



Reflect on this parable.

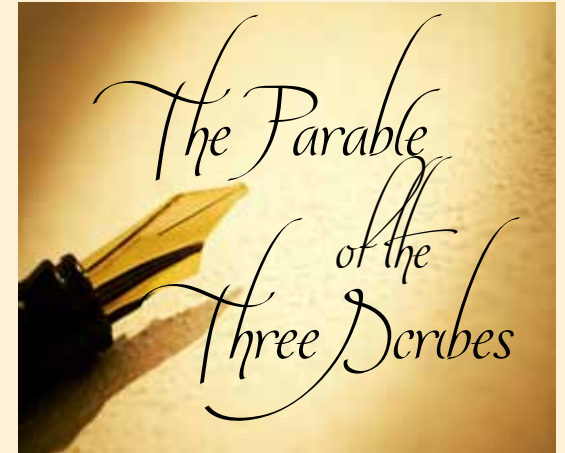
Read Matthew 25:14-30
and ask the Lord where you fit in this story.

Remember, if God has called you to write,
you can be sure of this very thing: that He
who began a good work in you will continue
until the day of Jesus Christ [right up to the
time of His return] developing [that good
work] and perfecting and bringing it to full
completion in you.

Philippians 1:6, Amplified Bible



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Adapted from Matthew 25:14-30

by Candy Abbott



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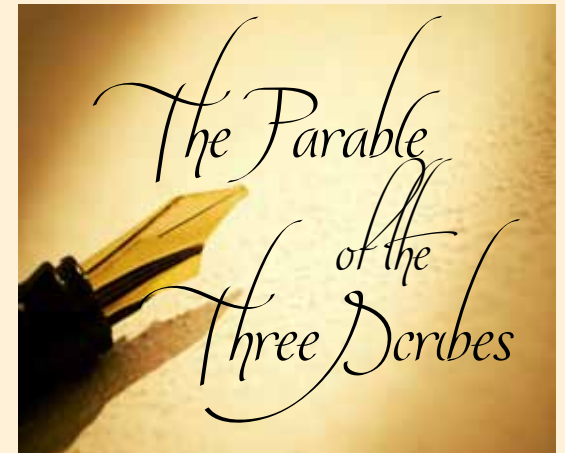
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IN THE LAND OF PEN AND PURPOSE, the king called three scribes into his chambers and said to them,

"I have placed within you gifts and talents to reveal the very heart of God. It may be a song, a poem, a book, a devotional, a magazine article, a short story, or a Sunday school lesson. The genre is up to you. I am going to be out of the country for an extended visit. Upon my return, I will call for you to present your results, which I anticipate will bring glory to God and enhance His kingdom."

To the first he gave five writing assignments:

1. Attend Christian writers' conferences—learn all you can.
2. Write from your passion.
3. Submit your manuscripts to publishers.
4. Start a writers' group for like-minded scribes, that you may encourage one another.
5. Market your work.

To the second he gave two writing assignments:

1. Learn well and bloom where you are planted. Your writing will be personal, so pay close attention to how the Lord is working in your life.
2. Share what you write with family, friends, and neighbors.

To the third he gave one writing assignment:

Be diligent, and nurture the good seed that has been entrusted to you, that it may bear much fruit.

After five years, the king returned to the Land of Pen and Purpose and called for the three scribes to present their results.

The first scribe, who had received five assignments, stepped forward with a rolling suitcase filled with three novels, one non-fiction book, 18 magazine articles, and four anthologies. "My lord, I am humbled to present these works that I have authored, because I couldn't have done it without my writing mentors and publishers who took me under their editorial wings. I host a monthly critique group for scribes who are hungry to learn. Several of our manuscripts have found international audiences since we initiated our blog, and we receive numerous postings from those who have come to know Christ because of our writings."

The king replied, "Well done, thou good and faithful scribe. You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!"

The second scribe who had received two assignments stepped forward with a journal and a three-ring binder. "I attend the monthly critique meetings, my lord, and quickly realized that I don't have what it takes to pursue royalty publishers. But I remembered your instruction to bloom where I am planted and have paid attention to what the Lord has been doing in my life. I recorded this journal, which has served as a springboard for almost one hundred newspaper articles, poems, and short stories that have generated discussion among my family, friends, and neighbors. They encouraged me to self-publish my testimony, which I am in the process of doing. I am blessed to be able to present these humble offerings to you."

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Then the scribe who had been given one assignment stepped forward and bowed low before the king. "Your majesty, I have thought and thought and waited and waited for inspiration to come and for publishing doors to open. I know that you are a hard taskmaster and have entrusted me with a holy task that will be a best-seller and change lives. I didn't want to disappoint you, so I have penned a few lines and kept them safe in my desk drawer—see, here they are. I didn't have enough to take to the critique group but, even if I did, I'm not sure anybody should be tampering with the divine words that were given to me."

The scribe paused and looked into the king's face. "If only you had waited another few months to return, I'm sure the Holy Spirit would have moved the piece to completion. In the meantime, I kept it safe in the drawer."

The king's face grew red. "You wicked, lazy procrastinator! How dare you blaspheme the Holy Spirit as an excuse for your own disobedience. You do not even know me! You could have at least shared your words with a neighbor to generate dialogue that might have drawn him closer to the kingdom. You could have nurtured the seed within you by journaling. You could have subjected your manuscript to critique, that your few lines may be refined like gold. No, you have been self-absorbed with grandiose dreams, savoring the calling instead of developing your gift. You have missed the opportunity to reveal the heart of God. Take this scribe's manuscript, and give it to the one who has been published. For everyone who writes will be given more inspiration, and he will have an abundance of publications. Whoever does not write, even what inspiration he has will be taken from him. Get this scribe out of my sight! Take him to a place where he can stew in his own regret."

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