

## **Twenty-Fourth Sunday After Pentecost (2017)**

**Matthew 25:14-30** "For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sowed and gather where I scattered no seed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

In the Name of Jesus.

The God of Abraham is the Living God; He kept His pledge and guarantee to father Abraham, that he would be the father of many nations. Not only those born of Abraham's DNA, but most of all those whose faith is the

same as that of the father of the faithful.

The Son of Abraham, the Son of David too, Jesus Christ, is the Seed, the Offspring Promised; and now the Regent of all things in heaven and in earth. And He has authority over His kingdom! You are in the presence of His authority when God's Word is preached and sung and prayed and proclaimed, and your heart is glad! For the MANDATES and COMMANDS of THIS KING smack of the Man mocked on Calvary as King of the Jews.

In short, the HARSHEST and MOST SEVERE that OUR David, OUR King, OUR Ruler can make demands of US, is to DEMAND that we LIVE from the pledge made to Abraham, the pledge of the Gospel: that NEW David is well pleasing to the Unseen Father when He joins in their baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And He drew to Himself more lawless, more sinners and MORE sins—all the way to the cross.

Now risen, He baptizes you and Me too! The same Spirit Who dwells in HIM without measure, now dwells in you, me, nations of disciples! And whenever the devil, your wicked Old Man inside, or the world tests you and makes you doubt that the Final Word on YOU is HIM—not YOU!---

Just remember and rejoice in the parable of the kingdom of heaven and the master who left his ‘Talants,’ his treasures in the hands of his servants. What are the riches of our Master and King? What is the ‘JOY of our Master?’ To call Himself ‘the Son of Man!’ And to please the Unseen Father above, by DEMANDING that WE...DEMAND—that the Unseen Father above GAUGE, that He DEFINE HIS EXISTENCE AND THE MEANING OF HIS LIFE AND THE WHOLE REASON HE EXISTS...on attaching Himself to little children like us, who must be taught and taught and taught and forgiven and loved and borne with...without end!

What a DEMAND! That WE...DEMAND that God be OUR dear Father too—and with all boldness and confidence, call on Him as dear children call on their dear father! Strange demand, nicht wahr? Yes! For we are subjects of the most strange King!

For each man-jack of us can thwart His rule! Thus, the scary stuff in the story about the one cast out into the outer darkness, where there is weeping and g-nashing of teeth! Some of the bright people who write books say the g-nashing is from agony; some say it might be the chattering of teeth among the cold in the outer darkness. All I KNOW, my dear ones, is that the OUTSIDE is BIGGER AND MORE IMPRESSIVE than the INSIDE! The OUTER DARKNESS is UTTERLY more ATTRACTIVE to what we are at our core—and thus that

place of weeping and gnashing of teeth to come is just some variation, magnification, extension—ugh, whatever!—of the world we have cobbled together here!

You see the news! We're getting a 'behind-the-scenes' tour—a show that I did not buy a ticket for!—the darkness that our Lords and Masters in our country have thought would eternally hide their skeazy, pervy, nersty true-selves. I have a hard enough time lamenting MY OWN sins against my Father above—MOST OF ALL, sins against THE FIRST TABLE OF THE LAW! Where is my confidence in the Gospel! Where is my joy in my redemption! Where is the then-outpouring of the same joy of the Master toward others?

Who has time for the shameful deeds of the doomed? Well, the doomed do!

And when exposed, what's the rejoinder from the outer darkness? MORE weeping and gnashing of teeth! 'Well, but THEM GUYS is WORSE!!' And they sell more newspapers, and the TV stations make more money and our people cannot get enough of it.

And I will confess my sins, and invite you along. My creep deep down is glad to see the glittering people who disgust me caught up in their filth.

And that, my dear ones, is as close to the ungrateful servant that I want to come! It is wrong, wrong, wrong, dear disciples, to DEMOTE the ourselves from the heights to which we have been raised, to join in with the head wagers and noddors and the ‘Aha! Aha!’ of the crowds—like those around Jesus’ cross!—somehow to do WHAT? What exactly does that get us? What satisfaction?

The Gospel according to Saint Matthew, chapter 25, says that we are practicing for the outer, infinitely larger and more impressive darkness of weeping and gnashing of teeth.

And...WE...ARE...CALLED...ON...TO...REPENT!

The currency of the Master’s house is intercession for sinners, pardon for wrongs done to our person, and then forgiveness, life and salvation poured out on those who SHOULD KNOW BETTER—WE, the servants of the King!—in the Holy Supper of the Son’s Body and Blood!

In fact, THAT is His CHIEFEST of ALL treasures and joys! To take Christian disciples, little children, like you, me, nations of children of Abraham—teach us again, rebuff our return to the darkness, and pardon us all over again!

So here's the Day of Judgment! The Judgment comes TODAY!

HERE, Master! You had to PARDON ME FIVE WHOLE BUNDLES of pardon for my past wrongs! And, LOOK! For MY NEW LIFE, you STILL had to pardon me FIVE! And I see no end!

Pardoned me TWO, Lord! I then, TWO MORE! My whole LIFE as a Christian in this world was about YOU forgiving ME!

And the one who was forgiven little loved little, pardoned little, thought little of grace showered on him that no grace came out from him either. And so that man will be demoted—for he HAS been demoted, already!—FROM baptized, christened, ANOINTED a joint-ruler of the kingdom of heaven—to another elbow-throwing, boasting, weeping, chattering hurter, being hurt in return, with no end in sight!