

PARABLE OF THE MASTER AND THREE SERVANTS

Ted Swartz and Lee Eshleman

Characters: Peter and Andrew

Scripture text: Matthew 25:14-30

Props: Hats, stools/chairs/ money (either real or prop cash)

Length: 10 Minutes

Setting: Indoors—uses the audience as part of the scene

(PETER is reading; ANDREW enters.)

PETER: Hey.

ANDREW: Hey.

PETER: What are you doing here?

ANDREW: It's a barber shop. I'm here for a haircut. Why else would I be here?
(Pause.) What are you doing here?

PETER: *(A take.)* Do you have an appointment?

ANDREW: Do I need one?

PETER: Well, there's a few people ahead of you.

ANDREW: How many? *(PETER indicates the audience. ANDREW scans them.)*
Oh. Some of these are gonna take awhile.

PETER: How was the trip?

ANDREW: Ok—I think we're going to be shaking a lot of dust off our feet.

PETER: Ah.

ANDREW: So, did I miss anything?

PETER: Coupla meetings—a new parable.

ANDREW: Oh man, it's always hard to play catch up with those. How did it go?

PETER: The parable?... It's called the parable of the master and the three servants.

ANDREW: Okay.

PETER: Okay, so there's a master and three servants. Are you with me so far?
(ANDREW just looks at him.) In the parable, the master is going away.

(ANDREW raises hand.)

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PETER: Yea?

ANDREW: Where?

PETER: He's going away; he's leaving.

ANDREW: Yea, but where?

PETER: I don't think it's germane to the story where he's going.

ANDREW: Germane?

PETER: It doesn't matter where he goes. He just goes.

ANDREW: Still, it helps to know where he's...

PETER: HE ... JUST ... GOES!

ANDREW: Okay. *(Raises his hands as if to say, this will not be my fault if the story makes no sense.)*

PETER: So he's leaving. *(Gives him a hat and motions him off.)*

ANDREW: What?

PETER: We're doing the parable; you're the master.

ANDREW: Finally you noticed.

PETER: This is fiction.

ANDREW: Right.

PETER: So the master is leaving.

ANDREW: See ya.

PETER: Okay, but before he leaves, he gives each of the servants some money. *(Nothing.)* So you give me some money.

ANDREW: What are you nuts? Giving you money is like spitting in a hurricane.

PETER: I'm just illustrating the point.

ANDREW: So am I.

PETER: The master gives the first servant 12 bucks. *(Holds out his hand.)*

(ANDREW reluctantly digs out his wallet and gives PETER the money.)

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PETER: Then he leaves.

ANDREW: Aimlessly, the master wanders, an itinerant drifter...

PETER: He just leaves!

ANDREW: All right. I'm going, I'm going.

(ANDREW leaves the stage; a long pause.)

PETERL: Andrew!

ANDREW: I'm at the beach.

PETER: The master returns.

ANDREW: I don't know— this is a great beach.

PETER: The master returns!

(ANDREW returns, and stands there.)

ANDREW: Aren't you going to ask about the beach?

PETER: No!

(ANDREW sulks.)

ANDREW: Okay.

PETER: All right, how was the beach?

ANDREW: I don't want to talk about it.

PETER: Andrew, you are supposed to ask about the money.

ANDREW: I had a lousy time at the beach because I didn't have any money. I gave it all to you.

PETER: I'm supposed to report in about the money.

ANDREW: All right, about the money I left with you?

PETER: *(Adopting another voice, one of stuffy efficiency.)* Ah, yes sir, I have your money, as well as another 12 dollars, with an itemized ledger, complete with the investment strategy used to accrue the 100% return on the prior investment.

ANDREW: Well, this is a nice surprise.

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PETER: And I might add, a pleasure to serve you, sir.

ANDREW: An excellent servant.

PETER: *(Back to Peter's voice.)* Exactly. The master is very pleased with the servant, gives him much responsibilities; he goes on to have a fine productive life.

ANDREW: That was the parable?

PETER: No, that's the first part. The master goes away again.

ANDREW: Again?

PETER: Yes.

ANDREW: All right. *(Turns to go.)*

PETER: But before he goes ... The master gives a second servant six dollars.

ANDREW: Only six?

PETER: Right.

ANDREW: Fair enough. *(Gives PETER the six dollars.)*

PETER: And he goes away.

ANDREW: Right. *(He goes and sits in the audience.)*

PETER: What are you doing?

ANDREW: I'm going to visit relatives. *(Pointing out audience members.)* This is Uncle Hebron, Aunt Lucille and cousins Larry, Marcus, and Jerome.

PETER: Okay.

ANDREW: Do they get any money?

PETER: That's up to you.

ANDREW: *(He looks at them.)* I don't think so.

PETER: Fine. When he returns ... *(ANDREW is not listening; he is relating to his "relatives.")* When he returns... *(ANDREW gets the message, returns. Stands waiting.)*

ANDREW: Aren't you going to ask me about Uncle Hebron?

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PETER: *(Rolls his eyes.)* How is Uncle Hebrean?

ANDREW: *(Looks at "Uncle Hebrean.")* Quite frankly, he doesn't look so good. I'm not sure he's going to make it.

PETER: Andrew...

ANDREW: He has this... *(Motions to face.)*

PETER: Andrew!

ANDREW: Plus he needs a haircut.

PETER: ANDREW!

ANDREW: Right.

PETER: The master asks about the money.

ANDREW: About that money.

PETER: *(Adopts another character; he is doing a version of Igor. It's pretty bad.)*
Well master, here is the...

ANDREW: What are you doing?

PETER: It's a different character. I'm acting.

ANDREW: Oh, I thought it was a cry for help. *(PETER gives him a look.)* Okaaaay. You were saying...

PETER: I have the six dollars, and I know... *(Searching.)* ...somewhere I have six more. *(Finds crumpled bills in pocket.)*

ANDREW: This is excellent! Good servant, good servant. I'm sure you'll be quite successful with just a bit of corrective surgery.

PETER: *(Still in character.)* Thank you master. Should you be needing anything else, I'll be in the laboratory. *(Shuffles off.)*

ANDREW: *(Counting his money.)* Great parable.

PETER: Parable's not over.

ANDREW: I was beginning to suspect that.

PETER: The master is well pleased, he gives this servant more responsibilities, and he goes on to have a fine productive life.

ANDREW: Good for him.

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PETER: Once again, the master goes away.

ANDREW: The master doesn't spend much time at home, does he?

PETER: Before he goes he gives a third servant one dollar.

ANDREW: Not much of a servant, is he?

PETER: Not the point here.

ANDREW: I'm not going to get much on that return.

PETER: The master goes away.

ANDREW: I'm going, I'm going. *(Moves off stage left and addresses member of audience.)*
Can I move in with you? You see, I'm an itinerant drifter. Can you say
itinerant? I knew you could.

PETER: The master returns.

ANDREW: I haven't had time to establish a relationship here.

PETER: You don't have time for a relationship.

ANDREW: You're telling me. I'm never home, no money for the beach, Uncle
Hebron's probably dying—I'm not there.

PETER: Andrew!

ANDREW: *(Aside to audience.)* Tomorrow we'll visit Mr. Trolley. Gotta go.
(To PETER) I'm coming home. *(Does so.)*

PETER: He asks about the money.

ANDREW: Hardly seems worth it.

PETER: He asks about the money!

ANDREW: Okay, I gave you a buck.

PETER: *(Once again another character.)* Yea, the money, it's like this—the money...
the money you gave me ... I didn't want to lose it. ... I went to look for a
place to use it, and there was this ... this ... ice cream truck, and they had
nutty buddies, and it's been years since I had a nutty buddy...

ANDREW: You spent my money on a nutty buddy?

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****PURCHASE REQUIRED FOR PERFORMANCE AND DUPLICATION****

PETER: No ... no, of course not. You asked me to take care of it. So after I had my nutty buddy, I took care of it. ... I didn't want to lose it, because you are a strict, demanding, difficult, hard to please, suspicious...

ANDREW: All right!

PETER: So I put it in a hole in the ground. *(Pulls it out and spits on to clean it off.)*

ANDREW: That's disgusting.

PETER: That's not all dirt y'know. The nutty buddy melted a bit.

ANDREW: You BURIED my money????

PETER: It seemed the smartest thing to do.

ANDREW: Well it wasn't! A hole?!

PETER: It wasn't a very deep hole.

ANDREW: It's not a question of burial depth, it's a simple matter of fiduciary responsibility!

PETER: But you got back everything you gave me....

ANDREW: You dawdling milquetoast layabout! I entrust you with my hard-earned capital and you deep-six it in some bizarre fiscal funeral?? INEXCUSABLE!! I'm going to take this dollar and give it to the other servants, and as for YOU ... you...

PETER: *(Helping him out.)* Will be cast out into the outer darkness.

ANDREW: Will be cast out into the outer darkness. ... Is that bad?

PETER: Yea.

ANDREW: Yea!

PETER: There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

ANDREW: There will be weezing....

PETER: Weeping!

ANDREW: Weeping and gnashing of teeth. *(Pause.)* And no haircuts!!!

PETER: Okay, that's the parable.

ANDREW: He say what that was about?

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PETER: Not exactly.

ANDREW: Typical. Just once I'd like him to let us know—maybe little note cards with salient points highlighted.

PETER: You know he's not going to do that.

ANDREW: Right. Just once—once.

PETER: Right—now give me the money back.

ANDREW: What money?

PETER: Funny...

ANDREW: Hey, look at the time..., *(Exits.)*

PETER: *(As he follows.)* How would you like to be cast into the outer darkness?!

THE END

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