

Pleasant Valley
Church of Christ

3317 Amidon
Wichita KS 67204
(316) 838-4195
www.letjesusleadus.org

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Classes 9:30 am
Worship 10:30 am
Evening 6:00 pm

Wednesday

Classes 7:30 pm

The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is a non-denominational group of believers who are committed to following Jesus in our attitudes, our relationships, and our worship. If you want the same thing in your life, please contact us. We'd like to help.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Wings



*"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31)*

August 3, 2008

Stifled by fear

by David King

"Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours'" (Matt. 25:24-25).

There are many reasons people do not accomplish everything they are capable of accomplishing in life. The parable of the talents illustrates the most common reason: **fear**.

Of what was the one-talent man afraid? There are several possibilities.

Perhaps he was afraid of **failure**. The "talent" in this parable was an ancient monetary unit, roughly equivalent to a year's wage. Even though this servant was given less than the others, it was still a sizable sum of money, and the risk of losing it through mismanagement was real. The prospect of blowing this assignment and losing the money could have had a paralyzing effect on this man's ability to act.

Maybe he was afraid of **rejection**. Even if he doubled his master's money, the total would be a mere pittance compared to the others. What if his efforts were not good enough? What if the master expected more? What if his services were no longer needed? There was a risk of a bad outcome, no matter what he did.

The fear of **ridicule** may have played a role. The master dispersed his money to his servants, each "according to his own ability" (v. 15). The fact that this servant got only one talent was a statement that the master did not have much confidence in his ability to turn a

large profit. Regardless of what he produced, there was plenty in this servant's position to give others an occasion to mock him as a loser.

In the end, it really doesn't matter what this servant was afraid of. All that matters was that his master's talent did not increase in value. Rather than risk losing the money, he buried it in the ground for safe keeping, and returned it upon his master's return, unused and unchanged. He would have been better off putting it in a bank and letting it draw interest. The master was not impressed by the servant's caution. His talent was given to another, and he was cast out (v. 28-30).

So the great irony in this story is that the servant's fear fulfilled itself. His extreme caution led him to do nothing, and he earned nothing. The result of his inaction was everything he feared: failure, rejection, and ridicule. Not because he tried and failed, but because **he did not try at all**.

And that is the chief lesson in this parable, isn't it? God does not judge us using the same standards that we humans use to judge each other. He judges us only on the basis of what we are capable of doing. Even if our talents are small, He expects us to do our best with what we have. The real tragedy is that we allow all these fears—most of which are irrational and exaggerated—to stifle whatever talents we have, and end up doing nothing.

If we fear anything in this life, it should be the prospect of giving back to God an empty bag, with nothing to show for the life He has given us. We must face our fears, and **try**.