

accomplish more than a small portion of what they can (could) accomplish. This is particularly true as I said about the great number of ministers. Because the minister is judged by his congregation as a rule by whether he has a nice voice, a pleasant manner, and all these superficial things. They are what ~~it~~ affect their judgment of him. Of course along with it the help he gives them in special crises and emergencies in life. These are the things by which the ordinary person can judge. So I have sometimes thought that ministers tend to fall into two classes: (1) Those who take it easy and coast along, and accomplish little (2) and those who see the great need of the work, the tremendous opportunities that ~~of~~ are of tremendous importance, and work themselves to death! Of course there is no point in working at such a rate you have a ~~XXXXXX~~ nervous breakdown in five years or in ten years. It is much better to accomplish 90% of your capacity for 40 years, 50 years, than to accomplish 130% of it for five years and then be finished. The latter would be fine if you knew the Lord was coming in five years, but of course we don't know when He is coming. He wants us to work as hard as we would work if He was coming soon, but He wants us to work in such a way that our work can continue if He delays His coming. And we have no knowledge whether He is coming real soon or whether He is coming later. But this is the first message of this parable and one which we all need: that if we are slothful, the Lord will also call us wicked. "Thou wicked and slothful servant." If we take the talent the Lord has given us and then use it for our own pleasure, for our own delight, for our laziness, if we do not make use of the talents the Lord has given us to the greatest extent, we are slothful and if we are slothful we are then wicked.

Now the Lord gives different amounts of talents, to these different