

# Bryan Station Baptist Church

INDEPENDENT

MISSIONARY

## THE PIONEER BAPTIST

ORGANIZED 1786

VOL. 16, NO. 2  
NOVEMBER, 1984

*"Preaching The Same Truth We Preached Before Kentucky Was A State"*

### THE PARABLE OF THE POUNDS

C. D. Cole

INTRODUCTION: This parable was spoken at Jericho, on our Lord's last journey to Jericho. Calvary, with all its horror, was but a few days ahead. An unusual tension of spirit marked our Lord's behaviour, and they were amazed and afraid. The passover feast was at hand. The air was electric and everybody felt that something was impending. Some thought the kingdom of God would immediately appear. So Christ spoke this parable to wet down that expectation which might easily flame into rebellion against Rome. He tells them what His real program was. He was to go a long way off and receive the kingdom. It was to be a long time for he was to go into a far country. When he did return, it was not to do what they expected. They thought the kingdom meant Jewish lordship over other nations. He teaches them that it meant the destruction of rebellious citizens, and a rigid inspection of the servants' faithfulness. As we follow the story we notice:

I. The small capital the servants received to trade with. It was a pound

apiece, which would be about \$20 in our money. Of course, the purchasing power would be considerably greater than it is today.

Each servant received the same amount, and it was a small amount. What could this pound stand for? What is it that all Christians possess alike and in the same degree? What gift do they all possess equally; rich and poor, learned and ignorant, black and white, male and female? Is it not the message of salvation which we call the gospel of Jesus Christ? That is the pound, and every saved person has it. Every believer has the story of salvation, the gospel of Jesus Christ. We may differ in many respects--in capacities and otherwise, but we all stand on a common platform here--we all have the gospel story.

Notice the smallness of the gift: just one pound or \$20. Can that represent the gospel? But go back to the time of utterance and you can see the beauty, the pathos and power of the metaphor. Here was a handful of disciples surrounded by a hostile world with great material

power, with systematized philosophies, and with military strength, and with venerable religion. And there stood 12 Galilean men with their simple story of the cross, which to the Jew was a stumbling block and to the Greek, foolishness. The foolishness of preaching--that was their poor pound, as men estimate values. They had to go into business in a very poor way. But the foolishness of God is wiser than men and the weakness of God is stronger than men. It was to be a repetition of the leather sling and five stones from the brook, in the hand of a stripling that made short work of the giant. He gave them a pound apiece--that was the Master's legacy, but what seems to be such a mite, is the power of God unto salvation.

Notice the purpose of the gift. It was to live on and to trade with. So we, like they, are to live on the gospel of salvation and also trade with it. We are to use it for ourselves and for others. We get salvation, not only to enjoy the sweetness and safety of it, but also to do business with. We are to work out our salvation with

fear and trembling. The gospel of salvation is our capital stock.

There are two ways in which we are to use it. We are to use it in molding our own characters and to make us more heavenly-minded and Christlike. We are to live on it for the purpose of growth and strength in spiritual things. We are to bring the gospel to bear on our conduct and walk and live by its holy principles.

Then we are to tell others. We are not to wrap the gospel up in our handkerchiefs of personal enjoyment and make no effort to get it to others. And this is the job, not only for the pastor, but for every believer. The world will never be evangelized by officials. Every believer is to be a witness and tell the story of the cross of Christ. The person who puts his pound away and never shares it with anybody else will be like the miser that puts his hoardings into an old stocking, and hides it in the ground. When he goes to dig it up he is apt to find that all the coins have slipped out. If you want to keep your salvation, tell others about it. If you want to increase it, then sow it. Oh, how much happier many would be if they would come out of their shells and trade with their pound. Psalm 126:6, "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

## II. The varying profits in trading.

A. There was an inequality of profits from an equal capital. One says: "Thy pound hath gained ten pounds." Another: "Thy pound hath gained five pounds." And those not mentioned must have had varying profits.

All had the same to start with but ended up with different amounts. One man makes twice as much as another, and one man made nothing out of his.

B. Wherein does the difference lie? Not in the apparent results. The outward results may be caused by difference in position or field of labor or opportunity, things for which we are not responsible. The difference is not in the number of souls saved under our labors, nor the amount of money we have raised, nor the size of the church we are pastor or members of. This is where man would put them, but man is apt to go wrong.

The difference in profits is the difference in devotion and faithfulness. If all were to work with equal diligence and faithfulness, their profits would be equal, regardless of the difference in outward results. The deacon may have as much reward as the preacher, and the obscure widow may have as much as either pastor or deacon--and more if she is more devoted and faithful in her sphere of life. The old law of Israel states the true principle of Christian recompense: they that abide by the stuff have the same share in the spoil as they that go down into the battle. Being a preacher or being rich or being talented has no advantage in this respect. Some of these dear women of obscurity may have more profit from their pound than the pastor--but only if they have been more faithful in their places.

III. All who trade make profits. No labor is in vain in the Lord. There are no bad debts in this business. No investments that result in loss. The man who lives by the principles of the gospel and tries to win others to

Christ will succeed. In reality, however, he may seem to fail in the eyes of others, and in his own eyes. If I try to develop this church in grace and godliness and liberality and fail to do that, I have gained as much for myself as if I succeeded. And if you refuse to cooperate and will not respond to the appeal for faithful living, you are the loser, not me. The man who works in the gospel business cannot lose. Nobody came and said, Lord, I put thy pound in my little shop and did my best with it, and it is all gone." Everyone who works will get something. The man with his ten pounds of profit made them because he worked hardest. The man with the five had all his work entitled him to. And the man who lost the pound--he had refused to use it and wrapped it up in his handkerchief. He did not believe God would pay off. He thought the pound was all he could ever have. He felt it would be useless to try to use it. He didn't think he could win a soul to Christ and therefore did not try. There is an inexorable law, both in nature and in grace, that what we do not use, we lose. We increase by use; we gain by spending. Proverbs 11:24, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." Put your arm in a sling and let it stay there six months, and you have lost the use of it. Why does the prizefighter have such large arms and hard muscles? You know why. It is because he uses them in training and fighting.

IV. The final declaration of profits. The master has come back and the servants render their accounts. He wants to know what has become of the money he left

## FAITH

"And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God." Matthew 8:5-13.

Faith is more than belief. The devils believe and tremble, but they do not trust. Faith is trust. It is not an opinion, not a fiction, not a supposition. Faith is a faculty of vision, a process of verification, an assurance of knowledge, a logic of life. Faith demands an honest and impartial mind, a pure and disinterested motive, a loyal and steadfast obedience. This is the faith that works to the justification of the ungodly, the sanctification of the unholy, and to the mighty power that prevails in prayer.

--Samuel Chadwick

The centurion in Matthew 8 provides Christians with an excellent example of true faith. He had such complete faith in Jesus that he said, "You do not need to come here; all you need to do is speak."

Twentieth-century Christians need faith like that!

FAITH is dead to doubts, dumb to discouragements, blind to impossibilities, knows nothing but success. FAITH lifts its hands up through the threatening clouds, lays hold on Him who has all power in heaven and on earth. FAITH makes the uplook good, the outlook bright, the inlook favorable, and the future glorious.

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say, "Lord, when saw we Thee in prison and visited Thee?" We never knew we had done anything of the sort. But he who gives a cup of cold water, only in the name of a disciple, if a cup of cold water is all he has, will in no wise lose his reward.

O, brethren, it is devotion and faithfulness that is going to count in that day of all days, when He shall come with His rewards.

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MAN'S SECURITY IS THE DEVIL'S OPPORTUNITY.

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## GOD'S HONOR

"I will...honour him." Psalm 91:15

*God's honor is something worth seeking. Man's honor doesn't amount to much. Suppose Moses had stopped down there in Egypt. He would have been loaded down with Egyptian titles, but they would never have reached us. Suppose he had been Chief Marshal of the whole Egyptian army, "General" Moses, "Commander" Moses; suppose he had reached the throne and become one of those Pharaohs, and his mummy had come down to our day. What is that compared with the honor God put upon him? How his name shines on the pages of history!*

*The honor of this world doesn't last, it is transient, it passes away; and I don't believe any man or woman is fit for God's service that is looking for worldly preferment, worldly honors, and worldly fame. Let us get it under our feet, let us rise above it, and seek the honor that comes down from above.*

D.L. Moody

*The crowns we will wear in heaven must be won on earth.*

It is not the happy people who are thankful; it is the thankful people who are happy.

in their hands. This brings up by way of metaphor, what lies beyond the grave for us all.

A. Notice all the profit is ascribed to the capital. The servants said, "Thy pound hath gained." Nobody said, "I have gained." If I live by the principles of the gospel and try to get others to believe it, the blessings I receive come from the truth of the gospel and not from my use of it. It is my dinner and not my teeth that nourishes me. It is the gospel and not my trust in it that is the true cause of my sanctifying. Paul said, it was not I but the grace of God which was with me. It is the pound that gains the pound. Paul may plant and Apollos may water, but God gave the increase.

B. Here is a point of contrast. Each servant knew exactly what his net profit was. He said to his master, "Thy pound hath gained so many pounds." But that is what we do not and cannot know in this life. And when He comes He will be the one to tell what the profit has been.

We are walking in the dark today. Our work will be seen as it really is, in the light of His presence. There will be two kinds of disillusioning when He returns. On one hand, many are going to expect great rewards only to be disappointed because they will be thinking of position and prestige and visible results and forget that God pays for motives and faithfulness and not results. On the other hand, many a man has said, "Lord, I have laboured in vain and spent my strength for nought," who will find out he was mistaken and that where he saw failure there were solid results. Those who may not expect much may receive much. Those who