



**By Elder
Ronald A. Rasband**
Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles

YOU'VE GOT

*Let me reassure you my young brothers and sisters,
each one of you has been blessed with special talents.*

I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE with you a message on talents and abilities. Now, before you say, “I don’t have any talents,” or “I don’t know what my talents are,” let me share with you that everyone has been blessed with many marvelous capabilities and talents. One of the great objectives of our journey through mortality is to improve upon them. The Savior powerfully taught this lesson in His parable of the talents.

A master gave each of his three servants a sum of money. The amounts were set according to each servant’s previously demonstrated capabilities. The man then left for a long time. When he returned, he asked each of these servants to report what he had done with the money.

The first two servants revealed they had doubled his investment. “Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord” (Matthew 25:21; see also Matthew 25:23) was the master’s reply.

The third servant then came trembling before his master. He had already heard what the others had reported and knew that he could not give a similar report. “I was afraid,” the servant said, “and went and hid thy talent in the earth” (Matthew 25:25). The master was upset. “Thou wicked and slothful servant,” he said. Then he commanded, “Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents” (Matthew 25:26, 28).

IMPROVE AND ADD TO YOUR TALENTS

In modern revelation the Lord affirmed the principles in this parable: “But with some I am not well pleased, for . . . they hide the talent which I have given unto them, because of the fear of man. . . .

“ . . . Thou shalt not idle away thy time, neither shalt thou bury thy talent



TALENT



IDENTIFY AND PUT INTO PRACTICE EACH DAY THE TALENTS [YOU] HAVE BEEN BLESSED WITH.

that it may not be known” (D&C 60:2, 13).

Sometimes we have a fear of using our talents. We use excuses such as “I know I can’t do that,” or “Someone else can do it much better than I can,” or “those listening to me, or watching me, will criticize and judge me.”

The Lord has made it clear that it is not good enough for us simply to return to Him the talents He has given us. We are to improve upon and add to our talents. He has promised that if we multiply our talents, we will receive eternal joy.

It is so important to identify and put into practice each day the talents we have each been blessed with. However, we must also be cautious and use our talents wisely in building up the kingdom of God here upon the earth. We need to engage in the activities, service, and lifestyle that will help to strengthen and protect our talents to be used righteously.

3 WAYS TO STRENGTHEN TALENTS

Applying the teachings of the parable of the talents has been a challenge and a great blessing in my life. I would like to share with you three principles which have been a great help to me in my efforts with this process.

1. Seek earnestly to discover the talents the Lord has given you. The talents God has given us first become apparent in the interests we pursue. If you are wondering about your talents, make a list of the things you like to do. Include all the activities you enjoy from different dimensions of your life—spiritual, musical, dramatic, academic, athletic, and so on. If you have received your patriarchal blessing, study and ponder it for insights and inspiration. Consult family members, trusted friends, teachers, and leaders; others often can see in us what we find difficult to see in ourselves.

Let me reassure you, my young brothers and sisters, each one of you has been

How can you use your talents to minister to others?



blessed with special talents. Each of you has been blessed with divine talents by our Father in Heaven. He is waiting for you to identify, develop, and magnify those talents He has blessed you with.

2. Use your talents to build up the kingdom of God, and I don't mean just the Church. Our first priority in building the kingdom is in helping others in our own family. Parents are in a unique and powerful position to encourage and support their children in developing their talents. Siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins, extended family members—we all have many opportunities to help others identify their talents. I am grateful for the many people who have helped me add to my talents. The successes in life of those we assist, sponsor, mentor, and lift as they pursue their own talents can bring us great joy and satisfaction.

Focusing on serving the Savior can guide us toward making proper decisions in our daily lives. This perspective prepares us to do whatever the Lord may ask of us at any time.

**EXPERIENCES YOU
HAVE EACH DAY . . .
WILL BE STEPPING-
STONES THAT WILL
HELP TO SHAPE
EACH OF YOUR LIVES.**

3. Acknowledge God's hand in your success.

We must never forget or stop acknowledging that all talents and abilities come from God. Some were given to us before our birth, while others have been acquired as we have developed. However, in both cases, they are gifts from a benevolent Heavenly Father, whose gracious blessings are also the means for improving our talents and obtaining others. The Lord has said, "And in nothing doth man offend God, or against none is His wrath kindled, save those who confess not His hand in all things" (D&C 59:21).

PONDER AND PRAY

I am thankful for the knowledge the Lord has given us—that we are His children and that we are to magnify and multiply our talents to our fullest potential.

The experiences you have each day, if you will allow them to be, can and will be stepping-stones that will help to shape each of your lives, as they have mine. They will assist you in finding your gifts and talents that will be used as you progress through mortality here upon the earth.

It is my humble prayer that we will seriously ponder and pray to find our talents, that we may use them in building up the kingdom of God here on the earth, that we may be found worthy to stand before the Lord at the last day and in His presence hear Him say: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Matthew 25:21). **NE**

From a BYU-Idaho Devotional given on January 25, 2011.

