

# Readers' Theatre

(Adapted from Matthew 25:14-30)

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Introduction: Jesus was a master story teller. The story we retell for you now is a parable first told by Jesus, that we have turned upside down. You can read the original version in the gospel of Matthew 25:14-30

Narr For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his employees and entrusted his business to them;

#1 to one he gave five hundred thousand,  
#2 to another two hundred thousand,  
#3 and to a third he gave one hundred thousand,

Narr to each according to his ability.  
And he spoke to them about his vision, his mission statement,  
"Peace on Earth; Good will to all."  
Then he went away.

#1 The one who had received the five hundred thousand went off at once, applying all his skill of research and development. He determined to acquire the most excellent and effective the tools of peace available.

#2 In the same way, the one who had the two hundred thousand also determined to acquire the most excellent tools of peace.

#3 But the one who had received the one hundred thousand went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

Narr Meeting back in the board room, the three employees discussed their strategies.

#1 For \$100 I have purchased 11 hand grenades,  
most effective tools to guard the little peace remains.  
"Peace on Earth, Good will to all."

#2 For \$100 I have purchased 11 blankets for refugees,  
most excellent tools to create peace where there is little.  
"Peace on Earth, Good will to all."

#3 But I, I will never squander that \$100.  
I will save the vision and keep the resources safe from all misuse.  
"Peace on Earth, Good will to all."

Narr Then, as these employees learned the ways of the business world, they traded and sometimes earned profit on their investments.

They continued to come together at regular intervals to compare their progress.

#1 Ah yes, for \$4,000 I have purchased 1 rocket launcher,  
a most effective tool to maintain unity, protect supremacy, create peace and profit.

#2 For \$4,000 I have organized 3-day training sessions for 160 youth in peace building,  
a most excellent way to achieve unity of spirit and diversity in practice of creating peace,  
but alas, no financial profit.

#3 I have considered the options and have not gambled on any one method of finding “Peace  
on earth, good will for all.”

Narr And so periodically the employees continued reading their treasurer’s report and  
itemizing their purchases:  
For: \$14,000

#1 1 cluster bomb  
#2 enroll 2 children in Head Start  
#3 nothing at all

Narr for \$40,000

#1 1 Hellfire missile  
#2 2 home health aides for disabled elderly  
#3 nothing at all

#2 (to #3) Oh, and by the way, I am all out of money,  
would you lend me your hundred thousand?

(#3 considers, and considers, then nods yes and hands over money)

Narr for \$763,000

#1 1 minute war on Iraq  
#2 annual salary and benefits for 15 Registered Nurses  
#3 The money’s gone, and I hope it’s doing well.

Narr for \$275 million

#1 3 tests of a missile-defense system  
#2 That could have eradicated polio world-wide

Narr for \$16 billion

#1 1-year nuclear weapons program  
#2 That could have provided healthcare coverage for 7 million children.

Narr for \$38 billion

#1 1 month of U.S. current military spending

#2 That could have saved 11 million lives world wide fighting infectious diseases

Narr After a long time the business owner came and settled accounts with the employees.

#2 And the one with the two hundred thousand came forward, saying, “Master, you handed over to me two hundred thousand. I have no profit to bring to you but the community has profited from these investments. I can show you the faces of those who now live in hope.

Narr The owner said to him, “Well done, good and trustworthy steward; you have seen the strengths of humanity and have given generously to empower the body and embolden the spirit. You have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into enter into the community of the new world which you are helping me to create. Peace on earth, good will to all.”

#3 Then the one who had received the one hundred thousand also came forward, saying, “Master, I knew that you were a discerning man, weighing the means with the ends; giving abundantly and expecting life and peace and knowledge of God as the water covers the sea. I was afraid that I would not know the way. So I went and hid your hundred thousand in the ground. But then I dug it up and gave it to the second who has spent it with little profit to show.”

Narr His owner said to him, “Well done, good and trustworthy steward; you have been discerning in a few things; enter into the community of the new world which you are helping me to create. There are many more decisions that require discernment as we move toward peace on earth, good will to all.

#1 Then the one who had received the five hundred thousand proudly came forward, “Master, you handed over to me five hundred thousand; see, I have made five *million* more.” It didn’t take me long to learn to profit from the system that trusts in power.

Narr And the owner replied, You misguided and deceived employee!  
You spent yourself for pieces of gold instead of peace for humanity.  
You procured homeland security for some at the expense of holistic shalom for all.

Your profit and prominence come at the price of the suffering of many.  
You can keep your millions –but you will become a target for terror in a divided world.

Look with me at the broken, warring world before us.

Stare into the faces of the fatherless children of American soldiers.  
Hear the cries of the widows and orphans of Iraq.  
Lament with me the tragedy that comes from my trust in your stewardship.  
Lament the destruction of depending on violence to solve our problems.  
Lament the brokenness. Lament the death.  
And I will pray for you too.  
Perhaps you may yet see the way, the truth and the life  
of authentic Peace on Earth, Good will to all.