

Rev. Paul A. Hottinger

**Use the Gifts for the Kingdom**    Thirty-third Week in Ordinary Time    Wednesday,  
November 21, 2018    Rev 4:1-11;    **Lk 19:11-28**    The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin  
Mary    (This is the time not for establishing the kingdom, but for preparing for it, and I need  
servants.)

This is a very well-known story, although this version is less well-known than the version from Matthew, where there are different talents given out, here one coin a piece. But we have to keep in mind what is the context of this story. Here it has to do with the fact that Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem and the people believe that the kingdom of God is going to come and become established right then and there. Jesus' point is you don't really understand. **There is work to be done. The kingdom can't come quite yet.** Work has to be done and someone has got to do it. That's the reference to the servants. Yes, the kingdom will come. Yes, it's on its way, but **this is the time not for establishing the kingdom, but for preparing for it, and I need servants.** The king needs servants to prepare the way.

And this is a mission given to every disciple. **Every disciple is called on to use the gifts God has given for the benefit of the kingdom.** And this is a very important mission. The analogy is to trading; that's just an analogy because when traders trade they make a profit. Jesus' point is, well, **the work of the kingdom needed to prepare the way for the kingdom is similar in that there must be a profit,** only the profit isn't actually in the nature of coins, but there's a profit. And in this profit "to everyone who has, more will be given." In that way it's similar to business where the rich get richer, but here the profit isn't gold coins. **The profit is the gifts of the Spirit,** and they are far more important than gold coins. But like gold coins being traded, **when they are exercised they benefit and increase in power and grace.**

The other side of this of course is that **those who don't use the graces that God gives them, the gifts of the Spirit, are really in a very dire state.** In other words, it is not an option that we

have a right to forgo, serving God with the gift he gives us because “from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.” **Gifts are given for a reason, and they are to be used.** And **every single baptized human being is filled with gifts from the Spirit, and they are to be used, and it is not an option.** If Christians believe that their life is simply passive, they are **just going to receive everything and not do anything, they are going to be very sadly disappointed.** The judgment, which is described here, will be very negative toward them. This is a warning Jesus wanted to make very clear to his followers.