

Don't Bury Your Talent Twenty-first Week in Ordinary Time Saturday,
August 27, 2016 8:15 AM 1 Cor 1:26-31; **Mt 25:14-30** St. Monica (Jesus is
trying to warn his disciples against living in fear and giving into a sort of indifference, as if, well,
it doesn't really matter; there's not much I can do.)

“For to everyone who has, more will be given and he will grow rich; but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.”

This sort of paradox often puzzles people, but of course **parables are meant to be puzzled over**; they are meant to be puzzling, contrary to some people's assumption that they are very simple things that ordinary peasants would understand. This is not true. They are **paradoxical**. They are **metaphorical**. They are **often deliberately confusing**.

Now, again, as I often mention, we have to see to whom is Jesus speaking? He is speaking to his disciples. He is not talking to the crowds. He is not talking to the leaders. He is not talking to the teachers. **He is talking to his own disciples. This is private instruction in the importance of following the master's wishes.**

Now of course **talent** is a metaphor. It is a unit of money; at this time it was a unit of money. But it isn't primarily talking about money, but it is talking about investment, **investment of one's resources**. It could involve money as well, but also time, effort, energy, all that the master requires to be invested so that there is a return. **The disciple is expected to make a return to the master of what the disciple has been entrusted.**

Now look at this poor chap who ends up being thrown out into the outer darkness. It says here “darkness outside.” The original is “outer darkness.” It really meant the dark side of the moon, originally. It meant in a place where light never hits. It meant a place of total despair. **This poor fellow is operating on fear.** “So out of fear I went off and buried your talent in the ground.” The disciple does not have the option of living in fear. Now you may think this strikes

you as odd that this whole thing is really a rather terrible result and we should be afraid of that result, but we are not supposed to live in fear. **We are supposed to live in confidence.** So here fear is translated into wickedness and laziness that is really another way of saying indifference to what is really good.

So Jesus is trying to warn his disciples against living in fear and giving into a sort of indifference, as if, well, it doesn't really matter; there's not much I can do. Well that can be true, and especially it was true for this one. There wasn't much he could do, but he could do something. And this is about the great tragedy that befalls those who because they have few resources, personal resources, because they have little energy, because they have few opportunities, therefore decide it isn't worth it—it isn't worth it. **They are just going to bury what little time they have, what few opportunities they have; they will just bury it all and forget it. And this says that is wickedness and that is evil.**

The whole idea about God harvesting where he doesn't plant is reference to the fact that God is eternally creative. And since we are called, made in the image of God and we are called to serve God, **we have some of that creativity in us**, even if just a little bit. And it is absolutely necessary that we **take that little bit and employ it.**