

## WISE STEWARDS

Our stewardship is over what we have and not at all over what we have not. Many failing to see this clearly let talents they do possess lie idle, while they make unprofitable endeavors to create and use others not given them by the Master, only to find in the end that they have been unwise stewards.

Quite a great many, seeing the necessity for money in carrying forward the work, ignore many opportunities (talents) and abilities (talents) for using time, hands, feet, and tongues to serve the truth, and endeavor to *make money*, generously saying that when they once get a good start, then, the truth will be liberally provided for, and in fact that the needs of the truth and not ambition or selfishness are the motives which prompt them to attempt money making. Alas, unwise stewards! Nearly all such efforts are failures, snares by which the adversary gets your hands and heads so full that all other talents are *choked*. And the very few who do „get a good start” financially are so injured by the greedy strife for gold, that they never use it as they honestly thought they would.

If when you consecrated yourself to God you had wealth—the money talent, then it should be your delight to use that talent with whatever others you possess, but never think of burying in a napkin the talent you have, to seek one you have not got. The talents which were added in the parable were the increase from the *use of the talents first given* the stewards.

The talents of oratory and sermonizing are evidently possessed by few, and hence we may well reason that sermons are not the things the Lord most wants. He is well able to give such talents when and where he sees their exercise needful, and it is the height of presumption for a steward to seek to use talents which the Master *has not given him* to use. Note carefully the exhortation of Rom. 12:1-3-9.

It is our *old*, not our *new* natures that would lead us to ignore little, humble matters which we can do, to waste our time in trying to do something „*great*” and „*grand*” which we as well as others know we have not the talents for. Let us not forget that if we were great, grand, influential orators, we would probably not be fit for the Master’s use, for it is not the great he is now seeking, but the humble. If you have an eloquent tongue or other such gift, be sure to use it zealously, but always remember that it is written, „*Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble*”

are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the powerful; and the lowly-born of the world and things which are despised God hath selected, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." (1 Cor. 1:26-31.) Yea, God hath chosen generally those not richest in talents or opportunities, but the poor of this world rich in faith, to be heirs of the kingdom and co-workers with him now. God has arranged his plans thus that he might hinder human pride and vain-glory—the very thing so many are disposed to cultivate. See the context above cited.

Be honest, earnest, unpretentious; and if you speak in public, or whatever you do, seek not to make self prominent and impressive, but seek to show forth the *truth*, relying upon *its impressiveness* as God intended. Remember that it is written, concerning the Gospel age and God's ambassadors, ministers of the truth, „Out of the lips of babes and sucklings thou [Lord] hast *perfected* praise." So then, even if the mighty and grand of this world have to some extent honored the Lord, his assurance that his praise is most perfect in those the world does not count great and grand—in *His* „little ones," should cause us to rejoice in humility and even to avoid imitating the style, tones and methods of the worldly great.

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Other stewards need a caution in an opposite direction; they do not quickly enough note talents which might be utilized in the Lord's service. These should remember that our commission does not limit us in the use of all, even the smallest talents, but reads, „Go ye into all the world and preach the good tidings." (Matt. 28:19,20.) It is not necessary to preach in the *usual* formal manner: Preach, as the twelve disciples preached, by the way side, or wherever you find a hearing ear. If you have a good voice for public speaking and lack the talent for preparing a discourse be not ashamed of it, and do not try to memorize some one else's words. By so doing you will fail of good results. Better far, if opportunity offers and you possess a suitable voice etc., *read* forcibly and clearly something touching the subject you consider most needful to your hearers.

What we all want first of all is honesty with ourselves as well as with others; and a few words honestly spoken even though rough and brokenly expressed will carry more weight to your hearer than a parrot-like repeating of more polished sentences. To be an acceptable minister of *the truth*, pride and vain-glory must be cast out and trampled upon. Those whose object in preaching is to appear great, wise and profound are not working with the right motive and will not get the great prize.

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Do not be ashamed to acknowledge it if you received your first introduction to the truth from the humblest man or woman of your town. Those who are ashamed of the humblest member of the body of Christ are dishonoring also the head of that body who used that member as his honored ambassador to bear his message.

All truth is of God and not of our fellow-men; it is *ours* when it comes to us and we receive it into good and honest hearts, no matter by which or how many channels or agencies it reached us; it all came from the one great fountain of truth. But while thanking God for the refreshing draught, let none despise, dishonor or ignore the humblest of the instruments by which the truth reached him. Remember God loves most and uses oftenest the humble. „The Lord *abhoreth* the proud, but giveth *favours* to the humble! Pride goeth before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.” Beloved, let us flee these snares of the adversary! Let us as wise stewards use the talents given us faithfully, and not only will they be increased, but to such stewards the Master will say, Well done good faithful servant: Thou hast been faithful over a few things [I gave thee], I will make thee ruler over many things. Our Lord wants *great, grand* co-laborers in the glorious work of the next age, but he is choosing the humble and unpretentious of the present for that honor, and when the right time comes to make us rulers over many things (talents) we shall be „*changed*,”—made „like him” and be with him and share his glory and power. „He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”

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