

PRAY EVERY DAY October 25, 2020 Resource

Three Servants Greet Their Long-Awaited Lord from Matthew 25:20, 22, 24-25, NRSV

Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, "Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents."

And the one with the talents also came forward, saying, "Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents."

Then the one who had received one talent also came forward, saying, "Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours."

A Prayer for Guidance from the Book of Common Prayer, 1831

Direct us, O Lord, in all our doings, with thy most gracious favour, and further us with thy continual help, that, in all our works, begun, continued, and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy name, and finally, by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Bishop Sharma Lewis Read the Bible in 2020 Challenge

More resources at www.vaumc.org/2020BibleChallenge

October 21 - November 10: "Fruit of the Spirit: Mercy"

October 26: Hebrews 10:26-31

October 30: Romans 9:14-18

October 27: James 2:12-13

October 31: Romans 11:29-32

October 28: Matthew 23:23-24

November 1: Ephesians 2:1-10

October 29: James 3:13-18

Small Group or Personal Study

Read Matthew 25:14-30.

Use the questions below for small group or personal study:

- In the parable, servants are given talents of different amounts. One talent was not one coin, but about 6,000 days of wages of a worker. Five talents was 30,000 days of wages for a worker! What are the talent or talents that God has entrusted to you?
 - What is your assessment of the value and potential for what God has entrusted to you? Do you find what has been entrusted to you of great or little worth?
 - In the parable, two servants went immediately to put the talents to work on behalf of their Lord and gained more talents. The third servant did not risk or use any of what had been entrusted but buried it, which was about as safe a thing a person could do in Jesus' day to protect a treasure. What have you been doing with what God has given to you? Have you put it all straight to work and continuing to work on God's behalf or have you buried it away?
 - If you have put some talents to work and kept using them, how are you doing that now?
 - If you have buried talents, when did you do so and why have you kept them buried?
 - The first two servants return to their Lord what was given them and all that was gained. A surprise is that the Lord in the parable who gave at the beginning, gives them all that was gained as well, and since they have been faithful with the "little" they were given (which seems like a lot!) they would be given many more things including the joy of their Lord. When have you put to use and risk what God has given you and discovered that God keeps giving you more to use and risk for the sake of Jesus Christ?
 - The third servant criticized the Lord in the parable as harsh and one to be afraid of and simply returned what had been given un-used and un-risked. The Lord who had given so much responded by

giving the un-used talent to one who would use it. That third servant blamed the Lord and did not use the talent and ended up in place of gnashing teeth. For us there is still time to dig up buried talents and employ them in service to Christ. What talent might you still have that you need to dig up and put to the purposes of Jesus Christ our Lord?

- What will you do with what God has given you?

Spend time in silence

Prayer for others and yourself

The Lord's Prayer

The Bishop Sharma Lewis Call to Pray at Noon Every Day

Almighty God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

We thank you for your blessings, past, present and future. You are our rock and the source of our hope in all things and at all times. As Jehovah Jireh, our provider God, we ask you this day to stretch out your mighty hand and eradicate from the face of the earth forever this virus called COVID-19 (coronavirus) that is spreading rapidly from continent to continent.

We also pray that you, Jehovah Rapha, our healing God, would place your hand upon all of those who have been stricken by this virus and restore them to full health. Be with those who have lost loved ones and are grieving. Protect all who are caring for those with this virus and keep them from contracting it themselves. Calm our fears and provide us with your peace that surpasses all understanding. Strengthen us with the joy of the Lord and help us to hold firmly to the hope that only you can provide.

Unify us that we, the Virginia Annual Conference, may be able to experience anew the promise of your presence in and through the unity of our faith, hope and trust in you in the days ahead and forever. We offer this prayer in the mighty name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. AMEN.

A Daily Prayer for Racial Justice and Reconciliation

(The following prayer is offered by the Bishop's Work Group on Racial Justice and Reconciliation.)

O loving God,

We give you thanks for creating the world which is full of diversity
and for making one human family of all the peoples of the earth.

You reign over all the nations and are seated on your holy throne.

You rule over all the peoples without partiality in respect to nations or races
because righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne.

Forgive us for the times when we put walls around us with false pride and racial prejudice.

Forgive us for the times when we were silent in the face of racism, private or institutional.

Open our eyes to see Christ who is in people of every nation and every culture.

Break down the walls that separate us. Set us free from fear, hatred and racism.

Bind us together with the unity of God's love. Restore oneness to the family of God.

We pray in the name of Jesus who came, lived and died for all humanity. Amen.

Share the Love of Jesus because It's All about Relationships

How will you or how did you share the love of Jesus with neighbor today with no strings attached? Write it down and share it this week in small group for support and prayer.

Praise for Faithful Servants from Matthew 25:21, 23 NRSV

"Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master."