

November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18; Psalm 90: 1-12; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11;

Matthew 25: 14-30

After Pentecost, 24, a

Have you ever heard the cliché, “God doesn’t give you anything you can’t handle?” I not only have heard it, I’ve said it. Today’s gospel lesson is in reverse, that is, *God **does** give you what you **can** handle*. The master did not give 10 talents to the first servant, because the master knew that the first servant would not be able to handle it. Yet the first servant could handle the care of five talents, so the master gave him five. The servant was given only what he could handle. Same with the second servant, he was given two talents, because the master knew that the second servant would be able to handle the two talents, and similarly with the person who was given one talent. The master thought that even this servant would be able to handle the one talent he was given.

Now, remember, those talents did not belong to the servants, to whom they were give. They belonged to their master, so you can see why the third slave buried the one given to him. The talent did not

belong to him, but his master, so he did not want to risk losing it, so he buried it.

Yet, two servants were willing to risk and actually invest what their master had given them. They could have lost everything, but they *believed in their master* and took what he had given them and doubled it –actually, for their master. One talent by the way was worth 15 years of wages, so we are not talking a few dollars here; we are talking about beyond an entire living wage that was entrusted to the first two servants and 15 years of wage entrusted to the third servant.

The word talent in our gospel is the root word for today's word, talent, or gifts, that we have been given, the talent of being a musician, the talent, the gift of teaching, leadership, the gift actually of being a follower. I often see my talents in what I am not talented. Once each week, we have two or three people come in and work with our finances. They would not want me a part of their group. They may not realize that what they do is a talent. But if they compared themselves to my abilities or inabilities related to finance, they would see they are quite talented.

What gifts, talents have we been given that bring attention to God's love and mercy? What gifts, talents do we have that brings attention to the gospel of Jesus Christ? What gifts are we using? Also, what gifts and talents have we been given that we not using? Talents and gifts do not necessarily mean being musically inclined, or being able to teach, it may mean something that we do well, that others cannot, such as working with numbers, working with words, working with foods and meals, working and communicating with people. We often do not think of what we find we do naturally, gifts or talents from God, but they are. Being a mom or dad requires talent, doesn't it?

The parable of Jesus today reminds us of what we have been given from our Creator. Through his teaching, Jesus reminds us not only to be a good steward of our gifts and talents, but to use them, ----- *generously*, in order to bring attention to the mercy and forgiveness of Jesus Christ, as well as, bring attention to the love and generosity of God.

Amen,

Pastor Scales