Grace and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

 We see a continuation of Jesus using real life situations to teach. The premise is simple - We are to be aware prepared and alert and to share what we have received from our very generous God with others. Like the other the parables in this part of Matthew, it exemplifies the certainty of the Lord’s coming and how the disciples are to live in the meantime.

 Like the parable of the ten maidens before it, the parable of the talents portrays the kingdom of God. The kingdom is not simply about a a man on a journey, but to the story that follows — a story that illustrates how the disciples are to wait in the meantime…until the Lord comes. We hear how a wealthy man who went on a journey brought his slaves together and entrusted his property to them according to their ability. Although the first receives five times as much as the last, each receives a significant sum of money. A talent is equal to about 6,000 denarii, so the smallest amount given to the three was considerable, since one denarius is a common laborer’s daily wage, a talent would be roughly equivalent to 20 years wages for the average worker. The second received around 40 years of wages while the five talents, which was the largest amount entrusted to any of the servants, is comparable to one hundred years’ worth of labor, a very large amount of money. The one who received 5 talents traded them and made 5 more talents. Also, the one who was entrusted with two talents was able to double their money. The third slave dug a hole in the ground and hid the money.

 The return of the is a sure thing, the only unknown when. After a long absence, he discovers what each servant has done with his property. The first two slaves do business with the master’s talents and double his money. Although the first slave earned more than the second, both doubled the money. They not only performed according to their potential but they have been faithful to do what the master has required of them. The master’s response to each is the same. He commends the slaves for being good and faithful, entrusts them with more authority, telling them

 ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slaves; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’

 But now the 3rd slave came forward and said he knew the master was a harsh man who would reap what they did not sow and they gathered where they did not scatter seed so being afraid he buried the money, a common practice in those days and gave him back what the master had first given him. The master was angry and called the slave wicked and lazy and if he believed what he did he could have given the money to the bankers and when he returned would receive his property plus interest. So the one talent should be given to the one with ten talents because, as the master pointed out

 Allegorically, Jesus is the man, the disciples are the slaves and his property isn’t riches, talents, blessings, or influence. The property is the mission of God’s message. **24**And he said to them, “Pay attention to what you hear; the measure you give will be the measure you get, and it will be added to you. Something you want to grow not bury out of sight. (Bishop Satterlee’s story of donation).

 Jesus tells this story to his disciples to prepare them for the days ahead when their faith will be tested. This parable depicts how the disciples are to demonstrate their faithfulness as they anticipate the return of the Lord. So what does faithfulness look like in a time of waiting? In Matthew’s Gospel faithfulness is emulating the ministry of Jesus.

 We should give a full-hearted response to God’s lavish gifts of faith and purpose. We are meant to be engaged and to share what we receive from our generous God. “This shines the light on the beauty of the faith-generated response to God’s lavish grace. Instead of the weight of obligation and duty we so often associate with religion, we are invited today to another way. As a Sundays and Seasons commentary asks what does it mean to be awake to the grace of God? On the surface Jesus’ parable is a simple premise: the contrast of workers who please and workers who disappoint their master. Psalm 90 tells us to carefully treasure our lifetimes, for there is something at stake. First Thessalonians is a letter reminding people they have exactly what they need to survive and thrive. So to be awake to the grace of God n a time in history when so many people are discouraged with work, home, life, and church, a word from Jesus’ parables healing and enriching, We are reminded there is a depth to faith that is sustainable as we carry out God’s mission. Amen.

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