

REDLINED • Week 1: Too Much, Too Fast, Too Long

Daily Briefing • Day 3 of 5 • The Two-Talent Life

WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Matthew 11:28-30

Sunday Jesus offered to trade your demands for His design. Today we look at a story He told about servants who were handed different amounts to work with, and why the smaller amount heard the exact same praise. It is a familiar story, but it reads differently from this angle. You can watch or listen to the sermon at 1mso.church or on the One Missoula app.

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, You gave me what I have on purpose. Forgive me for straining to carry loads You never handed me at the expense of the ones You did. Help me be faithful with my portion, and let Your calling and the people I love get the best of me instead of what is left over. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

TODAY'S TEACHING

Picture a pickup rated to tow 7,000 pounds hitched to a 12,000-pound trailer. It might get out of the driveway. It might even make it a few miles. But the transmission is going to cook, the brakes are not going to hold on the grade, and eventually something breaks that costs far more than the load was worth. Nobody would call that truck lazy. It was simply driven to pull something it was never built to pull.

Jesus told a story about a master who went on a journey and entrusted his property to his servants. "To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability" (Matthew 25:15). A talent (an ancient unit of money) was a huge sum, worth many years of a laborer's wages. Our English word "talent," meaning a natural gift, actually comes from this story. Notice that the master did not hand out equal loads. He handed out loads fitted to each servant.

Now watch what happens when he comes back. The servant with five talents made five more. The servant with two made two more. And the master says the exact same words to both of them: "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" (Matthew 25:21, 23). The man with two did not get a smaller "well done." He got the same one. What the master was looking for was faithfulness with what each man had been given.

This is where people redline. Imagine the two-talent servant spending the entire journey trying to produce what the five-talent servant produced, because that is what he saw the other guy doing. He would work every waking hour, sacrifice the relationships that matter most, and take risks he was never equipped to take. And he would be burning himself out for a result the master never asked him for.

Not everyone is built, equipped, or called the same way. The Bible says, "God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose" (1 Corinthians 12:18). Paul is writing about gifts and roles within the church, but the principle reaches the rest of life too. When you try to be something you are not, it costs you in the places that matter most: your relationships (starting with God), your finances, your physical health, and your mental and emotional well-being. Your spouse gets the leftovers. Your kids get the version of you that is tired, distracted, and irritable. And somewhere inside, you keep feeling like a failure for missing a number God never assigned you.

Faithfulness with two talents is still work; that servant doubled what he was given. But he doubled his two, not someone else's five. The master is not coming back to ask whether you matched the other guy. He is coming back to ask what you did with yours.

READ & MEDITATE

Matthew 25:14-15, 19-23

For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. ¹⁵ To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ... ¹⁹ Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰ 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." ²¹ 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." ²² 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." ²³ 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."

1 Corinthians 12:18

But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose.

Read Matthew 25:14-15, 19-23 and compare what the master says to the first servant with what he says to the second. Then read 1 Corinthians 12:18 and notice who decided how each part of the body would be arranged.

REFLECT

Reminder: honest introspection and Scripture-informed self-assessment are far more beneficial than self-delusion and wishful thinking.

The master handed out different amounts on purpose.

What has God actually given you to work with right now? Think about your personality, education, experience, skills, health, money, relationships, and the season of life you are in.

Which of those do you most often wish were bigger or different? What is driving that desire?

Fill in the blank from Matthew 25:15:

"To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his _____." (Matthew 25:15)

*These fill-in-the-blank questions use the ESV text. Your Bible may use different words for the same idea.

What changes when you believe God handed you your portion on purpose, fitted to you? (Pace, expectation, focus, comparison, etc.)

Picture the two-talent servant straining to produce what the five-talent servant produced.

Where are you trying to produce what someone with a different portion produces? An income, a house, a ministry, a body, a family life, a pace?

Who or what has been paying for that strain: your spouse, your kids, your friendships, your sleep, your peace?

Both servants heard the exact same words.

If God's "well done" is measured by faithfulness with what you were given, what would you stop doing this week?

Faithful with two still means working your two.

What is one thing God has clearly equipped you to do that you have neglected while chasing a bigger or different load?

What will being faithful with that look like this week? Get specific with it. Name the day and the time. Do some honest introspective self-assessment before moving on.

PRAYER

Write your prayer or pray out loud. God's ear is not dull. Talk to Him like He is listening and wants to hear from you.

MEMORY VERSE

Write or recite Matthew 11:28-30 from memory:
