

Don't Bury Your Talents



Theme: Using our God-given gifts - Proper 28 (33)

Object: A Frisbee

Scripture: Matthew 25:14-30 **Key Verse:** For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. Matthew 25:29 (NIV)

As I am sure you know, this is a Frisbee. In a few minutes, this Frisbee will help us to learn more about what God expects from you and me, but first, a word from God's Word.

This morning, our Bible story is a familiar story that Jesus told. It is called the Parable of the Talents. In the Parable of the Talents, a very wealthy man was going to go on a trip. He called his three servants together and told them that he would be gone for a long time and that he was leaving them in charge of all of his wealth. He divided up his wealth and gave it to the three servants.

To the first servant, he gave five talents. Now, that might not sound like much to you, but in Jesus' day, that was a lot of money. To the second servant, he gave two talents. Not as much as the first servant received, but still a large sum of money. To the third servant, he gave one talent. Even one talent was worth quite a lot!

The first servant took the five talents his master had given him and put it to work and earned five more talents. The second also invested his two talents wisely and earned two more talents. The third servant took his one talent and buried it in the ground for safe keeping.

When the master returned, he was very pleased when the first two servants told him that they had doubled his money. "Well done," he said. "Because you had been faithful with what I have given you, I will give you much more."

"How about you?" he asked the third servant. "What did you do with the money that I left with you?"

The third servant said to the master, "I knew that you were a hard man and I was afraid, so I went out and hid your treasure in the ground so that it would be safe. See, here it is."

The master was angry. "You are a wicked and lazy servant. You could have at least put my money in the bank where it would earn more." He then took the one talent from the lazy servant and gave it to the one who had ten talents.

In this Parable of the Talents, God is the Master and you and I are his servants. The talents that the master gave to his servants in this story was a form of money. But God has given us talents too, hasn't he? God created each of us with special gifts and he expects us to use those gifts for the purpose for which he gave them to us.

You all know what this is, it is a Frisbee, but pretend for a moment that you do not know what it is and that you have never seen one before. You might think it was a dinner plate... or a hat... or perhaps a tool for digging in the sand. It could be just about anything, but it isn't. It is a Frisbee and the person who created the Frisbee created it for a purpose. The purpose of a Frisbee is to fly! The Frisbee isn't very impressive to look at, is it? In a world full of high-tech electronic toys, it is pretty low on the totem pole. But boy, can it fly!

Sometimes you and I may look at the talents that God has given to others and think that God

hasn't given us very much talent. We might even be tempted to hide our talent. But when we use our God-given talent to be all that God intended for us to be... boy, can we fly!

Dear Father, help us to use the talents that you have given us to be what you intended for us to be. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

scripture Reading: Matthew 25:14-30

FRISBEE FLYING: Divide the children into teams and provide frisbees for each team to fly in different areas. Let the children take turns running after their own team's frisbees and flying back and forth to team mates if space allows. This can be played as various types of relays as well!

FRISBEE BIBLE VERSE HUNT: The teacher will hide small frisbees around a designated area. The children will take turns finding ONE frisbee and bringing it back to the classroom table. After all the frisbees have been found, the children will put the frisbees in order according to what word or words that the teacher has taped on each frisbee from the first sentence of today's key verse. (Matthew 5:29) If time allows and the teacher desires to practice reciting, the children could toss the frisbees once again into an open area, find the frisbees again and put in order for today's Bible verse.

MONEY STORE: Give each child some play money and let them see how WISELY they can use that money to purchase items from the teacher's STORE, buying such items as little candies, pencils, paper, colors, stickers, etc.

GATHERING TOOLS: Let the children find items that the teacher has hidden around the room. The items should be ones that would help them in a profession. (For example: a nurse or doctor, a fireman, a policeman, a carpenter, a school teacher, etc.) Tell today's story about the talents that GOD has given us to BUILD His Kingdom.

FRISBEE NECKLACES: Let the children cut out a traced circle to represent a frisbee. Let the children color and decorate their frisbee and write words from today's Bible lesson. Give the children small pieces of play money to tape on their frisbee. The children will then hang the "frisbee" around child's neck with string or yarn and wear it as a necklace.

FRISBEE KIDS: Have the children cut out a large circle or draw a circle on a piece of construction paper. Provide the children with markers and let them draw hands, feet, face, hair, etc to make a "frisbee kid". Cut out the artwork and hang on the classroom door or walls. Encourage the children to write today's Bible verse or words from today's lesson on their frisbee kid!

GIFT STORE: Give the children small boxes to wrap after choosing a small gift that the teacher will provide and placing it into the box. Wrap the box and tell the children that God wants us to USE our gifts for HIM to help others and to build up His Kingdom! Children can take the wrapped gift to give away to someone to share God's Love. Gifts for the children to wrap and then share with someone else, could include Bible pens, a Gospel tract, a mini copy of Gospel of John, some stickers, or other small items found at a Christian bookstore.

BURY TALENTS: Give the children an index card and tell them to draw a picture and write a talent that they may have. Then children can then hide their card for another classmates to find. When their "talent cards" are all found, the children will form a circle and discuss their talents that they could use for God.

TALENT SKIT: Let the children do a skit of today's lesson, with the talents, the wealthy man, 3 servants, etc. As the teacher narrates the story, the children can act out the lesson! If children are older and can read, the teacher can give them their own part to read.

The Three Toolboxes



Theme: God has given each of us "tools" to use in His kingdom. Proper 28 (32) Year A

Object: A toolbox

Scripture: For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. Matthew 25:29

Jesus once told a story called the Parable of the Talents. In Jesus' story, a man was going away on a trip so he called his servants together and gave each some of his money to use while he was gone. You will find that story in chapter twenty-five of the Gospel of Matthew. I don't think Jesus will mind if I change the parable a little bit and tell you a story that I call, "The Parable of the Three Tool Boxes."

Once upon a time there was a man who had a construction business. The man had to go away on a long trip and so he called his three employees together and said, "I have to go on a long trip and so I am leaving you three in charge. I have put together a tool box for each of you to use to keep the business going while I am gone."

The man then gave each of his employees a tool box. The tool boxes contained all the tools the employees needed to do what the man expected of them, but since the three employees didn't all have the same abilities, each toolbox was different. To the first employee, he gave a very large tool box filled with every tool that you can imagine. To the second employee, he gave a smaller toolbox, but one that still had a very good assortment of tools. To the third employee, he gave a very small tool box with just a few tools, but enough tools for the employee to do what was expected of him.

The man then left to go on his trip. When he returned, he called his employees together to see what they had done while he was gone.

The first employee said, "I knew that you had a great love for the homeless people of the world, so I used the toolbox that you gave me to build homes for the homeless.

"That is great!" said the employer. "You have done so well that I am going to put you in charge of all new construction for the entire company."

The second employee said, "I knew that you had a great love for the elderly, so I used the toolbox you gave me to fix up the homes of elderly people who can no longer do the work themselves."

"That is wonderful!" said the employer. "You have done such a good job, that I am putting you in charge of all the repair and maintenance work for the entire company."

Then he turned to the third employee and asked, "What did you do with the tools that I left for you?"

"I knew that you are a very demanding boss and that you expect a lot from your employees. I was afraid that if I used the tools you gave me that one of them might get broken or that I might lose one of them and make you angry. I put the tools in a very safe place. They were there all the time you were gone.

Look, here they are, just like new."

"What a worthless employee you are! I didn't give you the tools for safekeeping, I gave them to you to use in my business. You are fired!" Since they had proven that they would make good use of them, he took the man's toolbox and divided the tools between the other two employees.

I think this story is a good picture of what God has done in us. He has given each of us tools to use in building His kingdom. We don't all have the same tools, but God expects us to use whatever tools He has given to us. If we do, He will give us even more, but if we don't, He may take them away and give them to someone who will use them. Listen to the words of Jesus, "For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him."

Dear Lord, help us to be faithful in using the gifts that you have given to us to help others and to build up the kingdom. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Scripture Reading: Matthew 25:14-30

MONEY STORE: Give each child some play money and let them see how WISELY they can use that money to purchase items from the teacher's STORE, buying such items as little candies, pencils, paper, colors, or stickers.

GATHERING TOOLS: Let children find items around the room (that the teacher has placed ahead of class time), that would help them in a profession that the teacher tells them, such as a nurse or doctor, a fireman, a policeman, a carpenter, a mom, or a school teacher. Tell today's story about the tools that GOD gives us to BUILD His Kingdom!

TOOL RELAY: Divide the children into teams. When the teacher shouts out the name of a tool, a child from each team will run to a large box of tools and grab that tool, then run back and put it in their team's tool box. If the child chooses the wrong tool, the child will have to run back and find the correct tool that is needed! The teacher could have real or plastic tools or even pictures of various tools for the children to run for and to bring back to their team's tool chest! Everyone who participates can go to the teacher's tool chest and get a piece of candy to enjoy!

TOOL NECKLACE: Give the children supplies and patterns to draw or trace a large tool to decorate, color, and hang around their neck to tell others about today's story! Write TOOLS FOR THE KINGDOM, or today's Bible verse on their tool necklace.

TOOL TRACING: Give each child a large tool to trace or cut out and glue onto another piece of construction paper to be folded in half and drawn to look like a tool box. Let the children write today's

Bible verse on that tool. Do the same for a couple of other tools as time allows, and take the "tool chest" home as a reminder to be faithful in using the gifts that God has given to each of us.

CLAY TOOLS: Give each child some modeling clay and let the children mold a tool of their choice. While children are forming their tool, ask the children about tools that God gives us to build His Kingdom!

WHERE'S THE GIFT GAME: Have the children stand in a circle with their hands behind their back. One child will stand in the center of the circle with eyes closed while the teacher walks around the outside of the circle and places a small gift in one of the children's hands. The child in the middle of the circle will then try to guess which child has the gift! Take turns playing the game and ask the children in the circle what GIFTS GOD gives us to use for HIM!

GIFT STORE: Give the children small boxes to wrap after finding a small gift of their choice to place into the box. Wrap the box and tell the children that God wants us to USE our gifts for HIM to help others and to build up His Kingdom! The children may take the wrapped gift and give it away to someone to share God's Love. Gifts for the children to wrap and then share with someone else could include Bible pens, a Gospel tract, a mini copy of the Gospel of John, some stickers, or other small items found at a Christian book store!

TOOL MAN: Have the children trace a tool and then draw arms, legs and a face on their TOOL. Tell children to remember that God has given THEM tools to serve in His Kingdom. The children could write on their "tool man" — I WANT TO BE GOD'S TOOL MAN, or I WILL BE FAITHFUL IN WHAT GOD GIVES ME TO DO.