

### “Use It, or You Lose It”

In last week's Gospel, Jesus gave us a glimpse of our personal and final judgments. When those whose “good works” do not measure up, will spend eternity in hell. And those who keep their lamps of faith burning because of ‘good works’ will enter into the joy of His Father. In today's Gospel, Jesus told His disciples that the grace we receive from God as time, and talents, if we develop them, we will get more grace from Him and during judgment day, we will spend eternity with Him in eternal joy in heaven.

In our Gospel reading, the man who entrusted talents to his servants is Jesus. We who are members of His Church, who have faith in Him are the servants. The grace that He bestowed on us as talents, are given to us as gifts to be used wisely and prudently. The more we use His natural gifts for “good works,” the more He will give us supernatural gifts in this world so we can attain heaven. And in heaven, our reward would be far much greater than we can imagine.

God gives His talents to us in different measures as it pleases Him. But at the end of our race in this world, those who by His grace used His entirely free gifts doing “good works,” will get the same gift of eternal life with Him in heaven just as the servant who received the two talents received the same “**great responsibilities**” as the servant who received five talents. Therefore God does not require equal returns from all of us.

In coming to this world, Jesus has given us the great gift of faith to do “good works.” The “good works” to be done are acts of love and generosity done as we interact with our neighbors. Jesus has gone back to the Father after His earthly life. While He is away, we are to grow in His gifts He freely gave us rather than waste our lives in idleness.

The servant who buried his talent was called “wicked and lazy,” because he only used his natural talents or natural gifts and ignored his supernatural gifts of grace. As his recompense, he loses the gift of grace he had received and his gift is given to the servant who has more. He forgot, the more we trust and do God's work, the more God instills within us more grace so that we may become holier.

Our calling to faithfulness is often not easy, but we know that through faithfulness, we will be like the servants who were given precious talents and who doubled their numbers. If we do this, we can look forward to the coming of Jesus with joyful hope.

From this second parable about “faith” and “good works,” we can see that faith “alone” will not be enough for our salvation. It is obvious that all three servants had faith in God and that was why they received their talents from God. But one, whether out of wickedness, or laziness did not use the grace given him to do “good works.” Out of wickedness, he probably thought he got too little compared to the other two who were given more.

Sometimes we too probably think we can do nothing in the Church with what God has given us. We think we have gotten too little to start with. We tend to forget about the widow's mite and God's generosity.

As we come to receive the gift of supernatural grace of Christ in the Eucharist, let us ask Him for the grace to complete the good works he has begun in us.