

November 19, 2017 – 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

The Angel series, book 6 is on its way. So, those of you who started it two years ago, volumes 1 through 5 and finished it, can now finish the whole thing. We ordered them two days ago, they are coming. Second of all, I want to thank everyone who did a good job at the Christmas bizarre and I want to thank everyone who came to the Christmas bizarre. It was interesting to see what was available. I was even offered a free hotdog but, I turned it down because I can't eat the bun. I couldn't see myself being two or three years old again waiving a hotdog around. But thanks anyway for that offer.

In our gospel today, Jesus gives us a parable that is almost always misunderstood. We see this guy giving servants talents. We automatically hear the word talents, and we think about abilities; skills, things God blessed us with, art, music, whatever. But that's not the case in here. "Talents," in this situation, the master's talent, is a precious treasure, and he is giving it to the servants who have abilities. It even says "according to their abilities." So, we have a master, he is giving these talents, this treasure, to his servants. Now, this is very unheard-of. First off, most masters did not get to know their servants in an intimate way to know their unique abilities. They'd just say wait on my table, go do the dishes, things like that. But, this guy evidently, knows his servants very well. Second of all, there is no indication that these servants are financially able to do financial things. Third, he's not out to make a profit, because when we see him get back, he gives them everything. So he's not into making a profit. This guy is very unique and strange, at the time of Jesus. And so, he gives each according to his ability; five, two, one. This is interesting because each of us has different abilities. Each of us has different skills. This master knows what each one is. But, it doesn't make sense unless we realize that the master is the Father, God the Father. God the Father, is giving us His most precious treasure, according to our abilities. What was His most precious treasure? His son, Jesus Christ. Now, one of the saints had a vision of heaven, Jesus explained it. He says, "each one of us is created differently in our ability to receive grace. To receive the Holy Spirit, which is really Jesus Christ being delivered to us by the third person. Some people will be in heaven and they'll have enough grace, to fill a gallon jar. Some people will be there and they'll have enough to fill a pint. And, some people will be there and they'll have enough to fill a shot glass. Each according to his own ability. Now, does this mean there's bad or good in that? No. It means that each one of us is full and each one of us is in heaven. That's after all the ultimate goal. So it doesn't matter if your neighbor is a shot glass and you're a gallon jar. You're not going to sit up in heaven and go, "na, na, na, na, na." You're going to say, "praise the Lord, we're all here!" Because full is full, no matter what you are. It's the same thing with God the Father and these servants. He knows the first servant can accept five parts of Jesus. He knows the second servant can accept two parts of Jesus. He knows the third servant, one part of Jesus. This talent is so precious, and that's why Jesus used this term, it's a monetary figure, but Jesus isn't using it that way. It's a monetary figure, one talent was worth so much money that you could never pay it back. In fact, you probably couldn't spend it in all your lifetime back then. So, God is giving the servants a very special treasure. He is using "talents" as a priceless treasure, Jesus. He is giving these guys something to invest; Jesus. And when they come back, the first guy has doubled his Jesus; the second guy the same thing. What does that mean? It means they went out and spread the good news, "Let me tell you about my Lord and Savior, He can be your Lord and Savior too." "You need help? I'll be more than happy to help you." A glad heart. "Oh, you want me to listen? I'll listen to your problems with compassion." All the Christian things that Jesus asks us to do. These guys went out and applied Jesus to their natural abilities. Ones we normally call talents. Jesus coupled with us, means great

things, if we use the parts of Jesus we receive. Notice the master says, "Come, share your master's joy." To share joy with someone, it must be 2 equal persons uniting their wills. The master is using the talents to transform his servants from servants to sons. This joy is not the temporary one we think of, that disappears, but the permanent one that comes from knowing, being with and obeying God. A joy that can only be realized in Heaven.

If we receive the grace and are using it. This is what the third person doesn't do. He takes his part of Jesus and buries it. Who buried Jesus? Judas. Judas is the reason that Jesus was buried. In the same terms, just like in the beginning when the master gives these servants the talents, that word is handed on or handed over. That's the same term, not a financial term. Matthew uses a different one, he uses the same term that Jesus said, "I'm going to be handed over to be crucified." So, it's not a monetary thing. It's because of Jesus, that God the Father can give us Him, because of His sacrifice on the cross. So that we take our natural abilities that God gave us, we put the two together, and we're able to do great things. Like, double the amount of Jesus in the world. This is what Jesus is talking about. Now the third one, he took Jesus and buried Him. It's not unusual and Jesus's audience would not be shocked, to hear that he buried a talent, money. Because, in the middle east you buried money to keep it from being taken by invading armies, because there were so many coming and going. It was easier to save it in the ground, than the bank. But, in this parable, what this servant was doing, was saying, "you gave me Jesus, I don't want Jesus, I got rid of Jesus for fear of you. No, I don't like you, I hate you, I despise you." That's what he's saying to God the Father. "I took the gift of your Son and buried it, out of my life, I don't want Jesus in my life." That's what this third person is telling him. "I don't want salvation, I don't want to preach the good news, I don't want to be compassionate and understanding. I don't want Jesus in my life." So he buried it and got rid of it just like Judas was the reason Jesus was buried. So, the Father says, "take the gift I've given him; give it to the one who has more. Because, the more Jesus you have, the more you can give, the more you can put Jesus in the world. That's building the kingdom of God. Taking the Jesus given to me, using it and now giving it to someone else and there's more Jesus in the world. He says, "take him and throw him out in the darkness where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth." Darkness is against God. God is not present in the darkness because God is light. This person is going where there is no light of God. Where is that? Hell. When Jesus says, "out in the darkness, grinding of teeth," that's talking about hell; damnation. So, this person rejected Jesus, and God the Father says, "then you reject Me, go to hell." And that's how it works by the way, our judgements. We are able to say to God, when we go to judgement, "I accepted Jesus, I rejected Jesus."

We are at the last of the church year. This is our last Sunday in ordinary time; next Sunday is Christ the King. And the following one is the first Sunday of advent; brand new church year. Every year at the end of the church year, the church asks us, reflect on your life with Jesus, reflect on your life with God, reflect on your own end time. Where are you in relation to salvation? Where are you in relation to Jesus, God the Father, the Holy Spirit? This parable is asking us and letting us know, what we choose. What am I going to do with Jesus? Am I going to accept Him? Am I going to reject Him? If I accept Him, then it means I have to go out and share Him so that He increases and changes the world.

God Bless You.