

Global Partnership for Development

A Call to Partner with God: Matthew 25: 14-30

A Reflection

A Call to Partner with God: Mark 6:34-43

For Reflection:

The disciples wanted to send the people away but Jesus told them to fix supper for the crowd.
How often do I want other people to help those in need while ignoring my own talent to help?

The disciples thought they had too little to feed the crowd.
How often do I think I have too little to offer?

Jesus blessed the food then gave it to the disciples to distribute.
How does Jesus ask me to partner with him, being his hands handing nourishment to the people?

Prayers for Our World

Response: Lord, hear our prayer.

Closing Prayer:

Thank you for all I forget are gifts, not rights.
 Forgive me for the grievances I remember too well.
 Save me from the self-pity, the self-seeking,
 the fat-heartedness which is true poverty.
 Guide me, if I'm willing, (drive me if I'm not),
 into the hard ways of sacrifice which are just and loving.
 Make me wide-eyed for beauty, and for my neighbor's need and goodness;
 wide-willed for peace-making, and for the confronting power with the call
 to compassion; wide-hearted for love and for the unloved,
 who are the hardest to touch and need it most.
 Dull the envy in me which criticizes and complains life into a thousand ugly bits.
 Keep me honest and tender enough to heal,
 tough enough to be healed of my hypocrisies.
 Match my appetite for
 privilege with the stomach for commitment.
 Teach me the great cost of paying attention that,
 naked to the dazzle of your back as you
 pass, I may know I am always
 on holy ground.
 Breathe into me the restlessness and courage to
 make something new,
 something saving, and something true
 that I may understand what it is to rejoice.
 Amen.



Notes for using this prayer:

The theme for May is the 8th (and final) Millennium Development Goal: Develop a Global Partnership for Development. Many people believe the success of all the Millennium Development Goals depends on how seriously we work toward achieving this one. A five minute video on this goal can be found at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EXDDNFLDiFw&feature=related> It is excellent. It would be good to use with students (ages 11 up) and it is certainly good background information for teachers. The text from this video is the basis for the reflection found on page three. Please take the suggestions below and adapt them to the needs of your learning community. Note: The closing prayer is "Breathe into Me the courage to Make Something New" pg. 100 of Guerrilla of Grace: Prayers for the Battle by Ted Loder ISBN 0-931055-04-0. Both Scripture Passages are taken from The Message. For this prayer you will need:

- ✓ To choose a leader for the prayer and other readers.
- ✓ To decide if you want to add music to this outline.
- ✓ Copies of the readings below for the readers.
- ✓ Copies of the prayer guide (first page of this file) for those participating, or ability to project it so it can be read by those participating.

A Call to Partner with God: Matthew 25: 14-30 (The prayer leader can invite those gathered to a couple of moments of quiet to reflect on God's presence with us. Then someone reads the following.)

"It's also like a man going off on an extended trip. He called his servants together and delegated responsibilities. To one he gave five thousand dollars, to another two thousand, to a third one thousand, depending on their abilities. Then he left. Right off, the first servant went to work and doubled his master's investment. The second did the same. But the man with the single thousand dug a hole and carefully buried his master's money.

"After a long absence, the master of those three servants came back and settled up with them. The one given five thousand dollars showed him how he had doubled his investment. His master commended him: 'Good work! You did your job well. From now on be my partner.'

"The servant with the two thousand showed how he also had doubled his master's investment. His master commended him: 'Good work! You did your job well. From now on be my partner.'

"The servant given one thousand said, 'Master, I know you have high standards and hate careless ways, that you demand the best and make no allowances for error. I was afraid I might disappoint you, so I found a good hiding place and secured your money. Here it is, safe and sound down to the last cent.'

"The master was furious. 'That's a terrible way to live! It's criminal to live cautiously like that! If you knew I was after the best, why did you do less than the least? The least you could have done would have been to invest the sum with the bankers, where at least I would have gotten a little interest.

"Take the thousand and give it to the one who risked the most. And get rid of this "play-it-safe" who won't go out on a limb. Throw him out into utter darkness.'

A Reflection : (Have the Prayer Leader read the following.)

In Jesus' day a "talent" was a large amount of money. In our day we think of a "talent" as a special ability. You may have a talent for music, for sports, for listening, for finding solutions to problems, for working well with others. We know that the more we "practice" our talent the stronger it becomes. It could be said we become more talented. We also know that if we do not use our talents, they become weaker.

Today we pray for the efforts around the world to make Millennium Development Goal 8 a reality. It is critical if the other seven goals are to be met. Each individual, each group, each region, each country needs to lift up their collective talents and use them if this goal to Develop a Global Partnership for Development is to be achieved.

Goal 8 involves cancelling some international debt. Many poor countries spend more paying off interest on international loans than on health care and education. If the debts are cancelled...the people must hold the governments accountable to spend the money that is saved on health care and education. In Uganda the people are marching to remind the government of this and so far it is working. 2 million extra pupils are at school and health care is getting better. Debt relief money is providing running water in health clinics and needed drugs. What can we do to encourage debt relief?

"After a long absence, the master of those three servants came back and settled up with them. The one given five thousand dollars showed him how he had doubled his investment. His master commended him: 'Good work! You did your job well. From now on be my partner.'"

In Africa 2 out of 5 people go hungry every day. African farmers pay up to six times the usual price for fertilizer—fertilizer to help grow more food. People are dying because of the inequality in trade. The best way of aiding those people is to help them maximize profit from what they are doing for themselves. Just a small shift in the balance of world trade could make a huge difference. If poor country's exports went up by just 1% 128 million people would escape the poverty trap. The Asian tsunami disaster showed how quickly and generously the world can react, but tragedies of this scale happen all the time. Every two months more African children die of malaria than were killed by the tsunami. Rich countries have promised to spend .07% of their income on aid. So far few countries have actually done it. What can we do?

"The servant with the two thousand showed how he also had doubled his master's investment. His master commended him: 'Good work! You did your job well. From now on be my partner.'"

International trade practices are seriously unfair. "The Jamaican Hope" is a breed of cattle developed to thrive in Jamaica's heat. The "hope" was that these cows would create a booming dairy industry and help Jamaica trade its way out of poverty. For a while it worked. But Jamaica was forced to open its markets to outside traders. Cheap, subsidized European powdered milk flooded in. Jamaican farmers could not compete. Trade barriers mean goods exported from poor countries can be heavily taxed and imports from rich countries become expensive.

"The servant given one thousand said, 'Master, I know you have high standards and hate careless ways, that you demand the best and make no allowances for error. I was afraid I might disappoint you, so I found a good hiding place and secured your money. Here it is, safe and sound down to the last cent.' The master was furious. 'That's a terrible way to live! It's criminal to live cautiously like that! If you knew I was after the best, why did you do less than the least?'"

Can we accept God's invitation to partner with God? Let's pray for that grace.

A Call to Partner with God: Mark 6: 34-43: (Have someone read the following.)

When Jesus arrived, he saw this huge crowd. At the sight of them, his heart broke—like sheep with no shepherd they were. He went right to work teaching them.

When his disciples thought this had gone on long enough—it was now quite late in the day—they interrupted: "We are a long way out in the country, and it's very late. Pronounce a benediction and send these folks off so they can get some supper."

Jesus said, "You do it. Fix supper for them."

They replied, "Are you serious? You want us to go spend a fortune on food for their supper?" But he was quite serious. "How many loaves of bread do you have? Take an inventory." That didn't take long. "Five," they said, "plus two fish."

Jesus got them all to sit down in groups of fifty or a hundred—they looked like a patchwork quilt of wildflowers spread out on the green grass! He took the five loaves and two fish, lifted his face to heaven in prayer, blessed, broke, and gave the bread to the disciples, and the disciples in turn gave it to the people. He did the same with the fish. They all ate their fill. The disciples gathered twelve baskets of leftovers. More than five thousand were at the supper.

(The Prayer Leader invites those gathered to spend a few minutes praying with the questions for reflection on the prayer guide.)

Prayers for Our World: (After time for reflection, the Prayer Leader leads those gathered in praying the following petitions. The response is: Lord, hear our prayer. It is printed on the prayer guide.)

1. For all those using their talents to work toward debt relief for poor countries, and for the governments of those countries, that they will use the money saved to help improve the quality of life for all their people...we pray...
2. For all those using their talents to promote fair trade: the producers of products, those who buy and sell them, and the consumers who are willing to pay a little more so all may have enough...we pray...
3. For all those using their talents to develop fair trade laws and financial systems to benefit all peoples, especially the poor...we pray...
4. For all those involved in government at all levels, that they may use their talents to improve the lives of all people...we pray...
5. For all those using their talents to plan for sustainable development for the future...we pray...
6. For all those using their talents to develop decent and productive work for youth... we pray...
7. For all those using their talents to provide affordable essential medications to people in need... we pray...
8. For all those using their talents to make the benefits of new technologies (especially in the areas of information and communication) available to all people...we pray...
9. For each of us that we may grow in our awareness of the talents we've been given and our willingness to use them to make the world a better place for all people... we pray...
10. In thanksgiving for God who desires to partner with us...we pray...

(The Prayer Leader leads those gathered in the closing prayer, which is found on the prayer guide.)