

I think this NIV translation conveys the idea much more clearly --"Come and share your Master's happiness." (Continue reading Text).

Now it is possible that some who have opposed paying much attention to the Gospels have interpreted these sayings of our Lord as meaning that your salvation depends upon what you do with the gifts that the Lord has given you, and that if you don't work hard that if you prove yourself to be lazy you will be cast into outer darkness and there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. This weeping and gnashing of teeth is a figure of speech, but and I think there is a very real disappointment that will come to us if we have not made the utmost use of the talents the Lord has given us.

But it is of course very important in looking at this, or looking at any other part of God's Word to recognize and stress that pre-eminent truth in the Scripture that all our righteousness is as filthy rags. That whatever we accomplish in life is far less important than what Jesus accomplished for us. Our salvation comes only from what He has done. It is due entirely to Him and all we can do for eternal life is to rest upon Him.

Yet there is a very real meaning in this parable or account for each of us. I believe God has put each of us here for a very important reason. But I think it is a reason that applies to those already who have been saved, through the Lord Jesus Christ.

As you look at this the question can immediately come to us, Is this a parable or is it an allegory? I'm not sure we can draw a precise line between parable and allegory. It is very easy to go to an extreme in either direction. There are some who say a parable has just one simple idea, and that idea is developed in the story. And you must not get led off into giving meaning to every detail in the story, because there is one simply idea. That may very well be true of some parables.

On the other hand there are many stories in the Gospels that our Lord gave in which he gave a particular meaning to various elements in the story. Most of the stories he gave have more than one lesson; some have several lessons in them. So I don't think we can draw a precise line between parable and allegory. I think we must be careful that we don't read too much into a particular parable, or allegory. There is always that danger.

There are those who draw all sorts of things that are simply not in the story. I hear of a wonderful sermon by a preacher in Brazil. My friend told me he heard this man tell about the story of the Good Samaritan. He said the priest and the Levite went past and did not help the man who was injured at all. He said, The reason was they were on their way down to Jericho, and it was very wicked to be going down to Jericho. But the Good Samaritan was coming up from Jericho; he was coming away from that which represents wickedness, heading up toward Jerusalem and so he stopped and took care of the Samaritan!