufficient to burn for a **few hours**

(2) Only five have **extra oil**

- (a) *aggeion* - vessels, pail, flask
- (b) Additional container normally brought with lamps

**b. The Set-Up**

i. Key: The bridegroom **delayed**

- (1) Expected by a certain **reasonable** hour, but does not arrive
- (2) **Active**: tarried or delayed, not passive “was delayed”
- (3) Once again, a key event or concept

ii. Maidens **fall asleep** waiting for him

First grew drowsy, then feel asleep

**2. Scene 2**

And in the middle of the night a cry came: 'Behold, the bridegroom; go out to meet him!' Then all those virgins awoke and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise answered, saying, 'Because there may not be enough for us and you; go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'

**a. A Sudden Cry**

i. Some translations, “midnight”; lit. “middle of the night”

ii. Crier cries

- (1) It's time; he's coming; what you were waiting for is here
- (2) Go out to meet him (identical Greek to first verse - their **intent**)

**b. Rise and Shine**

i. All “awoke”

ii. All “**trimmed**” the lamps

- (1) *kosmeo* - Odd word; normal use in NT is to adorn (cosmetics)
- (2) Seems to have basic meaning of “put in order”, “make proper”
- (3) Basically, got the lamps working

**Parable of the Talents (3)**  
**10 October 2004**

c. **Emergency!**

- i. Due to late hour, the **lamps** are **going out**
- ii. Unlike first grade, **no sharing** here...
  - (1) "Hey, Go get your own oil!"
    - (a) Reason - Not sure if enough to go around
    - (b) Might buy some time for all, but not enough time
    - (c) Right, too! - Why should they risk missing the event because the others were too lazy or irresponsible?
    - (d) Complicated as it is **midnight**, and no 7/11 or Super WM

3. **Scene 3**

And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'

a. Key: Bridegroom **arrives** - good news for some

- i. 5 virgins "ready"
  - (1) *hetoimos* - "prepared"
  - (2) Our word from Matt 24:44
- ii. So, 5 virgins **admitted** in to the feast

b. Bad news for others - **Terrible** imagery

i. The **door** is **shut**

- (1) Not just "closed"
- (2) Seems to have a sense of **secured**

Luke 11:5-7 And He said to them, "Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; and he will answer from within and say, 'Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you?'"

ii. **Pleas** are made

"Lord, Lord" - Matt 7:21; Luke 6:46; Luke 13:25

iii. **Bridegroom** himself **denies** them

- (1) No doorman or bouncer
- (2) Very one on whom they waited
- (3) I do not *know* you - recognize; know who you are; acknowledge
- (4) Once again, the man of **authority**

E. The **Lessons**

1. The **Bridegroom** = **Xst**

- a. Man of **authority** who **admits** and **bars** entrance to the wedding feast
- b. Man who is **absent, delayed** past expectation, then comes with **no warning**

2. **If** Wedding Feast is **spiritualized**, then = the Last Day

Rev 19:9 Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!' " And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."

3. "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming."

- a. **Doesn't** come when **expected**; **long** delayed (feel asleep)
- b. Then, **suddenly**, surprisingly, thief in the night
- c. Yet lesson isn't really about wakefulness, but preparedness

4. **Two kinds of people**

a. **All...**

- i. virgins (same class)
- ii. went out to meet the bridegroom (not strangers)
- iii. had expectation and intention of admission to wedding feast

**Parable of the Talents (3)**  
**10 October 2004**

- iv. took lamps supplied with oil and lit (some level of preparation)
- v. slept (no condemnation here - not about wakefulness, but preparedness)

b. One distinction: **extra oil** (or, level of preparation)

i. 5 had **enough to carry them through to the end** ("wise")

- (1) distinguished by their **readiness**
- (2) knew bridegroom would come; didn't know when; **prepared**

ii. 5 did not - "foolish"

- (1) Knew bridegroom coming; didn't know when; **didn't prepare**
- (2) Basic trait: wanted privilege w/o responsibility
- (3) **Revealed** only by the **delay**...

iii. ...Like the good and evil servants

- (1) Both servants
- (2) Both position of trust
- (3) Both behaved the same **until the master delayed**
- (4) Difference? GS had that character or heart necessary to carry him through to end, including the Master's delay; ES lacked both, and his evil character eventually broke loose

c. New Principle

i. Previous focus on behavior during delay; here, on preparation for delay

ii. Counting the cost?

- (1) How long did you intend to wait for me? If you didn't bring enough to account for delay, how serious were you?

5. Consequences / judgment

Matthew 25:29 'For to everyone who has, **more** will be **given**, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away

- a. Extra oil = admission to wedding supper of the lamb
- b. Door shut (entry barred); relationship denied

6. Who are these virgins? A Kingdom Parable

a. In Israel: foolish virgins are the unbelieving Jews - they have knowledge, relationship, expectation; but find themselves denied

Matt 8:11-12 "And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and **sit down** with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

b. In the New Covenant time: Like the parable of the sower

Matt 13:20-22 "But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.

You must be there at **the end**...so **be prepared** for what comes

Not a race one gets an award for running, but for finishing



**Parable of the Talents (4)**  
**17 October 2004**

**I. Introduction**

**A. Text - Parable of the Talents - Matthew 25:14-30**

"For (the kingdom of heaven is like) a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.'  
His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.'  
His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.'

But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

**B. Context**

**1. The Question**

Matt 24:3 ...the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

**2. The Answer**

- a. Messiah's **return unmistakable; Tribulations specific and identifiable**
- b. The Lord will come in judgment **suddenly**, at a day and hour **no man knows**
- c. **Two kinds of people**
  - i. Wise, faithful
    - (1) "Know" and "believe" in the return of Xst
    - (2) "Discern" that the season comes
    - (3) "Watch" by living life in **awareness** of the Lord's return
    - (4) "Prepare" by living **obediently**; faithfully **stewarding** responsibility God has put in their hands
    - (5) Prepared not only for the return, but the delay of the return
    - (6) Find a gracious **reward** at his return
  - ii. Evil, foolish
    - (1) Indifferent: Live **without awareness** of the coming judgment
    - (2) Wicked: abuse Kingdom trust for satisfying ego and lusts in the cynical conceit that he will not return
    - (3) "Flippant": casually embrace Xst, desiring privileges, w/o true commitment revealed by careful preparation for his return
    - (4) **Caught, judged, condemned**
- d. **Great Revealer**
  - i. Unsupervised behavior
  - ii. Delay of return
  - iii. Return

**Parable of the Talents (4)**  
**17 October 2004**

**II. Exposition**

"For [it is] just as a man going abroad, who called his own servants and delivered his possessions to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went abroad.

**A. The Man**

**1. Man of Property**

**a. Servants** or slaves

i. Again, *douloi*

ii. "his own" - **emphasis**; important for interpretation (?)

**b. Goods (very wealthy)**

i. "his **possessions**", in the form of...

ii. ...*talanta* - "talents"

(1) **Measure of weight** for precious metals

(a) Greek 75.6 lbs; Hebrew 100 lbs silver, 200 lbs gold

(b) OT: Gold, Silver, Bronze, Iron, Lead talents

(c) Translates Heb. "kikkar" - round, so, a **round weight**

(d) Also refer to other coinage = amount (**sack of money**)

(2) **Danger of out-of-date** resources

(a) Websites cite value of gold talent as \$29,000

(b) Source: *Nave's (1907)*, when gold \$20/ounce

(3) **Modern value**

(a) 1 **Gold** talent = \$500k; 1 **Silver** = \$8500 (\$17k then)

(b) If **Gold**: \$4m, \$7.5m end

(c) If **Silver**: \$136k start, \$255k end (\$180-\$340k if Heb)

(4) Either way, **wealthy**

(a) **Day's wage** for vineyard labor = 1 denarius

(b) 6,000 denarii = 1 silver talent; 180,000 = 1 Gold

(c) Start 160 or 4800 years hard labor (6 day, 50 week)

(d) Finish 300 or 9000 years hard labor

(5) **Silver**, I believe

Matt 25:18 - "hides his lord's *argurion*" - lit. "silver"

Even when translated "money" seems to refer to silver coin

**2. Man of Authority**

a. **Title** of authority: Called *kurios* (master, lord)

b. **Exercise** of authority

i. **Summons** (*kaleo*) his servants (authority over their **location**)

ii. **Delegates**

(1) Delivers (*paradidomai*) his goods: "hand-over of authority"

(2) Not giving a present, but a responsibility

(3) Later, will **judge** their stewardship

(4) Why does he hand over control of his wealth? **Vacation!**

**3. Man of Travel**

a. *apodemeo* - to **journey** a considerable distance and time, usu. to **another country**

i. Parable of the Wicked Tenants, the householder

ii. Parable of the Prodigal Son, the prodigal

**Parable of the Talents (4)**  
**17 October 2004**

- b. **Why?** Not given - business? pleasure?
- c. Only, told it an **immediate departure**
- d. Once again, **absence**
  - i. servants know it will be for a **considerable length of time**
  - ii. servants know it will be **unsupervised**

**B. Working for The Man**

And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went abroad. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money.

- 1. **Meritocracy** - "to each according to his own ability"
  - a. Distributes assets based on observation of each servant's "powers"
  - b. So, not everyone gets same: 5, 2, 1
  - c. Not all equal, yet no one guilty for being more or less talented
  - d. Even the least still receives a considerable sum
  
- 2. The **Productive Servants**
  - a. What did they **do** with the money?
    - i. ergadzomai - "work"
    - ii. **Very general** word for all kinds of activity
    - iii. Sure fact: active enterprise (did not bank it)
  
  - b. How did they make out? They **made money** (two synonyms, nothing esoteric)
    - i. poigeo - "make, earn"
    - ii. kerdaino - "gain, acquire"
  
- 3. The **Unproductive Servant**
  - a. **Sneaks off** (aperchomai - "went away, departed") because...
  - b. ...**Hides the money**
    - i. **Digs a hole** in the ground !
    - ii. **Not unusual:**  
Mat 13:44 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid..."  
Joshua 7:20-21 And Achan answered Joshua and said, "Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel...When I saw among the spoils a beautiful Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. And there they are, hidden in the ground in the midst of my tent...."
  
  - c. Did he **disobey**?
    - i. Owner depicted as a careful, thoughtful man
    - ii. Unlikely he gave 100 lbs of precious metal with no clear instructions
    - iii. As in, toss a sack of money and ride off...
    - iv. More likely, perfectly clear: "I must go away and so cannot manage my affairs myself. Here is a part of my estate. Do what I would do with it. Make it productive and useful."

**C. The Return**

After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

- 1. **Long Delay** (key theme)
  - a. How long? polun chronon used only one other time in NT  
John 5:5-6 Now a certain man was there [at the Pool of Bethesda] who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been that way a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?"
  
  - b. How long? Perhaps a decades long absence....

**Parable of the Talents (4)**  
**17 October 2004**

2. **Sudden Return?** Not this time.
  - a. Not in this parable, because suddenness of the return not relevant
    - i. Not about **preparation** for a **sudden event** (like bridegroom)
    - ii. Not about being **caught** in the **act** (householder, unfaithful servant)
  - b. Rather, this is **behavior** measured **over** a long period of **time**
    - i. Lord knew reasonable profit : time ratio would be
    - ii. Can't be faked by last minute enterprise
    - iii. More importantly, bad servant didn't care....

**D. The Reckoning**

After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

1. sunairei logon - "settled accounts"
  - a. technical, commercial phrase
  - b. Inspect the books; close out the transaction

Luke 18:23-25 ...the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. And when he had begun to settle/reckon, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made.

2. A **Reward** for **Good Service**

So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a little, I will make you ruler over much. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will make you ruler over much. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

- a. **Praises** their **conduct** - Eu - lit. "Good"
- b. **Honors** their **obedience**
  - i. **Faithful** - as earlier parable - "you did what you were supposed to do"
  - ii. Now, **good** - "your faithfulness reflects your character"
- c. **Rewards** their **stewardship**
  - i. As before, From little to much
  - ii. As before, authority ("kathistami")
  - iii. Faithful exercise of the lesser trust leads to the reward of a greater trust
- d. **Blesses them** - "Enter into the joy of your Lord"
  - i. Only here in NT (or whole Bible for that matter)
  - ii. Curious phrase - personal, intimate - more than a handshake
  - iii. Why is the Lord joyful? At his return? At the money he found out he had made? I think, rather, at the revealed **character** of his **servants**...

3 John 1:4 I have no greater joy than this, to hear that my children are walking in the truth.

3. **Making a Scene**

Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you, that you are a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.'

- a. **Excuses, excuses**
  - i. **Acknowledges** his **authority** - "lord..." (kurios), but then...
  - ii. **Attacks his character** - "I knew you, that you are a hard man"
    - (1) You are **mean** - sklaros
      - (a) fierce winds of Mediterranean (destroy ships)
      - (b) vicious speech of ungodly against God

**Parable of the Talents (4)**  
**17 October 2004**

- (c) stubbornness of an unbroken horse
- (d) 1 Sam 25:3 Nabal was “harsh and evil”; his own wife calls him “a man of worthlessness” and “a fool”
- (e) **Not a compliment**

- (2) “Reaping where you have not sown, etc.”
  - (a) Clearly **not** intended as a **compliment**
  - (b) Lives off the backs of other people
  - (c) “you go in and take the profit after someone else has done all the work”

iii. **Defends himself, blames his Lord** - “I was afraid”

- (1) Fundamental argument for his disobedience
- (2) phobeo - “terrified”; used for people fleeing in terror
- (3) “You are mean, greedy, and exploitative. You are so scary that I was too terrified to obey you. It’s your fault, then, if I didn’t make anything of this money you gave me.”
- (4) No sorrow. No guilt. No apology.

iv. Parting Shot - **Insults his expectations, Implies greed**

- (1) “Look, you have yours”
- (2) Idea - he shouldn’t complain, because he got his talent back
- (3) Implication, to expect more would be unreasonable and greedy

v. What a false view of the Master’s character this is...

4. **Not so fast...**

But his lord answered and said to him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

a. He “**answers**” him

- i. Accepts the implicit challenge of his argument
- ii. Now he will defend himself and prove the servant wrong

b. “**Wicked**” - because he lies

- i. “You say I am hard man, but make no attempt to please me?”
- ii. “You say I expect gain w/o personally working, yet entrusted with my assets, you make no attempt to meet that expectation?”
- iii. “You say the receipt of this trust terrified you, yet you made no objection?”
- iv. “If you truly believed these things, if you were truly scared, you would have done something to **ensure** gain”
- v. “Even if you were too incompetent or fearful to undertake active industry with the money, you could have simply deposited it with the bankers to earn interest - “a full-proof, and fool-proof, plan”
  - (1) “ought therefore” - lit. “it was therefore necessary”
  - (2) If all this was true, then you **must** do this...

vi. Story doesn’t pass smell test. What is **real reason**?

c. “**Lazy**” - oknaros

- i. While others engaged in business and trade, he did **nothing at all**
- ii. Nothing to do with fear, just couldn’t be bothered
- iii. Begs question of what else this guy had to do...how lazy is that!

**Parable of the Talents (4)**  
**17 October 2004**

5. **Judgment** - “cast into the outer darkness”
- a. As before, **cut off** from the household of the Master
  - b. As before, place of misery and bitter wrath

E. The **Lesson** - Part One

1. Parables **non-comprehensive**

- a. **Distinctions** in “bad” characters
  - (1) Servant abusing, rioting, believing no consequences
  - (2) Servant shirking all responsibility - get away from it
  - (3) People who casually and inadequately prepared
  - (4) Clearly **not all the same** people
  
- b. “**Kingdom** parables”
  - (1) Do not apply to everyone on the earth, at all times, equally
  - (2) Clearly not about people who have no knowledge of God
  
- c. So, must not **force-fit** to everyone in our applications, either
  - (1) Leading **universal themes**
    - (a) Characteristics of Xst
    - (b) Praiseworthy and wicked behaviors
    - (c) Principles of Xtn living
  
  - (2) **Selective truths**  
Certain people, at certain times, places, and situations
  
- d. Why point this out? This parable frequently universalized in this manner

III. **Assignment**

- A. **You** interpret...
- B. [Pass out questions]

## **Parable of the Talents: Lesson 5**

### **Pre-Study Handout**

1. The “Lord” in the story obviously represents Jesus Christ. What does the parable reveal about his character, his life, or his works?
  
2. Does the parable have a stated lesson? What is it? What does it mean?
  
3. How does this parable interact with the previous parables? Are there common themes or events? Teachings reinforced or clarified?
  
4. Does this parable have new lessons or themes not previously explored?
  
5. Who do the servants in this parable represent? Are there lessons we are meant to learn from the differences in their behavior, character, and outcome?
  
6. How does the “evil” servant’s view of his master translate into a view of the character of God?
  
7. When does the judgment represented in this parable take place?
  
8. What do the talents represent in real-life, if anything?
  
9. Is this parable about money and the stewardship of money in the Christian life? If so, what does it say?
  
10. Is this parable about economic systems? Does it teach, endorse, or presuppose a particular economic viewpoint? Is God a capitalist?
  
11. How can the Master demand that the servant put money in the bank, if lending at interest is condemned in the Bible? Does this have a spiritual equivalent or relevance to the spiritual message of the parable?
  
12. Any other questions you want to ask or answer?

**Parable of the Talents (5)**  
**24 October 2004**

**I. Introduction**

**A. Text - Parable of the Talents - Matthew 25:14-30**

"For (the kingdom of heaven is like) a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.'  
His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.'  
His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.'

But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

**B. Review**

1. Review story, if needed
2. Remind about group discussion based on questions

**II. Exposition**

**A. The Master**

*Q1. The "Lord" in the story obviously represents Jesus Christ. What does the parable reveal about his character, his life, or his works?*

1. How is Xst the man of **authority** and **property**?

- a. Creator of all things; Owner of all things; One for whose glory all things tend  
Col 1:15ff He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For **by Him all things were created** that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. **All things were created through Him and for Him.**

b. Authority over all things

Matthew 7:29 "...**Taught** them as one having authority"

Mark 1:27 "With authority he commands even the **unclean spirits**, and they obey him"

Daniel 7:13-14 " I was watching in the night visions, And behold, *One* like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that **all peoples**, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion *is* an **everlasting** dominion, which shall not pass away, And His kingdom *the one* Which shall not be destroyed.

Matt 28: 18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "**All authority** has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

- c. A **kingdom** parable: he is the king and head of the church



**Parable of the Talents (5)**  
**24 October 2004**

2. How is Xst the man of **travel**?
- a. **Goes away** to the “far country” - in a real sense Xst is **absent** and **separate**
    - i. We can have: grace... spirit... love... knowledge... of Xst
    - ii. But to have **Xst himself** ?  
Phil 1:23 For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire **to depart and be with Christ**, which is far better.
  - b. “Long time” = 40 for Jerusalem judgment; 2000+ for end  
Long enough that “scoffers will come in the last days...saying, ‘Where is the **promise** of His **coming**? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.’ “ [2Peter 3:3]
  - c. What does Xst **leave behind**?
    - i. His **Word**, to instruct his servants
    - ii. According to our parables, His **Stewardships**
    - iii. [His Spirit, to empower them, though strictly speaking, **not a factor** in these parables, as these stories are about human responsibility....]
    - iv. *Q. Are these parables anti-Calvinist, or anti-evangelical (i.e., works oriented)? How would you defend them against this charge?*

**B. The Talents**

*Q8. What do the talents in this story represent in real life?*

*Q9. Is this parable about money and the stewardship of money in the Xtn life? If so, what does it say?*

1. **Xst and money**

- a. **Taught much** on subject: some say most frequent topic...
- b. *Q. Is any of that instruction directed towards the idea of a duty to be financially productive? To multiply our assets? Is that a concern for Xst?*
- c. Character of the teaching the **opposite**
  - i. Tries to get people to part with wealth
  - ii. Cautions about concerns over gaining of wealth
  - iii. Explodes myths of wealth = security
- d. What then?
  - i. All our wealth certainly a gift from God
  - ii. As such, brings a responsibility for wise use (though not utilitarianism)
  - iii. But certainly no concept of needing to create a financial return for God

2. If talents not wealth, **what** then?

- a. Again, **stewardships** in the kingdom
  - i. A broad class
  - ii. Gifts, responsibilities, providences
  - iii. By nature, can be used for “kingdom increase”
- b. Key point: **Distributed** according to the **wisdom** of the **Master**
  - i. Stewardships **vary** in **size**, but...
    - (1) **None** are “small” in the sense of **unimportant** (talents big)  
*Q. Where else do we see this idea?*
    - (2) No guilt for **receiving** small stewardship; guilt in how managed
  - ii. Stewardship **vary** according to **ability**, but...
    - (1) Not **merit**, for ability is **of God** (breakdown of analogy)
    - (2) God gives to each **exactly** what is **suited** to them at the time

**Parable of the Talents (5)**  
**24 October 2004**

**C. The Servants**

*Q5. Who do the servants in this parable represent? Are there lessons we are meant to learn from the differences in their behavior, character, and outcome?*

1. What do they have in **common**?
  - a. All **servants** of the Master
  - b. All **receive talents**; stewardship in the Master's household
  - c. Once again, a kingdom parable
    - i. Not a parable of world at large, though some aspects apply
    - ii. "Visible church" parable, yet can be universalized in many respects
  
2. What makes them **different**?
  - a. **Measured** difference: **productivity**
  - b. But, only a manifestation of a **character** difference
  
3. "**Good**" servants
  - a. Again: marked by **obedience**
  - b. Again: marked by **faithfulness w/o supervision**
  - c. Again: marked by **perseverance during long delay**  
Again: **Believed** the master would **return**, behaved accordingly
  
  - d. New: marked by a **union** of **wills** with the Master
    - i. Sought in Master's absence exactly what he would have sought if present
    - ii. **Gain** upon his **capital**
  
  - e. New: marked by **lack of complaint, envy, or contempt**
    - i. Did not fight over varying distribution of talents
    - ii. Did not compete or sabotage (not, The Apprentice)
  
4. "**Wicked**" servant
  - a. Marked by **disobedience**
    - i. Did **not** even **attempt** a productive stewardship
    - ii. "Past performance no guarantee of future results..."
  
  - b. Marked by **lazy self-centeredness**
    - i. Attitude: simply could not be **bothered**
    - ii. Yet, could not have had any other **purpose** in life...
    - iii. Did so in spite of **long-term testimony** of other servants
  
  - c. Marked by **contempt** of the Master
    - i. **Excused** himself
    - ii. **Blamed** the Master's greed and mean nature
  
5. **Lessons**
  - a. What does our **obedience look** like?
    - i. Obey? Unsupervised? Persevering?
    - ii. Union of will?
    - iii. Envy or anger over our stewardship or others?

*Q6. How does the "evil" servant's view of his master translate into a view of the character of God?*

- i. Amongst the world, of course...
- ii. But what about within the visible church?!!!

**Parable of the Talents (5)**  
**24 October 2004**

**D. The Judgment**

*Q7. When does the judgment in this parable take place?*

**1. Timing**

- a. Pharisees, Jewish leaders **lost place** and **nation**
  - i. One thing they most desired to protect
  - ii. Ultimate reason for Xst's murder
  - iii. Complacency, attitude, judgment **fit, but...**
  
- b. Parable seems to me to have an **end focus**
  - i. **Nature** of stewardships, of absence and return, and esp. the nature of reward
  - ii. Does not have a Jerusalem judgment **parallel** - fits Last Days perfectly
  
- c. Important (new) Point: Jerusalem judgment a **localized miniature** of Last Day

**2. Nature**

Again: **care** and **exactness** of God's assessments

- i. Settle accounts - reckons **exactly**
- ii. Explains and justifies decision

Proverbs 22:12 If you say, "Surely we did not know this," Does not He who weighs the hearts consider it? He who keeps your soul, does He not know it? And will He not render to each man according to his deeds?

Rom 2:2.5-11 But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth...the righteous judgment of God, who "will render to each one according to his deeds": eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness -- indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For there is no partiality with God.

Rev 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

**3. Reward**

- a. Again: **Reward** of the faithful with a greater stewardship
- b. *Q. What is the joy of the Lord. What will it be to enter into it?*
  - i. We think of day of Xst's return as day of joy for us...but what about for him?
    - (1) Day in which his **reign** fully **established**
    - (2) Day in which the **last enemy**, death, is **conquered**
    - (3) Day in which he is **united** with his **bride**
    - (4) Day in which he sees **fruits** of his **death** - the obedience of elect - and **rewards them** from his throne
  - ii. And for us?

**4. Punishment**

- a. Again: Nature of **judgment** of wicked servant
  - i. Loss of place in household, Consignment to the outer darkness
  - ii. Ungodly sorrow and malice
  
- b. *Q. Did God make a mistake with the wicked servant? Did he mess up God's plan?*
  - i. According to his ability, worthy of the one talent, yet he fails completely
  - ii. Failure measured by a standard vs. failure measured by providence

**Parable of the Talents (5)**  
**24 October 2004**

E. The **Lesson**

*Q2. Does the parable have a stated lesson? What does it mean?*

*Q3. How does this parable interact with the previous parables? Are there common themes or events? Teachings reinforced or clarified?*

*Q4. Does this parable have new lessons or themes not previously explored?*

1. **Common** themes?

- a. Nature and character of the Master
- b. Stewardships
- c. Two kinds of people
- d. Handling of the stewardship a revealer of character
- e. Nature of the reward and judgment

2. **Stated Lesson?**

“For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away.”

- a. Also **present** in the **earlier** parables, but not stated outright
  - i. Maidens lose place at wedding feast
  - ii. Unfaithful servant loses place in household; faithful receives greater place
- b. Here, given as the **primary lesson** of this parable
- c. Makes this parable a **statement of fact**
  - i. “This is what the kingdom is like, it is a place where those who have receive more, etc.”
  - ii. Like when Xst says “Last shall be first, first last”
  - iii. Not an admonition (not first, anyway), but an **explanation**

3. **Missing** themes?

- a. Admonition to watch
- b. Admonition to be prepared
- c. Not contradicted, but assumed - this parable about **behavior measured over time**

4. **New Ideas**

- a. Behavior measured over **time**
- b. God **desires** an **increase** from his distributed stewardships.

i. *Q. What is the increase which God seeks?*

Matt 5:14-16 You are the **light** of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they **light** a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives **light** to all *who are* in the house. Let your **light so shine** before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Matt 13:33 Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."

Matt 28:18ff And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

ii. *Q. Is there a lesson in this parable that we must improve upon gifts given or suffer loss? Isn't that Arminian or works? How does it square with election?*

- (1) Compare sower parable - explanation first!
- (2) But still can infer an application - but not panicked fear

**Parable of the Talents (5)**  
**24 October 2004**

**F. Economics**

*Q11. How can the Master demand that the servant put money in the bank, if lending at interest is condemned in the Bible? Does this have a spiritual equivalent or relevance to the spiritual message of the parable?*

*Q10. Is this parable about economic systems? Does it teach, endorse, or presuppose a particular economic viewpoint? Is God a capitalist?*

**1. Bankers and interest?**

- a. Doesn't really have a **spiritualization**
  - i. "Put it in the bank" - no spiritual equivalent
  - ii. Serves purpose of parable to expose lazy and lying nature of wicked servant
  
- b. Not a commentary on lawfulness or unlawfulness of interest
  - i. Though, interest only unlawful in **lending amongst brethren** in OT
  - ii. And, questionable whether prohibition would apply to **commercial loan**
  - iii. Point was to **protect the poor**
  - iv. Not to limit enterprise, in which the person receives rent for use of capital

**2. Economic Lessons? Well, if you insist...same as rest of Scripture**

- i. God recognizes **private property** (You shall not steal, covet)
- ii. God encourages **industriousness**
- iii. God does **not** encourage **acquisition** of **wealth** as a life goal - a fact which makes a literal application of this parable questionable, since that is the entire point
- iv. Parables **not** there to teach economics, any more than parable of the unjust judge is to teach law, or parable of the vineyard workers is to teach labor relations!
- v. Witness how anemic this all becomes if we stray from the strong spiritual concepts embodied here!

**G. The Last Word**

*12. Any other questions you want to ask or answer?*

**Parable of the Talents (6)**  
**31 October 2004**

**I. Introduction**

**A. Review**

1. **Lessons about Xst**
  - a. Authority; Property, Travel
  - b. Delegation of stewardships within kingdom
  - c. Departure, Delay, Sudden return
  
2. **Lessons about People**
  - a. **Good**
    - i. Watch - Live in awareness of Lord's return
    - ii. Prepare - Live obediently
    - iii. Faithfully, wisely, profitably steward Master trusts
    - iv. Prepared for, and persevere through, Master's delay
  
  - b. **Wicked**
    - i. Indifferent - Live without awareness of coming judgment
    - ii. Unfaithful - abuse Kingdom trust for satisfying ego and lusts
    - iii. Casual - desiring privileges, w/o true commitment
    - iv. Lazy - Cannot be bothered with stewardship; blame Master
  
3. **Lessons about Judgment and Reward**
  - a. Care, exactness, righteousness of God's judgments
  - b. Gracious reward and blessing of faithful
  - c. Great terrors upon wicked
  
4. All in **parables**

**B. Text**

Matt 25:31-46 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'

Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'

And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.'

Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?'

Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.'

And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

**Parable of the Talents (6)**  
**31 October 2004**

**II. Exposition**

**A. No More Parables**

1. Parable form falls away; now **only doctrine**
  - a. Sometimes called “Parable of Sheep and Goats” - **probably an overstatement**
    - i. If parable, only in a limited or minor sense
    - ii. No real allegory here; just an illustration (i.e., a **simile**)
  - b. *Q. But isn't Xst the Good Shepherd and His people sheep?* A. Yes, but...
    - i. Shepherds do not punish (slaughter) goats and bless (spare) sheep
    - ii. Read carefully. What is stated point of illustration?  
“...as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats...”
    - iii. Two points here which Xst particularly wants to seal in our minds
      - (1) Authoritative **division**
      - (2) **Two** clearly distinguished and distinguishable **groups**
      - (3) Remember this - we will return to it

**B. The Man of Travel**

- Q. Where do we begin this time?* A. **Return**
- i. “When the Son of Man comes...”
    - (1) Flood came
    - (2) Master of the Stewards came
    - (3) Bridegroom came
    - (4) Master of the Talents came
    - (5) Now, **Son of Man** comes
  - ii. **Logical conclusion of direction** Xst's instruction/parables
    - (1) Began with events that would **precede** his coming
    - (2) Then, **suddenness** of his coming
    - (3) Then, **delay** of his coming
    - (4) Now, here it is first - we **start** with it

When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

**C. The Man of Authority**

1. **Authority of Xst** visibly, clearly, undeniably **revealed**
  - a. Before, his **coming** would be unmistakable
  - b. Now, his **power** is unmistakable
2. Uses the **Messianic Title** - “Son of Man”
  - a. OT - just means **human**, as a figure of speech
    - i. First 12 appearances in Hebrew couplets - “man”, “son of man”
    - ii. Becomes God's “name” for Ezekiel (93 times)
    - iii. Messianic aspect comes from one verse (and even here, just a description)  
Daniel 7:13 “I was watching in the night visions, and behold, one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before Him.”
  - b. Nevertheless, in NT, Xst's **self-chosen** Messianic title
    - i. Emphasizes, obviously, that Xst is the God-Man
    - ii. Becomes a Messianic title used by the church as well (Acts 7:56)  
Acts 7:56 ...“Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!”

**Parable of the Talents (6)**  
**31 October 2004**

3. Five **undeniable manifestations of authority** (as in parables - no ? of authority on return)

a. **Revelation of his glory** - "When the Son of Man comes in His glory..."

i. doxa - splendor, magnificence, excellence, and (crucially) brightness

ii. With God, an attribute, but one which has a **visible** manifestation

1 John 1:5 This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

iii. So, when God manifests glory, does so with a pure, powerful brightness

(1) Thus, in OT, glory of God something that "**appears**"

(2) Moses catches it, has to cover his face

(3) The New Heavens and Earth are **illuminated** by it

Revelation 21:23 The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light.

iii. For Xst, to "come in his glory" is to return with this visible manifestation of purity, holiness, deity - a blinding brightness around his person

b. **Manifestation of his authority over Heaven** - "...and all the holy angels with Him..."

i. Angels almost countless in number, often terrifying in appearance

Rev 5:11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many **angels** around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands...

Heb 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels...

ii. *Q. With how many angels does he appear ? A. All*

i. Imagine that...

ii. Side-note: Angels are the servants of the judgment (more later)

c. His **public enthronement** - "...then He will sit on the throne of His glory..."

i. Throne is the **place of Kings**, and this, the **King of Kings**

ii. Throne of **glory**: both in **doctrine** but again in visible manifestation

Rev 20:11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it...

(1) leukos - from an obscure word for "light"

(2) Not just white paint - dazzlingly bright and illuminated

iii. This **sight a terror to the wicked**

Rev 6:12-17 I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

d. **Manifestation of authority over Earth** - "All the nations will be gathered before Him..."

i. **Universal** - "all the *ethne*"

ii. **Not an optional** engagement, or an invitation ("will be...")

iii. **Not done by King** himself; brought before as he sits on throne

Matt 24:31 "And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

e. **First act of power: judicial separation** : "and He will separate them one from another"



**Parable of the Talents (6)**  
**31 October 2004**

**D. Judgment**

All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

1. The **Picture**

a. Xst sits on brilliant throne of light, with entire human race amassed before him

b. Then, a separation

i. **Angels** go forth, **make a division**

Matt 13:49 "So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, and separate the wicked from among the just..."

ii. aphoridzo - a complete division

(1) Acts 19:9 when Paul separates Ephesian disciples from synagogue

(2) Gal 2:2, when Peter separates from Gentile brothers

(3) Luke 6:22 Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you *from their company*, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

2. The **Illustration: I** - "...as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats..."

a. What is **not** the **point** here?

i. Xst is called Good shepherd, sheep consistent image for his people, but...

ii. Shepherd does not separate sheep to cuddle, goats to slaughter

iii. Shepherd responsible to provide loving care for his sheep and his goats!

iv. Not sheep good - goats bad; both in sacrificial system, both types of Xst

b. What is the **point**?

i. An **authoritative division** (shepherd divides)

ii. Two **clearly distinguished** groups

(1) Two different animals, even **visibly** different animals

(2) Not only no confusion by the shepherd (or judge)...

(3) But a lesson about the vast gulf separating these groups

3. The **Illustration: II** - "And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left."

a. **Right hand** of King's throne a place of **first honor**

1Kings 2:19 Bathsheba therefore went to King Solomon, to speak to him for Adonijah. And the king rose up to meet her and bowed down to her, and sat down on his throne and had a throne set for the king's mother; so she sat at his right hand.

b. **Multitude** of verses about Xst sitting on the right hand of God

i. *The* basic description of His Ascension/Glorification

ii. No higher or **more** honorable place to be except the throne itself!

iii. Still, a symbolic gesture, not **moral** or **esoteric** (better right profile?)

c. **Limit**: Left side not **necessarily** a place of dishonor...(but...)

Matt 20:20ff Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him. And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She said to Him, "Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom."

i. Right #1, left #2

ii. Left only a bad place to be if only **one** group receiving **honor**

**E. Two Kinds of People: I - The Right Hand**

"Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'"

1. **Second act of power**: royal **proclamation** - "Then the King will say to those on His right hand..."

a. Not Jesus, not Teacher, not even Master

b. basileus - **king**; monarch

**Parable of the Talents (6)**  
**31 October 2004**

2. The **Proclamation**

- a. **King's Command** - "Come!", "Come here!"
  - i. Again, imperative (Command), not invitation
  - ii. Blessing or cursing non-optional
  
- b. **Father's Blessing** - "you blessed of my Father"
  - i. First differentiation: **Not** what **they** have done, but what **God** has done
  - ii. eulogeo - praise, consecrate; of people, to receive God's favor
  - iii. OT: Privilege of Father to "bless" his children according to his will  
Genesis 49:28 All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father spoke to them. And he blessed them; he blessed each one according to his own blessing.
  
- c. **Family Privilege** - "inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"
  - i. **Inheritance**
    - (1) Implies relationship, by family ties
    - (2) No small legacy - a kingdom! (How great a salvation?)
  
  - ii. The **Missing Doctrine**
    - (1) Said before don't try to intrude doctrines when not in text
    - (2) Some struggled with "Arminian/works" nature of parables
    - (3) But when Xst finally abandons parables, what doctrine emerges?
  
  - iii. **Divine Election** - "Prepared for you...from the foundation of the world"
    - (1) Not from when you decided; not from when you obeyed...
    - (2) From before you even existed

3. The **Reason**

'...for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'

- a. How did he **identify the sheep**?
  - i. **One thing** showed them to be those blessed of the Father, in family of God
  - ii. One characteristic behavior which identified them as sheep-side
  - iii. **Mercy** (and **practical** mercy)
  
- b. This is **Stewardship** (connection with parables?)
  - i. *Q. Whose food, water, home, clothes, time?* A. Their **own**
  - ii. Gave of what they had, so by definition, of what they had received
  
- c. As before, a **simple** measure: How did you behave towards my needy brethren...?

4. The **Response**

Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'

- a. **Surprised!!**- "Hey, we appreciate it, but there's been some kind of mistake"
- b. Character shines out, even as they "answer" Xst sitting on his throne
  - i. **Honesty** - won't take credit or reward for what they did not do
    - (1) Don't say they didn't do these things
    - (2) Just not to him!
  
  - ii. **Purity** of heart - didn't live so for reward, or even with comprehension of what they were truly doing (ministering to Xst)
  - iii. Rather, because they share **basic trait** of Xst - **compassion** (10 lepers!)

**Parable of the Talents (6)**  
**31 October 2004**

5. An **Explanation**

And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

a. **amen** - "truly", "assuredly"

i. A word we say after prayer, to mean "it is so"

ii. Here, no argument or contradiction even **possible**

b. **Basic Principle:** Xst is with the lowliest (even **esp.** with the lowliest)

i. From Good Samaritan, to James' poor man; From the Xst's unseemly members, to the Corinthian judges

ii. From the Sermon on the mount to the denouncement of the Pharisees

c. **Basic Principle:** As head of body, Xst is part of every member

i. So, what is done to them, is done to him

ii. Not just the good, but the bad, too

(1) Slander

(2) Judgment

(2) Exclusion

d. *Q. Is this universal, or limited to Xtn hungry, thirsty, naked, sick, stranger, imprisoned?*

i. Doctrinally, for the purposes here, **limited**

ii. **But**, vital lesson of Scripture, no test of faith before mercy

(1) We aid the brethren **first**

(2) But the compassionate heart is moved by all need, just as with Xst

(3) Test is not faith, but **need!**

Ezekiel 22:29 "The people of the land have used oppressions, committed robbery, and mistreated the poor and needy; and they wrongfully oppress the stranger."

Proverbs 14:31 He who oppresses the poor reproaches his Maker, But he who honors Him has mercy on the needy.

6. The **End** - "[And] the righteous [will go into] into eternal life

a. Righteous, by declaration, but **also** by life lived

b. **Reward** - eternal life

**Parable of the Talents (7)**  
**7 November 2004**

**I. Introduction**

**A. Text**

Matt 25:31-46 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'

Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'

And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.'

Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?'

Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.'

And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

**B. Review**

**1. Xst - The Man of Authority**

- a. **Revelation** of his **glory** in a visible brightness
- b. **Manifestation** of **authority** over **heaven** in return w/ all angels
- c. His **public enthronement** on the great bright throne
- d. **Manifestation** of **authority** over **earth** in the summoning of the nations
- e. **Judicial separation** of the people

**2. Day of Final Judgment**

- a. **Authoritative division** of the nations
- b. **Two** clearly distinguished and distinguishable **groups**

**3. Two Kinds of People(I) - Sheep**

- a. Given a **place of honor**  
Right hand of the throne
- b. Receive a **royal decree**
  - i. Spiritual **identity** revealed: Blessed of the Father, elect of God
  - ii. Right of **heir** promised: Commanded to enter kingdom inheritance
  - iii. Living **identification**: mercy
  - iv. Final **End**: eternal life
- c. An Interesting **Debate**
  - i. Honest and Pure of heart: sheep claim **mistaken identity**
  - ii. Xst's **assurance**: your ministry to brethren = ministry to me
- d. Two **principles**
  - i. As head of body, Xst part of every member: done to them = done to him
  - ii. Xst with lowliest (even **esp.** with lowliest)

**Parable of the Talents (7)**  
**7 November 2004**

**II. Exposition**

**A. Two Kinds of People: II - The Left Hand**

Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, cursed [ones], into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'

**1. A Second Proclamation**

**a. Opposites**

- i. Exact parallel and precise opposition to sheep
- ii. Earlier **illustrated** in our parables (servants, maidens, stewards)
- iii. Now **defined**

**b. Dismissal** (approach) - "Depart from me"

i. Again, **imperative** (command)

- (1) Important lesson: Judgment certain, verdict final
- (2) In this case, "You are out of options...."

ii. Simple word: "go away"

iii. More importantly, "go away **from me**"

- (1) As in parables...
  - (a) Wicked servant - appointed portion w/ hypocrites
  - (b) Unprepared maidens - shut out of wedding
  - (c) Faithless steward - cast out

(2) All picture this event: **Banished** from presence of Xst

**c. Curse** (blessing) - "cursed [ones]"

i. **Vocative** - Direct address

- (1) Like saying, "David" or "Ian"
- (2) This is your **name**; your **identity**; who you are
- (3) "Blessed of my Father, Come, inherit the kingdom. Cursed ones, depart from me into the everlasting fire."

ii. **Perfect** tense: **completed** action with **ongoing**, existing result

- (1) Not **going** to be done, but **already** done
- (2) What follows not blessing/curse itself, but **result** of that condition

iii. **kataraoimai** - "curse"

- (1) Strong word: **imprecation**
- (2) **Curse**: call for exercise of divine power to doom object of curse
- (3) Think Imprecatory Psalms - to call for **divine doom**
- (4) **Be** cursed: to be object of that exercise of power

Mark 11:12ff Now the next day, when they had come out from Bethany, He was hungry. And seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. In response Jesus said to it, "Let no one eat fruit from you ever again.".....Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. And Peter, remembering, said to Him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away."

iv. *Q.* *What is the subtle difference here?* A. "Of my Father"

- (1) No question but the curse is from God
- (2) But, emphasis may be impersonal compared to sheep
- (3) Curse of the **law** rests on them; sin and death
- (4) Consistent w/ emphasis below on personal responsibility

**Parable of the Talents (7)**  
**7 November 2004**

d. **Damnation** (Inheritance)

“Depart from me...into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels...And these will go away into everlasting punishment.”

i. “Eternal fire”; “eternal punishment”

- (1) Nothing mysterious here - exactly what they say in English
- (2) Unending **torment**
- (3) Pictured here as **burning** (most terrible of physical traumas)

ii. *hetoimadzo* - “prepared”, “made ready”

- (1) **Two** places **prepared**
- (2) One, an eternal **kingdom**
- (3) Other, a place of eternal **judgment** - the “lake of fire”
- (4) A physical resurrection, so two **real** places

iii. *Q. For whom was the everlasting fire prepared?*

- (1) A. Devil, his angels (fell in Satan’s rebellion)
- (2) A crucial **difference** in the **parallel**
  - (a) **Inheritance** prepared for **sheep**
  - (b) Does **not** say, eternal fire prepared for goats

iv. **Answers**

(1) **Arminian**

- (a) Eternal fire not made for man
- (b) God never “meant” for man to go to Hell, etc.
- (c) Oops! Romans 9:22

(2) **Biblical Theology**

- (a) Fall of Satan/angels pre-Fall of Man
- (b) Place of punishment originally for them, **afterwards** man
- (c) A bit esoteric, to say the least

(3) *Q. Anyone like to hazard an answer?*

2. **A Digression: Personal Responsibility**

a. Basic **Scripture** view

- i. **God** responsible for man’s **salvation**
- ii. **Man** responsible for man’s **sins (and consequences)**
- iii. Salvation a **free work** of a sovereign God
- iv. Man’s doom a **fair** and **righteous consequence** for sin

b. **Parable** view

- i. Personal **choices made** (revealing heart character)
- ii. Perfect **justice applied** based on those choices

c. **God made me do it!** - *Q. Is God’s sovereignty a defense for sin?* A. No

- i. *Q. All events (even sin) determined by eternal counsel of God?* A. Yes
- ii. *Q. Yet man, not God, responsible for their own sins?* A. Yes

(1) **Death of Xst**

Acts 2: 22-23 "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know -- Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death..."

**Parable of the Talents (7)**  
**7 November 2004**

**(2) Rejection of Gospel**

1 Peter 2:8 They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.

d. *Q. Why isn't God's sovereignty defense against guilt?* A. Question of wills

i. *Q. Do lost men sin **against** their own wills?* A. No

(1) Man not pictured as automaton or mindless robot...

(2) ...but a being of **will**; and fallen man **freely chooses** sin

James 1:13-15 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.

ii Men sin **freely**, w/o **compulsion**

(1) Did crucifiers of Xst do it involuntarily?

(2) Did Paul, when persecuting saints, wish to do otherwise?

(3) *Q. Is this a picture of fallen man - Desperately wishing to obey God, but hopelessly compelled to live sinful life they despise?*

Romans 1:32 ...who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

iii. *Q. But wait, aren't men slaves of sin?* A. Yes, but...

(1) **Voluntary** servitude

Rom6:16-19 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves...whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?... For...you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness

(2) **Love** their master

Prov 2:10ff ...wisdom enters your heart...to deliver you from the way of evil, from the man who speaks perverse things, from those who leave the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness; who rejoice in doing evil, and delight in the perversity of the wicked...

iv. *Q. Does this mean fallen men can choose to escape sin?*

(1) No. They are **truly** captives and slaves

(2) Why? **Corrupt heart, fallen nature**

(a) Will directed by heart, nature

Luke 6:45 "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

(b) Men sin, must sin, can basically do nothing but sin

(c) Yet not compelled **against own will** (every heart a witness)

(d) So, every man guilty, and every man responsible

**3. The Reason**

'...for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.'

a. How did he **identify** the goats?

i. **One thing** showed them to be cursed, worthy of Satan's end

ii. **One characteristic behavior** which identified them as goat-side

iii. **Merciless**

**Parable of the Talents (7)**  
**7 November 2004**

b. Again, **stewardship**

- i. *Q. Did the goats lack food, water, home, clothes, time?* A. No
- ii. They had all the same assets that the merciful sheep had

4. The **Response**

Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?'

a. Again, **surprise**

- i. "Wait a second, you've got this wrong...."
- ii. Argue, like the unprofitable servant

b. Excuse? **Lack of opportunity**

- i. Do not deny that Xst in need would be deserving of assistance
- ii. Do not deny his claim upon their assets
- iii. Rather, deny opportunity

c. Another **opposite**

- i. Sheep use this argument as a reason against reward
- ii. Goats use as argument against wrath
- iii. Both, of course, were wrong

5. The **Explanation**

Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.'

a. **Implication:** they helped **no one**...

b. **Why?**

- i. Lazy? Too **busy** to be bothered
- ii. Self-centered? Too **important** to be bothered
- iii. Self-righteous? Too **good** to be bothered
- iv. Law-based? Suffering is **deserved**
- v. We don't know....

c. What we **do** know...

- i. Had opportunities
- ii. Did not act
- iii. Felt **secure** and **defensible** in doing so
  - (1) Certainly felt no obligation
  - (2) Remember, neither sheep nor goats saw Xst in needy brethren
  - (3) Sole difference - not moved to compassion
  - (4) So, in self-**justification** (and self-**delusion**) passed-by

d. Whatever the reason, broke Xst's **one** commandment

John 13:34-35 [And Jesus said] "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

- i. A True Word
- ii. Distinction identifies sheep and goats...

6. The **End**

And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.

Again, work of Xst's angels

Matt 13 49-50 "So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."



**Parable of the Talents (8)**  
**14 November 2004**

**I. Introduction**

**A. Review**

**1. Doctrines explored**

- a. Xst as man of authority, property, travel
- b. Two kinds of people
- c. Judgment, reward, and punishment

**2. Xst's commands regarding his return, summarized**

- a. Be observant
- b. Be alert
- c. Be prepared
- d. Be obedient
- e. Be productive
- f. Persevere

**3. Limits?**

- a. Broad principles (as is frequent in NT)
- b. Not much elaboration or detail

**B. Q. Any Scripture which elaborates or clarifies how we should live in light of the return of Xst?**

**1. Entire NT (J.I.)**

Matt 28:18-20 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

- a. Acts: record of "go...make disciples"
- b. Gospels, letters: record of "teach them..."

**2. Specific NT elaboration**

- 2Peter 3:10-18
- James 5:7-20
- 1Thess 4:15-18; 5:1-23

**II. Exposition**

**A. Pursue Holiness: 2Peter 3:10-18**

**1. A Description: The Day of the Lord**

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up....the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat

- a. **Sudden** (using Xst's image): ...as a thief in the night...

**b. Violent and Fiery**

**i. The End of the Heavens**

- (1) Not heaven, but **space**, the atmosphere and sky
- (2) Catch fire, and are "dissolved" (lit., loosed)
- (3) Vanish with "noise of something rushing through the air"

**ii. The End of the Earth**

- (1) **Reduced** by fire to constituent parts
- (2) Not only earth but all **man** has **built** ("works in it")
- (2) Fire **so hot** basic elements of creation "**melt**" (i.e., turn to lava)

- c. Currently **divinely preserved** for this very purpose and end

2Peter 3:7 But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

**Parable of the Talents (8)**  
**14 November 2004**

2. Leading to an **Exhortation**

Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God...?

a. **Direct argument**

- i. **Not** because day is **coming**, but because of **nature of day**
- ii. **Particular nature** of “judgment” of heaven and earth (destruction by fire) leads to **this question** about Xtn living

b. *Q.* “*What sort of person is it necessary for you to be...in these things?*”

- i. A **question**, rather than an admonition or instruction!
- ii. Of course, an implied answer, but still left for you to make the conclusion

c. **Holiness as committed lifestyle**

i. **Holy conduct**

- (1) Broad meaning: a “way of life”
- (2) Can be good, bad, indifferent
- (3) Here, “holy” (hagios, consecrated to God)

ii. **Godliness**

- (1) Eusebia - basic concept **devotion** to something or someone
- (2) From this, idea of piety as person **committed** to God and **his** ways

iii. Important concepts

- (1) **Broad**, all-encompassing commitment
- (2) **Serious**, not casual
- (3) Consistent teaching of Xst

Luke 14:25-27 Now great multitudes went with [Jesus]. And He turned and said to them, “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple....So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.”

Mark 8:34-36 When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, “Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?”

Matt 7:14 “...Narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.”

d. **Earnest Future Orientation**

i. **Looking for**: waiting, yes, but use also implies an **expectation**

ii. **Hastening unto** (speudo)

- (1) All other NT uses refer to person hurrying w/ purpose

Luke 2:16 And [the shepherds] came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

(2) *Q.* *Can we move the day closer, or ourselves closer to the day? So what is the idea here?*

- (a) Picture: Man rushing towards something
- (b) Other forms carry meaning of “diligent endeavor”
- (c) So, “Earnest” future orientation (**not** casual)

(3) *Q.* *What does normal man do when he contemplates fiery judgment? A.* Run away! *Q.* *What does Xtn do? Why?*

**Parable of the Talents (8)**  
**14 November 2004**

**3. A New Creation**

Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

**a. New Creation**, described

- i. A **Physical** Dimension: earth and universe to replace that destroyed
- ii. A **Spiritual** Dimension: righteous, w/o sin (as Pre-Fall, but confirmed)

**b. Exhortation**

Therefore, beloved, looking for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, unspotted and unblemished; and understand that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation

- i. **Contemplation** of coming **new creation**.... (“looking for these things”)
- ii. ...Should lead to **active, future-oriented pursuit of holiness**
  - (1) **Active pursuit**: “be diligent”
    - (a) spoudadzo - earnest endeavor, a man hurrying w/ purpose
    - (b) Again, contrast w/ casual pursuit or interest
  - (2) **Future Oriented**: “to be found by him”
    - (a) heurisko - find, discover; refers to actual return of Xst
    - (b) Lit. for few people, yet life lived with this possibility in mind
    - (c) **Not**, “What do you want to be found **doing** at Xst’s return?”
    - (d) **But**, “What do you want to be found **being**?”

iii. **Holiness as purity**

- (1) “Unspotted” - aspilos; “Unblemished” - amomos
  - (a) Picture borrowed from sacrificial system

1Pet 1:18-19 ...knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.
  - (b) Sanctified life as **purity**
  - (c) Earlier emphasis, **extent**; here, **quality**
- (2) *Q. Standard here appears to be perfection, yet as Xtns mature they become more aware of shortcomings, and overall gap between themselves and God. What does this mean?*
  - (a) Does not mean we must be perfect, for such not possible

1John 1:8 If we say that we **have no sin**, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
  - (b) Rather, indicates **strength** of Xtn commitment called for by contemplation of Xst’s return and old/new creations
  - (c) **Eliminated**: casual Xtn; **indifferent** Xtn; **excuse-filled** Xtn

iv. **Peace**

- (1) Interesting: Only **one virtue** singled out for itemized mention
- (2) A Xtn **grace**
  - (a) Peace with God through salvation (epistle salutations)
  - (b) State of mind: inner peace (Phil 4:7)
- (3) A Xtn **lifestyle**
  - (a) Seek peace (1Pet 3:11)
  - (b) Pursue peace (Heb 12:14, 2Tim 2:22, Rom 14:19)
  - (c) Make peace (James 3:18)

**Parable of the Talents (8)**  
**14 November 2004**

- (d) Preach peace (Acts 10:36)
- (e) Called to peace (1Cor 7:15)
- (f) Live in peace (2Cor 13:11, 1Thess 5:13)
- (g) "Blessed are the peacemakers" (Matt 5:9)

(4) *Q. To what do we here refer?*

- (a) **Not** salvation peace, assumed here
- (b) Could be the **inner peace** of faith/obedience
- (c) Related texts show major emphasis on relationship-peace

**v. Understanding God's nature**

Therefore...be diligent...and understand that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation

**(1) Context**

(a) Whole discussion arose due to **scoffers** who **deny return**

2Pet 3:3-4 ...knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of creation."

(b) Peter explains delay is due to **God's merciful intentions**

2Pet 3:5ff For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

(2) *Q. All people, or all elect?*

- (a) Consider: "...the longsuffering of our Lord **is** salvation"
- (b) Either all saved, **or** longsuffering not directed towards all

(3) Understand this fact - an **Imperative Belief**

- (a) hegeomai - make a decision after weighing facts
- (b) **Imperative** form: not "this is a truth", but, "Conclude this!"

(4) Given coming new heavens and earth, imperative for Xtn to understand Xst's delay due to God's mercy - But, *Why?*

**4. Knowledge Applied**

You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

a. Constant **Chorus** of **Temptation** - "He isn't coming back"

As delay grows, even faithful believer susceptible to doubt

- (1) What if it isn't true?
- (2) Is all this for nothing?
- (3) Creeping doubt - not all at once, but an inch at a time

b. **Antidotes** to this slow-acting **poison**

i. **Fully understand** Xst's delay due to God's mercy

You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand

**Parable of the Talents (8)**  
**14 November 2004**

ii. **Beware!**

- (1) Temptation so **powerful**, mere belief of truth not enough  
...since you know this beforehand, **beware**
- (2) **phulasso** - "beware", lit. "guard"
- (3) **Guard** against **what**?
  - (a) Being "carried away" by this error, and so...
  - (b) Falling from "steadfastness"
  - (c) **stayrigmos** - "firm belief", "determined condition of mind"  
Luke 9:51 Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem...
  - (d) Falling refers to falling from "firm belief" of this particular truth, **not** falling from salvation

iii. **Actively seek spiritual growth**

- ...grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
- (1) **Doubt robs** us of vigor in obedience: half-hearted, complacent
  - (2) Xtn life **too difficult** to live **doubtfully**...
  - (3) **auxano** - "increase, grow" - another imperative
    - (a) Spiritual growth here put as a Xtn endeavor - you **do** this
    - (b) Same phrase elsewhere used as prayer for **God to do** this
    - (c) Divine sovereignty, human responsibility

**III. Lessons Learned**

- A. Knowledge of doctrines of the Last Day to be vital to Xtn living
- B. Contemplation of the future fiery renovation of heaven and earth should lead us to:

1. A broad-based lifestyle of committed holiness
2. An earnest future orientation

- C. Contemplation of the future righteous new creation should lead us to:

1. An active future-oriented pursuit of holiness (a frequent Scripture theme)

James 1:12 Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

1Cor 9:24-27 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 26 "To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God...He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death...To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it....And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power...and I will give him the morning star.

Rev3:12,21 "He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. And I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name....To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

2. A pursuit of holiness intensive in quality as well as extensive (before)

- D. Understanding of the reason for Xst's delay vital to Xtn living

1. We must comprehend God's longsuffering and merciful nature in this delay
2. We must guard against infection with doubt by the error of the wicked
3. We must commit ourselves to the pursuit of spiritual growth in Xst

**Parable of the Talents (9)**  
**21 November 2004**

**I. Introduction**

**A. Review**

1. Xst's **broad commands** regarding his return
  - a. Be observant
  - b. Be alert
  - c. Be prepared
  - d. Be obedient
  - e. Be productive
  - f. Persevere
  
2. **Other NT elaboration** on how we should live in light of the return of Xst
  - 2Peter 3
  - James 5
  - 1Thess 4-5

**B. 2Peter 3**

1. **Knowledge** of doctrines of the Last Day **vital** to Xtn living
2. **Contemplation** of the **future** fiery **renovation** of heaven and earth leads us to:
  - a. a **broad-based** lifestyle of **committed holiness**
  - b. an **earnest orientation** towards Xst's return
  
3. **Contemplation** of the **future** righteous new **creation** leads us to:
  - a. an active future-oriented **pursuit of holiness**
  - b. a pursuit of holiness **intensive in quality** as well as extensive in breadth
  
4. **Understanding reason** for Xst's **delay** vital to Xtn living
  - a. Must comprehend **God's** long-suffering and merciful **nature**
  - b. Must **guard against** infection with **doubt** by error of wicked
  - c. Must **commit** ourselves to **pursuit** of spiritual growth in Xst

**II. Exposition**

**A. Doom of the Wicked Wealthy (5:1-6)**

James 5:1-6 Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you! Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days. Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter. You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you.

1. **Intro** thoughts
  - a. Must be one of **most vivid** "literary" passages in entire NT
  - b. *Q. Condemnation of all rich?* A. No, but...
  - c. Wealthy, powerful so associated w/ behaviors, James doesn't qualify remarks
  
2. **Evils Done**
  - a. **Financial Fraud** - the wages of the laborers...which you kept back by fraud
    - i. **Withheld** lawful **wages** of their workers
    - ii. *Q. Why weren't they punished for robbery?*
      - (1) Wealth brings **power**
        - Pro 10:15 The rich man's wealth is his strong city
        - Pro 18:23 The poor man pleads, but the rich answers roughly
  
      - (2) Power includes ability to **manipulate law** and **judgment**

**Parable of the Talents (9)**  
**21 November 2004**

- b. **Judicial Fraud** - You have condemned, you have murdered the just
- i. Wealthy owner and hired worker **not equals** before law **in practice**
    - (1) Money bought **credibility**, outright **judgment**
    - (2) Manipulated justice system to further illegal enrichment  
Isaiah 3:14 The LORD will enter into judgment With the elders of His people And His princes: "For you have eaten up the vineyard; The plunder of the poor is in your houses.
  - ii. Used **false witness**, or false judgment
    - (1) katadikadzo - legal term, "give judgment against, declare guilty"
    - (2) Power and position used to cover false testimony
    - (3) Or, sat in judgment and find legally guilty, against true facts
  - iii. Judicial power used to impose **ultimate penalty**  
Guilt aggravated by peaceful nature of victims
- c. **Decadence**  
Used **illicit gain** to live in decadent **splendor** (think Roman emperors)
- (1) "Heaped up" treasure - **mountains** of wealth
  - (2) "pleasure", "luxury" - **self-indulgence, satisfaction** of every **lust**
  - (3) Grew "fat" on their unlawful gains

3. The **Evidence**

Surrounds them

- i. **Cries** of the **reapers**, and of their stolen wages  
Indeed the wages of the laborers...cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth
- ii. **Corrosion** of their heaping stores wealth  
Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire
- iii. **Oversatiation** (their fatness)  
You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter

4. **Coming Judgment**

- a. Loss of wealth
- b. Misery

**B. Suffering Saints (5:7-12)**

James 5:7-11 Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door! My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord -- that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.

1. **Strange Transition** - Therefore be patient, brethren...

- a. *Q. Why should Xtns be patient because of future sufferings of wicked rich?*
- b. A. Because **they** are the "just" ones being killed and robbed  
James 2:6-7 You have [honored the rich man and] dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts? Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called?

2. A **Question Implied**

- a. *Q. How should Xtns face suffering?*
- b. A. With the **patience** which comes from living in light of Xst's return

**Parable of the Talents (9)**  
**21 November 2004**

i. **Patience:** *makrothumeo*

(1) **Defined:** “state of emotional calm (w/o complaint or irritation) in the face of provocation or suffering” - *Louw-Nida*

- (a) Attribute of God (“long-suffering”)
- (b) Attribute of people of God

(2) **promise-based**

- (a) Not a general “hopefulness”, but **faith-based**
- (b) Based on **specific promises** of God - “This will happen”  
Hebrews 6:11-15 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you." And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.
- (c) See also, 2Thess 1:3-10

(2) **future-oriented**

- (a) Not abstract Zen-like content, going **out-of-time**
- (b) **Time-based:** Has The End in constant sight
- (c) Not oriented towards current circumstances, but future

ii. Not **stoicism**

- (1) Emotional disconnection, ability to suffer w/o “scenes”
- (2) Based on false pagan fatalism and rejection of emotion

iii. Not **positive thinking**

- (1) Self-delusion that your life is not as miserable as it is
- (2) “Wish” it away, or “imagine” it gone, like a childhood terror

c. Biblical **Patience:** Briefly **Defined**

- i. Steadfast waiting, enabled by faith in God’s promises
- ii. For NT Xtn, those promises centered around return of Xst

3. **Patience Expounded**

Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord  
Establish your hearts, because the coming of the Lord is at hand.

a. Two **questions**...one **answer**

- i. *Q. How long must we be patient?*
- ii. *Q. On what promise is our patience based?*
- iii. A. Coming of the Lord - Promise of Xst’s return is primary well of strength for suffering Xtn

c. Action-based, **positive definition** for patience

- i. Patience in Scripture frequently defined by **negatives** (Israel)
  - (1) Grumbling against God
  - (2) Apostasy
- ii. Here, a **positive:** “Establish your hearts”
  - (1) staridzo - “make stable”, “firmly affix”
  - (2) Imperative, something **we** can and must do (w/ grace)

d. **Problem:** Specific comfort drawn from **imminence** of Xst’s coming

- i. These readers went to Xst first...way first



**Parable of the Talents (9)**  
**21 November 2004**

- ii. Retrospect, seems like false hope
  - (1) “ambulance is on its way” when paramedics aren’t even on-duty
  - (2) No good answer here, I’m afraid...
  - (3) Text clear: not mere coming, but **soon** coming is basis for command
  
- iii. Different, divine time standard (2Pet 3)
  - (1) Possible, but still feels like weak answer in specific example
  - (2) Mystery? Any ideas

**4. Patience Exemplified**

See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. You also be patient.

**a. The Farmer**

- i. Crop-farming not a high speed occupation
  - (1) Much work, but all geared towards a single, final event - harvest
  - (2) Early farming totally dependent on events out of your control
  
- ii. Israel has two rainy seasons - October and March
  - (1) Sow seed in October, before the early rain
  - (2) Could not harvest until after latter rain
  
- iii. Farmer could prepare, sow, tend - but then, must wait
  - (1) Couldn’t make the seasons pass faster
  - (2) Couldn’t make the rains come sooner
  - (3) **Promise-oriented**: all he does based on a belief in the rains
  - (4) **Future-oriented**: not looking at current weather, but future
  
- iv. **Imperative**: “You, also, be patient...”
  - (1) We, too, wait for a final, crucial event
  - (2) We, too, can do nothing to influence timing of this event
  - (3) We, too, must be patient

My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience.

**b. The Prophets**

i. General fate of prophets - suffering

Luke 13:34 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her!"

Heb 11:35-38 And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented.... They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.

- (1) Elijah - “I alone am left, and they seek to kill me”
- (2) John the Baptizer - imprisoned, beheaded
- (3) Matt 23:35 “...from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah...whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.”

ii. Not only an **example** of suffering, but of **patience**

- (1) Waited, endured, persevered, accepted end w/ victory - *Why?*
- (2) **Promise-oriented**: only reason to endure such things - belief in God’s word
- (3) **Future-oriented**: clearly not driven by current circumstance, but by looked for, waited for, coming fulfillment

**Parable of the Talents (9)**  
**21 November 2004**

- iii. **Imperative:** "Take the prophets...as an example..."
- (1) You suffer; they did before you
  - (2) They remained patient; so also can you

Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the endurance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord -- that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.

c. **Job**

i. New word: **endurance**

- (1) hupomone (hupomeno)
  - (a) Basic meaning: stay behind, tarry
  - (b) Of suffering: capacity to **continue to bear up**
  
- (2) Always attached to a **negative** situation
  - (a) Hatred, Hostility, Violence, Chastening
  - (b) Affliction, Tribulation
  - (c) Death, Betrayal, The Cross

ii. Same **theme**

- (1) **Lesson of Job** himself
  - (a) Would not "curse God and die"
  - (b) Would not give up, even in confusion and misery
  - (c) Endured, kept going, kept believing
  
- (2) **Lesson of story** of Job
  - (a) Job himself **inconsistently** promise/future-oriented
  - (b) James directs us to Job the **story** as well as Job the person
  
- (3) "the end intended by the Lord"
  - (a) Job's faith **proven** - And still he holds fast to his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to destroy him without cause
  - (b) Job's heart **purified** - "I repent in dust and ashes."
  - (c) Job's **deliverance** and super-abundant **restoration**, displaying the true character of God, and the blessedness of those who endure such circumstances - Now the LORD blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning

iii. Same **lesson**

- (1) **Promise-oriented:** As to Job, so also to us
- (2) **Future-oriented:** focus is on the **end** - God's final purpose

5. **Patience Contradicted**

Do not groan against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!

a. No **groaning**

i. Suffering can make us **ill-tempered...**

- (1) ...towards those **persecuting** us
- (2) ...towards **God**, who we expect to deliver us
- (3) ...but also, towards the **children of God**

ii. **stenadzo** - groan, sigh

- (1) **Physical manifestation** of "I can't take it anymore"
- (2) Can be good **or** bad - it's the **reason** that counts  
2Cor 4:4 For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life.

**Parable of the Talents (9)**  
**21 November 2004**

iii. Here, though, means "I can't take **you** anymore...."

- (1) In life, we are apt to take our problems out on people closest to us
- (2) No different here - impatience under suffering (or just plain old impatience) causes people of God to turn on one another

But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your "Yes," be "Yes," and your "No," "No," lest you fall into judgment.

b. No **swearing** (as in, oaths)

- i. As **impatience** leads to groaning, so also to **unnecessary** and **rash oaths**
- ii. Prohibition **very strong**, but not immediately **clear** why **this** a temptation
  - (1) **Cultural**: US not oath-centered; reduced to forms and testimony
  - (2) Prominent w/ ancients, due to limited ability to verify statements

iii. Examples

- (1) **Bargaining** with God ("I swear to do this if you will only, etc.")
- (2) Other ideas?

**C. Patient Living (5:13-20)**

1. Exegetical question: New thoughts, or continued application

- a. Can't find a reason for a new topic, as this is the end of the letter
- b. So we'll go with continued application

2. **Patient Living: Or, What to do while waiting**

a. Let your **faith permeate** your **life** (individual lives)

Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

- i. Examples not **absolute** or **limiting** (no doctors, only sacred music)
- ii. Rather, to show a **spread** of faith into all life

b. Live in **koinonia** (group life)

Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed....Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.

i. **Instead of groaning at each other...**

- (1) Pray for one another
- (2) Confess sin together
- (3) Seek to restore the wandering brother

ii. Patient living presupposes community living....

**III. Lessons Summarized**

**A. What is patience?**

*Biblical patience is a peacefulness under adversity or suffering, made possible by a belief in and orientation towards the promises of God*

**B. What behaviors exemplify or oppose Xtn patience?**

**Opposed:** Unbelief, apostasy, complaint, groaning against brethren, oath-taking

**Exemplify:** Permeation of life with faith; koinonia living

**Parable of the Talents (10)**  
**28 November 2004**

**I. Introduction**

**A. Review - 2Peter 3**

1. **Knowledge** of doctrines of Last Day **vital** to Xtn living
2. **Contemplation** of fiery destruction of old; new, righteous re-creation, leads to:
  - a. an **earnest orientation** towards Xst's return
  - b. an active, future-oriented lifestyle of **committed holiness**
  - c. an **extensive** (broad-based) and **intensive** (purity) pursuit of holiness
3. **Understanding reason** for Xst's **delay** vital to Xtn living
  - a. Must comprehend **God's** long-suffering and merciful **nature**
  - b. Must **guard against** infection with **doubt** by error of wicked
  - c. Must commit ourselves to pursuit of spiritual growth in Xst

**B. Review - James 5**

1. *Q. How should Xtns face suffering?*
  - A. With the **patience** which comes from living in light of Xst's return
2. *Q. What is Xtn patience?*
  - a. A peaceful, steadfast endurance under adversity or suffering
  - b. Promise-based
  - c. Future-oriented
3. What behaviors are **inconsistent** with Xtn patience?
  - a. Complaint, unbelief, apostasy
  - b. Groaning against brethren
  - c. Desperate oath-taking
4. What behaviors compliment Xtn patience?
  - a. Permeation of life with faith
  - b. koinonia living

**C. Text - 1Thess 4:13 - 5:24**

**II. Exposition**

**A. Hopefulness of the Last Day (4:13-18)**

But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.

1. Death w/o resurrection = hopelessness and sorrow
  - a. Pagans rejected resurrection, afterlife; death final, sorrowful, hopeless
  - b. Resurrection errors infected early church also
    - i. **Resurrection already past**

2Tim 2:16 But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness. And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some.

- ii. **No resurrection at all**

1Cor 15:12, 16-19 Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.

**Parable of the Talents (10)**  
**28 November 2004**

iii. *Q. How important are errors regarding resurrection/return?*

- (1) Confusion, uncertainty
- (2) Elimination of future hope, present assurance and purpose
- (3) Faith “overthrown”
- (4) Entire **chapter** (1Cor 15) devoted to defending doctrine

**2. Error Corrected, Hope Restored**

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

a. **Key Point:** Xst’s resurrection **guarantees** resurrection/return of dead saints

1 Cor 15:20ff But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ’s at His coming.

- i. **Federal** (representative) headship
- ii. **Efficacy** of Xst’s work

b. **Thessalonian Error**

- i. **Not a denial** of Xst’s resurrection (1 Cor), or a **timeline** problem (2Tim)
- ii. Problem w/ **implications** of Xst’s **resurrection**, relationship to saints
- iii. Placed **question mark** over those who died between ascension and return

For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

a. **Last Day, described**

i. Xst’s **unmistakable return**, in Surround Sound (auditory emphasis)

- (1) **Shout** - *keleuma*: a command, esp. one shouted out to give a signal to men, or to urge on animals (hunter’s hounds, charioteer’s horses)
- (2) **Voice** of an archangel
- (3) **Trumpet** of God

Rev 11:15 Then the seventh angel sounded [his trumpet]: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!" And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying: "We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned. The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth."

ii. **Resurrection and rapture**

- (1) **Dead** in Xst **rise** (in glorified bodies), **ascend** to meet Xst
- (2) Then, **living** saints “**caught up**”, bodies **transformed**
  - (a) *harpadzo* - take by force, seize
  - (b) Used for “ascent” of Philip in whirlwind, Paul to 3rd heaven
  - (c) Implies irresistible power, gives visual image

b. **Return, reunion**

- i. **Living** saints **reunited** w/ **dead** saints
- ii. **All reunited** w/ Xst

**Parable of the Talents (10)**  
**28 November 2004**

**3. Koinonia application**

a. *Q. What is Paul's primary concern in teaching this doctrine here?*

But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.

- i. **Sorrow** over, **hopelessness** towards departed brethren
- ii. "What happened to them? Will we see them again?"

Therefore comfort one another with these words.

b. **No need for sorrow**, once this **truth is known**

i. parakaleo

- (1) Basic meaning "call upon"
- (2) From there - entreat, exhort, encourage, strengthen, console
- (3) A **vigorous** and **strong** consolation; not half-hearted

ii. Always sorrow, because always death; but also, **consolation**

iii. **Promise-oriented** (he will raise them up), **future-oriented** (when he comes)

**B. Suddenness of the Last Day (5:1-10)**

But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.

1. Again, time of Xst's coming **hidden**

a. "You know perfectly well...I don't even have to say it"

Acts 1:6 Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.

- i. **Assumes** that they **understand** this fact, so well known it was
- ii. A **fact** apparently **lost** on large portions of church **today**

b. Chronon and kairon

- i. Chronon - "times"; Kairon - "measures of time"
- ii. **General** terms to be sure **all ground is covered** (no room for **esotericism**)

2. Again, Xst's coming **sudden, unexpected, inescapable**

a. **Old** image: **thief** in the night

- i. Xst's image from parables
- ii. **Whole point** is that thief's **coming a surprise**, else not a very good thief

b. **New** Image: **labor pains** of pregnant woman

Excellent picture of **suddenness, unpredictability**

c. Again, **security** and **complacency** of **wicked**

i. **Irony**: "Peace! Safety!"...then sudden inescapable doom

- (1) Eirene - peace
- (2) asphaleia - certainty, security, safety from danger or enemies
- (3) They **speak** this to one another, **assuring** one another
- (4) Then, **inescapable destruction** falls on them
- (5) As in our **parables** (wicked steward, days of Noah)

ii. **Contrast**

- (1) **Hope** and certainty of **righteous** is **promise-based**
- (2) **Hope** and security of **wicked** is **delusion-based**
- (3) Both **console**; only one **true**....

**Parable of the Talents (10)**  
**28 November 2004**

But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.

**1. Two kinds of people**

- a. Day-people v. Night-people; Light-people v. Darkness-people
  - i. Image usually used for sin v. righteousness (e.g., 1John)
  - ii. Here, **not moral** concept, but **behavioral** metaphor
  
- b. *Q. What do people do at night? During the day?*
  - i. **Night**: sleep; drink to intoxication
  - ii. **Day**: awake; stay sober
  - iii. Important point: **illustrations, not literal**
  - iv. **Not** about **staying awake** all the time vs. **sleeping**, etc.
  
- c. Stay in **scope of discussion**: return of Xst in the Last Day
  - i. Key idea: Lost people living **entire lives** as if at **night**
    - (1) **Sleep**: no expectation, so do not live in awareness of Xst's return
    - (2) **Intoxicated**: abandoned to pleasure; also, opposed to watching
    - (3) Real ideas: **ignorance, indifference, complacency, security**
  
  - ii. Key idea: Saved living **entire lives** as if (metaphorically) in **day**
    - (1) **Stay awake**: live life in **awareness** of Xst's return
    - (2) **Stay sober**: not carried away by pleasure
    - (3) **Knowledge, dedication, attention**
  
  - iii. Difference in **outcome**
    - (1) **Lost**: Overtaken by Xst as by thief; receive wrath at his coming
    - (2) **Saved**: Not overtaken as by thief; receive salvation at appearance
  
  - iv. Difference in **appointment** (election)
    - (1) Appointed to salvation through death of Xst
    - (2) Appointed to wrath
    - (3) Election again appearing as an explanation, and an exhortation

**2. Q. What is Xtn sobriety? What is the watchful life?**

- a. **Not** hyper-serious, kill-joy mentality; Not waiting on the mountain
- b. **Passage defines** it for us
  - i. **Faith**
    - (1) Believe the promises of God
    - (2) Waking/Sober life a **promise-oriented** life
  
  - ii. **Hope of salvation**
    - (1) Biblical hope not a "wish"
    - (2) Hope = earnest expectation and longing for future fulfillment
    - (3) Salvation here **final salvation** of Xst's return, **not** justification
    - (4) Waking/sober life a **future-oriented** life
  
  - ii. **Love** - God is love; he that dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him. (1Jn 4:16)
    - (1) From belief, we turn to **outworking of belief**
    - (2) Waking/sober life an **other-oriented** life

**Parable of the Talents (10)**  
**28 November 2004**

**C. Living Together for the Last Day (5:11-24)**

Therefore comfort each other and build one another, just as you also are doing. And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with all. See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all.

**1. Living towards one another**

**a. Comfort and build one another**

i. Again, **comfort** one another

- (1) Lit. "call upon"
- (2) Vigorous, strong consolation and encouragement

ii. **Build** one another

- (1) Lit. "build a house"
- (2) Metaphorically, actively promote grace, sanctification

**b. Recognize and esteem godly leadership**

i. *Q. What kind of leaders?*

- (1) **labor**: lit. labor to weariness, not lazy or riding easy
- (2) **admonish** and warn: not men-pleasers
- (3) **over you**: means to protect, aid, care for, guard
- (4) Not about title or position, but **character** and **behavior**

ii. eido - know, **discern**, recognize

- (1) Not every leader in Xst's house like this...too few, in fact
- (2) Look for, test for, evaluate for these things

iii. When you **find** it, **honor** it

- (1) Difficult to translate
- (2) Lit. "regard them extremely in love for the sake of their work"

**c. Maintain peace** in the house of God ("...among yourselves")

i. Factions, fighting inconsistent w/ living for Last Day

ii. Must try **now** to cultivate union that will be perfected in His **return**

**d. Minister according to need**

i. To the **unruly** - a **warning**

- (1) Exemplified by Paul
- (2) Must put down selfish, baseless interests disrupting church

ii. To the **fainthearted** - **comfort**

- (1) Discouraged, despondent, fearing spiritual failure
- (2) Lit. "come to side and speak in a friendly manner"

iii. To the **weak** - **help**

- (1) Physically or mentally ill (can be moral sickness, but not here)
- (2) Lit. "stick to someone"; used for "help" in general sense

iv. To **everyone** - **patience**

- (1) No special group here
- (2) We **all** will need brethren to be patient with us sooner or later



**Parable of the Talents (10)**  
**28 November 2004**

e. **Seek good, not revenge**

- i. A **basic principle** of Xtn living: no evil for evil
- ii. But a returning of good for good and evil alike

f. **Universal obligations**

- i. Paul **not** speaking to church **officers only**
- ii. Speaking to **everyone**....everyone's job, everyone's responsibility

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies. Test all things; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil.

2. **Living towards God**

a. **Live in joy** - rejoice always

b. **Live in prayer** - pray without ceasing

c. **Live in thanksgiving** - in everything give thanks

- i. Of course, **none** of these technically **possible, desirable** (airplane pilot)
- ii. **Hyperbole for a point**
  - (1) Xtn life **bathed** in these things
  - (2) **Cornerstones** of Xtn relationship to God; **Missing** = anemic, weak

d. **Live in spiritual openness**

i. **Openness** to God's **mighty works**

ii. **Openness** to **revelation, truth**

- (1) Love of novelty a bad thing in the church, but...
- (2) Unwillingness to hear voice of God in each time equally bad

iii. But **not** simple **credulity**

- (1) Apply the **test**: keep the good, dump the bad
- (2) Weak Xtn **believes everything** (no test, just accept)
- (3) Equally weak Xtn **believes nothing** (no test, just deny possibility)
- (4) **Mature** Xtn **listens**, examines, tests: **then** receives or rejects)

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who will also do this.

3. **Promise to the waiting saints**

a. **Not** left to our **own strength** or efforts

b. Rather, we obey, confident in **God's** gracious **work**:

- i. Of **sanctification**
- ii. Of **preservation**

III. **Final Thoughts**

A. **A life lived God-ward**

Life lived in anticipation of Xst's return and the Last Day is a thoroughly God-directed life; a promise-oriented, future-oriented life, pursuing relationship with Him and conformity to Him

B. **A life lived together**

Life lived in anticipation of Xst's return and the Last Day is a life of koinonia; a rich, participatory, other-oriented life pursuing grace together, and for one another, as we together await His coming