

"What Hast Thou Giv'n For Me?"

"I gave My life for thee, My precious blood I shed, that thou might'st ransomed be, and quickened from the dead; I gave, I gave My life for thee, what hast thou giv'n for Me?" That haunting first verse from the song by Frances R. Havergal ought to give every Christian pause to think about how his attitude toward Christ is reflected by his activity or his apathy. It is a reflection of true love for the Lord when we hold nothing back in His service, while it is a mere shade of love grown cold when we do nothing, or as little as we deem necessary to "get by." The Lord who bought us (1 Cor. 6:20) and to whom we owe our all deserves more than what he gets from us even at our very best: *"So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do"* (Lk. 17:10).

The "Parable of the Talents" (Mat. 25:14-30) is another case in point. To one servant was given five talents, to another was given two talents, and to the last was given one talent (talents refer to a sum of money, but represent varied abilities to serve). It is noteworthy that the Lord did not require the same return of service from the three, but required a return comparable only to what had been given "...to each according to his own ability." It is also noteworthy that there is no mention of anyone who had been given no talent, and from whom was expected no return in service. The "one talent man" would have been given the same blessing as the two faithful ones, who were equally rewarded, had he only employed his ability in the Lord's service. The measure, then, is not between men in terms of merit or production (2 Cor. 10:12), but between what is expected of each individual based upon his God-given abilities (whether they are great or small) and what he does with those abilities. Matthew Henry, in commenting on the parable, says, "We must all be reckoned with as to what good we have got to our own souls, and have done to others, by the advantages we have enjoyed. It is not meant that the improving of natural powers can entitle a man to Divine grace. It is the real Christian's liberty and privilege to be employed as his Redeemer's servant, in promoting his glory, and the good of his people: the love of Christ constrains him to live no longer to himself, but to Him that died for him, and rose again. Those who think it impossible to please God, and in vain to serve him, will do nothing to purpose in religion. They complain that He requires of them more than they are capable of, and punishes them for what they cannot help. **Whatever they may pretend, the fact is, they dislike the character and work of the Lord.**" Well said. Let each of us who love the Lord give as we have been given, and rejoice to hear, *"Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord."*

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