



Written by
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The Parable of “The Talents”

Scripture: Matthew 25: 14-30

Dramatic Category: “Fractured Parable”

What is a “Fractured Parable”?

A “Fractured Parable” is a contemporary, humorous re-telling of one of the parables of Jesus. The Narrator, who may, or may not be involved in the action, tells the parable. As the parable is told, the mimes portray the action, occasionally using props and suggested costume pieces. The mimes generally wear black slacks, black turtleneck shirts or black and white striped shirts with black suspenders, and white gloves to accent their hand motions. They do not need to wear the traditional “white-face” of the mime genre. These “Fractured Parables” do not require any specific set.

Topic: Stewardship of resources in building the kingdom of God

Performance Time: 7 minutes

Number of Players: 6 players (*men or women*)

Objective:

This "Fractured Parable" emphasizes the importance of using the resources God has given us to increase His kingdom.

Synopsis:

This familiar parable is retold using the antics of three mimes who become Mike, the faithful servant who multiplies his five talents into ten; Ike, who multiplies his two talents into four, and Patrick Mahoney III, who simply buries his talent. The point is made that we are responsible for being active stewards of the gifts we are given; whether they be influence, financial wealth, physical talents, or other kinds of abilities, in order to build the Kingdom of God while Jesus, the Master, is away. When Jesus returns, we will be judged according to the degree of faithfulness and hard work we showed in multiplying our resources while they were entrusted to us.

Cast:

Narrator 1: *Reads the more dignified lines of the parable from this script*
 Narrator 2: *Reads the comical lines, and does voices with accents, if possible*
 Mimes
 The Master: *An important person who goes on a journey*
 Mike: *An industrious person who receives five talents*
 Ike: *A faithful person who receives two talents*
 Patrick Mahoney III: *A lazy person who receives one talent*

NOTES:

1. When the script refers to “mimes,” they respond to the Narrator as neutral mimes, not as their assigned characters. When you see character names in the script, the mimes portray those characters; add character props to the standard mime costume, if you desire, such as: hats, neckties, a briefcase, a boa, etc.
2. Change the character names to reflect the gender of the mimes playing the parts. If needed, change the name of the “Patrick Mahoney III” to “Patricia Mahoney III.”

Props: All props are pantomimed (imaginary)

Sound: Wireless mics for the Narrators

Staging:

Arrange the Narrators on some kind of risers or a platform, behind the actors, so that they look down on the action on stage.

<p>Narrators <i>elevated on risers</i></p>

The Master	Mike	Ike	Patrick Mahoney III
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Lighting: Even light across the stage

NOTE:

This skit is a narrated mime; this technique requires that the action described by the Narrator be acted out in **pantomime** by “mimes” who **perform simultaneously** while the story is being told. The attention of the audience is on both the Narrator and the mime action. Block the action of the mimes so that they illustrate the events being described by the Narrator. Facial expression and interaction between the Narrator and the mimes is suggested to add comedy and energy to the performance. The characters respond to what the Narrator says. The action is almost constant.

The Script:

NOTE: The Narrators' lines are in bold. (*The mime directions are in italic.*)

Narrator 1: **And now for the "Parable of the Talents"**

(The mimes jump with enthusiasm as each one prepares to impress the Narrators with his or her talent. The following sequence of lines should be said over each other as the mimes act out their talents all at once. Divide them according to the actual abilities of the mime. Let singers, sing; let dancers, dance, etc...)

The Master: *(to the Narrators)* Watch this!

(he begins a little tap or dance routine and sings)

"I'm singing in the rain..."

(or some other song associated with dancing)

Mike: *(to the Narrators)* Hey, check this out!

(He begins to juggle or bend his arm as a contortionist or some other physical comic talent)

Ike: *(to the Narrators, stepping forward, adopting an operatic pose)*

"The sun'll come out tomorrow, tomorrow..." *(or any other tune)*

Patrick: *(to the Narrators)* Hey, listen to this.

(He does an impersonation of someone, like John Wayne.)

How 'ya doin' cowboy?

(The comedy of this is that they are doing it simultaneously, much to the dismay of the Narrators, who stare at each other in disbelief.)

Narrator 1 & 2: **No, no, no.**

Narrator 2: **Not that kind of talent.**

Mimes: *(simultaneously offering other talents they might have)*

Okay, well, I know a million tunes. *(starts a new song)*

You want a tango? *(tries a new dance step)*

Okay, who's this? *(starts a new impersonation)*

Can you do this? *(another physical gag, etc.)*

Narrator 1: **No, no, this kind of talent is worth money.**

Mimes: *(obviously insulted at the thought of their talents being worthless)*

Oh yeah, well then go entertain yourself....

Get your own show....

I don't have to take this...

We can find other work..., etc.

(They start to leave.)

Narrator 2: *(raises his/her hand)* **Stop!**

(The mimes stop in mid-exit)

Narrator 1: **I'm sorry...We think you are all very talented,
but this parable is about a different kind of talent.**

Narrator 2: **It's about earning money, you know, business.**

Narrator 1: **Not show business.**

(turning to Narrator 2) **Actually, it's not really about money either;
it's about being a good steward of resources.**

Narrator 2: *(speaking to Narrator 1)* **God-given resources, like influence or intelligence.**

(The two Narrators begin talking together, ignoring the mimes.)

Narrator 1: **It's really about being faithful to the interests of your master.**

Mimes:

(They have had enough of the debate concerning the meaning of this parable. They speak out randomly, not in unison.)

Make up your mind.

What's it about?

I haven't got all day.

Blah, Blah, Blah...

Narrator 2: *(pointing to Narrator 1)* **He's right.**
In this parable, Jesus is the Master

Narrator 1: **And we Christians are the servants.**

Narrator 2: **The long journey is the time between Jesus ascending into Heaven**
(motioning from earth to heaven)

Narrator 1: **After the resurrection**

Narrator 2: **and His second coming when He returns again in power.**
(motioning from Heaven to Earth)

(The mimes lean against each other, waiting patiently for the story to continue.)

Narrator 1: **Meanwhile, Jesus wants us to be faithful**
and to be good stewards of the tools He has given us
to expand his kingdom.

Narrator 2: **So that's it.** *(satisfied with him/herself)*
That's what the parable is about.

Mimes: *(tired of waiting)* What parable?

Narrator 1 & 2: *(in unison)* **The Parable of the Talents!**

(The mimes line up to tell the story. The Master stands downstage right. The three servants stand across center stage. They all turn their backs to the audience.)

Narrator 2: **In Matthew 25**

Narrator 1: **Verses 14 through 30.**

Narrator 2: **The "Kingdom of Heaven" will be like a man going on a journey,**

(The Master turns around to face the audience and begins to pantomime packing for a journey.)

Who called his servants:

Narrator 1: **Mike**

(Mike turns around with a strong stance.)

Narrator 2: **Ike,**

(Ike turns around with an intelligent look.)

Narrator 1: **And Patrick Mahoney III** (“the third”),
(Patrick turns around with a very snobbish smirk.)

Narrator 2: **and entrusted his property to them.**

Narrator 1:
(The Narrator gives a shrill whistle, as if he were calling his dogs, then he shouts in a Jewish accent.)

Kvick...everybody, come 'ere.

(The Master gestures calling the servants, and mouths the words. "Kvick...everybody, come 'ere.")

(The servants stare in amazement at Narrator 1's Jewish accent.)

Narrator 1: **Well, he was Jewish!**

(The three servants line up eagerly, single file, across the stage, as in the "Staging" diagram above.)

Narrator 2: **To Mike he gave five talents of money,**

(The Master pantomimes the distribution of his wealth. He hands the first servant, Mike, five Talents. Mike looks at the Narrators with confusion.)

Narrator 1: **It's a lot of money, trust me.**
See, it took 60 minas or 6,000 drachmas to make a talent.
That's about five grand...give or take a drachma.
(He sees that he is diverting the story, and he backs down.)

Oh...sorry, too much information; so, you were saying?

Narrator 2: **To Ike, he gave two talents,**

(The Master gives out two more Talents to the second servant.)

and finally, he gave one talent to Patrick Mahoney III.

(The servant stares at the talent, quite insulted that a man of his stature would be handed only one talent.)

(All three Mimes examine the talents they were given.)

Narrator 1: **Then he took his hat,**

(The Master takes his hat.)

Narrator 2: took his coat,

(The Master takes his coat.)

Narrator 1: took his time,

(The Master gives the Narrator a puzzled look, then looks at his watch.)

Narrator 2: and left.

(The Master walks to the back of the stage and turns his back to the audience, as though he is "gone.")

Narrator 1: So, there they were; each one given talents according to their abilities; so no one would be overwhelmed

(Patrick Mahoney III, holds out his one talent with a sour expression on his face.)

Narrator 2: Or “underwhelmed,” as the case may be.

(All three servants examine their money and look puzzled.)

Narrator 1: But, what were they going to do with them?

(All three mimes look puzzled. Mike has an idea.)

Narrator 2: The first servant invested in real estate.

(Mike pays out his money to an imaginary owner, then turns the key to a door and walks in.)

He bought fixer-uppers and fixed 'em up.

(Mike's expression turns to shock when he sees the condition of the house.)

Narrator 1: He went to DIY.com and learned how to "Do-It-Yourself"!

(Mike opens his laptop computer and begins to type furiously.)

Narrator 2: He mastered plumbing;

(He tightens up the toilet by turning the whole thing around, then he flushes it. He is very pleased.)

Narrator 1: Laid tile

(Mike drops to his knees and lays tile.)

Narrator 2: Taped drywall

(Mike jumps up and tapes drywall. He looks tired and flashes a look at the Narrators to stop with the chores!)

Narrator 1: Hammered roof tiles

(Mike gently balances himself as he walks on the roof.)

Narrator 2: He bought low and sold high

(Mike signs papers and receives cash from an imaginary buyer.)

Narrator 1: 'till his profit margins hit the sky!

(Mike cheers with his arms in the air.)

(Mike freezes in a "home improvement" pose so he will not distract from the sequence with Ike.)

Narrator 2: The second servant thought hard,

(Ike begins to pace back and forth at center stage.)

Narrator 1: He thought long,

(Ike taps his forehead.)

Narrator 2: He was hard pressed to do the Master proud,

(Ike taps his chin, then comes up with an idea.)

Narrator 1: Hard pressed?

(Ike pantomimes ironing a shirt on an ironing board.)

Narrator 2: Then it came to him!

(Ike motions that he has an idea!)

Dry cleaning!

(Ike hangs up an imaginary sign, and opens the door.)

Narrator 1: **So he opened a Dry cleaning business**

(Ike takes clothing from people, sprays it, and places it in washers.)

Narrator 2: *(with anticipation)* **And people were "impressed."**

(He begins a battle of puns with Narrator 1.)

Narrator 1: *(laughing to himself)* **Which "ironed out" his money problems,**

(Ike pantomimes laying trousers in a pressing machine.)

Narrator 2: *(taking the challenge)* **'Cause he had it all "in the bag,"**

(Ike pantomimes putting clothing in the bag and handing it to a customer.)

Narrator 1: *(impressed with himself)* **And he developed a "dry" sense of humor.**

(Ike has had it with the jokes and glares at them to stop the puns. The Narrators take the hint. Ike freezes in an ironing position, so he will not distract from the attention to Patrick.)

Narrator 2: **But what about Patrick Mahoney III?**

(Patrick paces back and forth.)

Narrator 1: **What was he to do?**

(Patrick scratches his head.)

Narrator 2: **He only had one talent?**

(Patrick grimaces and holds up one finger.)

Narrator 1: **He couldn't do much.**

(Patrick shrugs his shoulders.)

Narrator 2: **But he could do something?**

Narrator 1: **But what?**

(Patrick shrugs his shoulders again.)

Narrator 2: **He thought to himself...**

(Patrick taps the side of his head with his finger.)

Narrator 1: **I know... this talent is all about stewardship,
So, I could be a steward... on a ship!**
(Patrick imagines himself staggering for balance on a ship.)

Narrator 2: **But no,**
(Patrick shakes his head.)

Narrator 1: **I get seasick.**
(Patrick looks like he will throw up.)

I could open a kennel, and baby sit dogs...
(Patrick pretends to call a dog to him.)

Narrator 2: **But no,**
(Patrick shakes his head.)

Narrator 1: **I'm allergic.**
(Patrick holds back a sneeze.)

I could start a window washing service,
(Patrick runs a squeegee against a window pane.)

Narrator 2: **But no,**
(Patrick looks down in a panic!)

Narrator 1: **I'm afraid of heights.**
(Patrick shakes his head, "No.")

Narrator 2: **The poor guy....**
(Patrick looks down, sadly.)

Narrator 1: **He had lots of great ideas,**
(Patrick tries to think of others.)

Narrator 2: **But he was too fragile,**

(Patrick imagines sea sickness.)

Narrator 1: **too allergic,**

(Patrick holds back another sneeze.)

Narrator 2: **too afraid**

(Patrick covers his eyes as he looks down.)

Narrator 1: **to do anything**

(Patrick shrugs his shoulders.)

Narrator 2: **So that's what he did**

(Patrick just stares at the Narrators during the following sequence.)

Narrator 1: **Nothing**

Narrator 2: **What?**

Narrator 1: **Nothing,**

Narrator 2: **Oh, I thought you said something.**

Narrator 1: **I did.**

Narrator 2: **What did you say?**

Narrator 1: **Nothing**

(The mimes see where this is going and shout.)

Mimes: *(randomly, not in unison)*
Stop it!

Go on with the story...

Finish this already...

come on!

Narrator 2: **So he decided to keep his Master's gift safe,**

Narrator 1: *(with suspense in his voice)* **Late one night,**

(Patrick tiptoes down stage left.)

He dug a hole in his front yard

(Patrick pantomimes digging a hole.)

And buried his talent

(Patrick places the talent in the hole.)

He posted a "yard gnome" as a guard.

(Patrick looks around, then grabs an imaginary gnome and places it over the hole. He folds his arms in satisfaction.)

**Narrator 2: And there they were...
Three stewards of the Master's trust**

Narrator 1: All hard at work

(Mike and Ike are busy at work, but Patrick is pacing back and forth on his lawn.)

Narrator 2: Then it happened!

Narrator 1: What?

Narrator 2: The Master returned.

Narrator 1: *(Shouting at the mimes)* The Master is home!

(The mimes hurry to gather their money. Mike rolls up some imaginary house plans, Ike grabs some dry cleaning, Patrick quickly moves his gnome and digs up his talent, and all three of them line up across the stage to greet the Master.)

Narrator 1: All right, boys "Show me the money."

**Narrator 2: So each one prepared to show how he had multiplied
his resources to expand the Master's holdings.**

Narrator 1: First Mike,

Narrator 2:

(If possible, the Narrator uses an accent or a unique voice to create the character of Mike, a heavy construction-worker type voice.)

"I bought low, worked hard, sold high, and here you go,

(He hands the Master five more talents and a roll of house plans.)

**You entrusted me with five talents,
And see, I have gained five more.
I doubled your money!**

Narrator 1: **Well done, my good and faithful servant.
You have been faithful with a few things;
I will put you in charge of many things.
Come share your Master's happiness.**

(Mike crosses in front of the Master, gives him a "high five" and steps over to far stage right, cuts a piece of imaginary cake, then chomps away on it merrily during the next sequence.)

Next came Ike,

(Ike steps up, the Master sets Mike's money and the house plans aside.)

Narrator 2: *(He changes his voice to a new accent or character, possibly British)*
I did it, Sir, good clean fun, too!

(Ike hands the Master some imaginary money and a piece of dry cleaning.)

**You entrusted me with two talents,
And see, I gained two more.
I doubled your money!**

Narrator 1: **Well done, my good and faithful servant.
You have been faithful with a few things;
I will put you in charge of many things.
Come share your Master's happiness.**

(Ike crosses over to stage right, gives the Master a "high five" on his way, and joins Mike, who slices some cake and hands it to Ike. They both chomp away merrily on the cake as they watch the next sequence of events with Patrick Mahoney III.)

(The Master sets the money and the dry cleaning aside.)

Narrator 1: **Now it was Patrick Mahoney III's turn.**

Narrator 2: **He stepped up to the plate,**

(The Narrators begin a sparring round of puns again.)

Narrator 1: *(accepting the challenge)* **His moment of truth had arrived,**

Narrator 2: *(impressed)* **The rubber met the road.**

Narrator 1: **The proof was in the pudding.**

Mimes: *(seeing where this is going and shouting randomly)*
No! Not again...

Finish the story...

Enough already...

Stop with the bad jokes...

Narrator 2: *(He uses yet another voice, a real lazy, "good-for-nothing" voice.)*
Ah... I... ah... well, I...

(Patrick mimes this dialogue with gestures.)

**I would've gone to sea, see... but I get seasick...
and you see where this is going, don't you?
I could've gone to the dogs... but my allergies!
And I'm afraid of heights, so the window washing was out.
You understand, don't you?**

**Besides, it was your money, so it was your problem, not mine.
I knew you were a hard man;
harvesting where you have not sown
and gathering where you have not scattered seed,
so I was afraid and hid your talent in the ground.
See, here is what belongs to you.**

Narrator 1: **And he gave his talent back to the Master.**

Narrator 2: **It hadn't grown by even one drachma!**

Narrator 1: **That's about 16 cents, given the depreciation after the rule
of Alexander the Great in the year...**

Mimes: *(flash a stern look, in unison, at the Narrators to finish the story)*

Narrator 2: **So, the Master became furious.**

(The Master stomps his feet, folds his arms, and pretends to spit on the ground. He mimes this conversation as the Narrators give the speech.)

Narrator 1: **You wicked lazy servant!
So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown
And gather where I have not scattered seed?
Well then, you should have put my money on deposit.**

**With the bankers, so that when I returned, I would have
Received it back with interest.**

(The Master takes the talent from Patrick and gives it to Mike, then he mimes these words while raging at Patrick.)

**Take the talent from him
and give it to the one who has the ten talents.**

**For everyone who has will be given more,
and he will have an abundance.**

Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him.

**And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will
be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**

(Patrick looks horrified as he walks downstage, left. He is obviously frightened as he approaches the imaginary "gnashing teeth.")

(The mimes all freeze. Mike and Ike freeze as they take a bite of cake. Patrick freezes as he is being consumed by teeth.)

(The Narrators step forward to center stage.)

Narrator 2: What resources have you been given?

**Narrator 1: What are you doing to multiply God's Kingdom
while The Master, Jesus, is away?**

Narrator 2: Remember: "To whom much is given, much will be expected."

The End