



## BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS

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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

**A1683 ~ The Parable of the Three Servants.**

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*Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.*

In today's *Bible Adventure*, the Lord Jesus was close to the end of His ministry when He gave this parable about using one's talents and skills. Some people think they can't do anything to help others, but after praying to God, find a place to minister their skills. At the same time, they receive opportunities to tell people about the peace that the Lord Jesus offers them with His Father in Heaven.

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This parable of the Lord Jesus is listed only in Matthew, Chapter 25. The word 'talent' can mean natural ability but in ancient times, it meant a unit of weight or money. Some Bibles suggest a talent was worth about \$5,000, which is a large sum of money for most people. The best servant was given great responsibility by receiving his five talents but he did very well with them. So did the servant given two talents.

The third servant, however, only received one talent. He was lazy and didn't have his master's best interests at heart. People can sometimes have the attitude that if they'd been given a lot, then they would have made an effort. But God expects us to be faithful in all the small things first before we're given more important jobs to do. If we can't do the small things well, then we won't succeed with the big tasks either. We can fool ourselves if we try to do things differently from God's plan for us.

The man going on a journey in the parable is the Lord Jesus. Jesus has given gifts to His followers that are both spiritual and natural. He also gives different gifts to different people according to their ability. Some may receive more than others, but whatever Jesus gives each of us, He wants us to use our gifts for the glory of God.

In modern times, the world places great value on natural gifts. But such gifts won't turn into anything useful unless self-discipline and hard work are applied.

Even successful and famous people keep working hard to use their particular talent to the best of their ability for extending God's kingdom. There isn't a time when a believer in Christ can sit back and think that the road forward should be easy from now on. Sometimes when a person is successful at one talent, God redirects their focus onto doing something else for the people around them.

A young man brought up in a Christian family in the United States during the early 1800's wanted to become an artist. When this young man Samuel Morse finished his education, his parents counselled him not to become a full-time artist but rather, a bookseller by day and a painter at night when he had the time. Samuel did this until it became obvious to his parents that he was becoming a good artist. They then supported Samuel by scraping together the money needed for sending him to a London art school.

In London, Samuel Morse learnt to paint very well from his tutor but war broke out in 1812 when he was only 21 years old. As the war was between America and Britain, Samuel's parents were naturally very concerned about him. Letters home to his family across the ocean took months to arrive, but Samuel's parents took comfort in knowing that Samuel loved and trusted the Lord Jesus and his faith was serious.

Samuel had kept a diary since he was 13 years old. Each day he answered questions like: ‘How did I pray?’ ‘Did I feel weighed down with sin?’ ‘Did I pray like the self-righteous Pharisee?’ ‘Have I received blessings for which I’ve not been thankful?’

After three years Samuel returned to the United States and in time, got married. Only after seven years of marriage, his wife died. Samuel was away at the time painting and didn’t hear the sad news for several days. He wished that there had been a way of getting a message from one place to another when his family needed him. He was so very sorry about his absence that he nearly gave up painting.

In 1832, Samuel Morse sailed to New York where he’d been appointed as a professor of painting and sculpture. One day on board the ship, he heard some passengers discussing electricity. He joined the group and asked if electricity could be conducted through only short lengths of wire. Any known length could be used, he was told. Suddenly, Samuel had an idea. Maybe electricity could transmit messages. For the rest of the trip, he worked on an alphabetical system that was later called the Morse Code. The only symbols that he made up were a dash and a dot. Common letters had short codes and lesser-used letters had longer codes. When Samuel started to build his telegraph with odd pieces of things and prove its worth, no one was interested in his invention.

After much hard work and many financial difficulties, in May 1844, a cable was laid a distance of 180 miles to New York. A group of spectators waited and wondered if Samuel’s telegraph would work. They watched as Samuel tapped out a series of dots and dashes that travelled along the line and back again before being printed out. The message came from the Bible book Numbers, Chapter 23: “What hath God wrought!” or, to put it in modern words, “What a wonderful thing God has done!” Samuel Morse gave all the glory to God. He said, “It’s God’s work. He alone could have carried me through all my trials and enabled me to triumph over all the obstacles.”

The Morse Code system of communication was the first quick method of sending messages from one location to another around the world. The patience Samuel Morse learnt as a painter helped him to be a good inventor. Those Christians who start out with natural ability still have to work hard and practise their skills. Then God can use their talents to achieve things that they may never have dreamed of doing when they were young.

In 1 Corinthians, Chapter 12, the Apostle Paul spoke of various kinds of gifts yet noted that they were all given by the same Holy Spirit. Everything we have is a gift of God and this includes the Holy Spirit. The only thing we can call our own is our sin that we ask God to pardon.

In the parable, when the man returned from his long journey, he called his servants to give an account of what they'd done. The first two were praised and given rewards. But when it came to the third servant's turn, the servant was disrespectful to his master and tried to defend himself and escape punishment. The master asked why he hadn't put the talent with the bank so at least he could have gained interest on it when he returned. The third servant had cheated his master by not rightly using what he had been given. Then the only talent given to the third servant was taken off him and given to the first.

The third servant had deliberately set himself up to fail his master's orders. His disobedience and laziness may have saved him the bother of working to increase his master's talent in the short term. But eventually, it cost him everything. The unprofitable servant was thrown out of his master's house and left to suffer greatly.

This parable is a warning to us. If we don't use our spiritual and material blessings wholeheartedly in God's service, they will be taken away from us. If we reject Jesus' gifts and refuse to serve Him, we shall bring eternal judgement and condemnation on ourselves. We can bring sorrow, hurt, disappointment and insult to God's Holy Spirit by the way we live our daily lives. We need to remember that Jesus has identified each believer as His own, guaranteeing that each one will be saved on the day of redemption.

The Apostle Paul teaches believers in Ephesians, Chapter 4, not to grieve the Holy Spirit. Every time we turn back to the old worldly behaviour we once rejected in order to follow the Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit draws away as our teacher and comforter. Paul lists three things to be extra careful about: sinning against others with our anger, stealing and using degrading and unbeneficial talk.

Paul urges believers everywhere that while we wait for the Lord to return, let us invest our lives and earn dividends for God the Father's glory. Christ gives us opportunities that match our abilities and in God's sight, the one-talent servant is just as important as the five-talent servant. The key is our faithfulness, for God measures us against ourselves and not by comparing us against other servants. Are you afraid to step out by faith and take some risks for God?

When Jesus returns, there'll be a time of praise for His faithful servants. We'll learn with surprise that some of the things we did and thought insignificant will be rewarded by the Lord. However, this parable isn't teaching salvation by good works. Some people might say that they're Christians yet they don't have the Holy Spirit living inside them, because they've never fully forsaken their sin or committed themselves to follow the Lord Jesus in every way. How about you? Are you ready to meet the Lord at any time?

In 1 Peter, Chapter 3, Verse 15, it says: “Have reverence for Christ in your hearts, and honour Him as Lord. Be ready at all times to answer anyone who asks you to explain the hope you have in you, but do it with gentleness and respect. Keep your conscience clear.”

*The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.*

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