

faithful passes to the faithful, v. 28. The busiest Christians are always being asked to undertake something extra. And they usually manage it. Use what capacity you have, and it will grow in the using, 1 Cor. 15 : 58.

2. *Unfaithfulness in service forfeits opportunity.* vs. 24-30. The one-talent man is too easily tempted to despise his opportunity. He thinks it trifling. He counts it not really worth while, 2 Kgs. 5 : 12. He imagines it does not matter; but it does. Neglect your opportunity, and it goes from you altogether and passes over to others, 2 Kgs. 5 : 13. Make clear that the one-talent man's opportunity (a) was not too brief to enable him to do something worth while. In the same period, in which he did nothing, the others had time to double their money. (b) Nor was his opportunity unfair, v. 27. With a perfectly just opportunity he stood self-condemned (vs. 24-26), and on that ground was fairly condemned by his master, vs. 28-30.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

The second of twin parables. Get the scholars to tell the parable of last Sabbath. Find from them where it was spoken, and its purpose, namely, to show the inward, or heart preparation for the Lord's second coming: that we should have the oil in our lamps of a genuine Christian character.

To-day's parable touches another equally vital point, namely, that we should have the preparation of opportunities well improved. But do not announce this as the purpose of the parable. Let the scholars find it out, as they go along.

A novel method (say in a class of eight) would be to have five scholars study specially the part about the five-talent man; two, that about the two-talent man; and one—brightest of the class, if possible—that about the one-talent man. No fear that each section will not watch closely what the other sections have to say.

A few preliminary questions in regard to this rich householder and his trusted slaves (The HOME STUDY QUARTERLY, and the Exposition, afford the materials for the answers.) Bring out that the householder represents Jesus Himself, who is about to go into a "far country," and who will return, ch.

24 : 3, 27; 42, 44. Also question as to the money value of the talent (see Exposition), and as to why the allotment was not the same to each. (Partly, because the man who owned the money had a right to divide as he would; and partly, because, he gave to each what he thought he could use to advantage.) A touch upon "straightway (immediately) took his journey"—the servants were left at once, and altogether, upon their own responsibility.

Now for the five-talent servant; what did he do? v. 16. The boys will have their explanations ready as to the "trading." How many per cent. did he gain? (He may have "turned the money over" many times; probably had.)

What of the two-talent man? Did he do as well? Or better? Or not so well? (v. 17).

And the one-talent man? (Explain, if your bright scholar has not discovered it, or one of the others, that this was at that time a common way of safeguarding money: like banking it, now. Any harm in this? (The harm will come out by and by. To begin with, it was not doing as his master had bid.)

Plenty of time given? V. 19 answers, and also brings to the climax of the parable. Explain, that, whilst no one knows when the judgment will be, every one of us has time enough for the service expected.

A happy reckoning for the five-talent man! (vs. 20, 21.) He has been faithful and diligent, and has doubled his capital. The reward? Have the scholars entrusted with this section pick out the four elements in the reward (see Exposition). Have them tell also of some of the joys of heaven. Work for Jesus well done brings glorious reward,—is the lesson.

There is not much different to be said about the two-talent man (vs. 22, 23); but what there is, is important: it is faithfulness that counts,—not how much work is entrusted to us, but how well we do it.

The one-talent man has a sad account to give. The outcome was, he did nothing; and therefore he lost all, and was shut out from any further chance: oh, the woe of it! (v. 30); and the man who had been able to handle the largest responsibility, had fresh chance given him to do more.