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Chapel
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I have on my schedule to talk to you about the "one talent person" this morning. I am not going to talk to you about this parable of the talents in the light that you have heard it talked about so much. Talent, unquestionably here, means one's ability, because the master said he gave this money to those people according to their several abilities. That is, - here's a man who can handle five talents of money to advantage, and here's one who can handle two, and here's one who can handle one, and so he gives to them according to their several abilities. We find all through life people with five talents, and two talents and one talent, and I am not at all sure that the one talent man isn't the one that we need to give the most attention to. He is the kind of person we find in this story, when he was talking to his master he says, "I knew that thou art a hard man". How often do we find people who say, "I know the task is hard". "And I was afraid," said this man, "and went and hid thy talent in the earth." It is a hard task, I just won't try it. And he said, "Lo, there thou hast that is thine." I haven't done a thing with it. I went off and dug a hole in the ground and buried it for fear somebody would steal it, so when you did come again, I could take it out and hand it back to you.

I don't know that there is any significance in the fact that there was one out of three of these people. There probably is some significance in that. I am afraid to undertake it. I will go and bury it. I will just let it alone. I won't destroy it, but I won't do anything with it. You are going to see that one talent child all over North Carolina, and all over the world, if you travel all over the world. You are going to have to deal with that one talent person who is afraid and wants to go and bury what ability he has. And they are going to be people when they get grown who are going to work for other folks, and when they work, they are going to be like that section master that they tell the story about on the L and

N Railroad, one of the large railroad systems of the middle west. He and another boy started together as section hands and the other boy went on from section hand to section master, and step after step until he was finally made president of the railroad. One day his private car went by the old section where he started as a section hand, and there was his section hand companion as section master. When the train went by this section master said, "I know that man. He started here thirty years ago as a section hand with me." And some one said, "And now he is president of the road and you are just a section master." He said, "Yes, and I know why." The men asked him why, and he said, "That man was working for the road, and I was working for thirty dollars a month. He got the road and I am still getting thirty dollars a month." That section master was the one talent man who buried his talent. The other was a man with ability who used his talent. Now, the master who gave this money to these three people, said to this one talent man, "Thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed" -- all the things you have said about me were true, you ought at least to have taken that money and handed it over to the people who deal with money, so when I did come back, I would at least have my money with interest. And he said to them, take the talent away from him, take that one ability that he had away from him, and hand it over to the man with ten talents, "For unto every one that hath shall be given and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

It is the one talent person that I want you to work with as faithfully if not more so than we do with the five or two talent people. We want at least to train them so they may ~~at least~~ see that they may at least put their little ability under the direction of some one who can make it profitable. I know a man who owns a farm, but who left his farm and rented a farm from another man. I was talking to him one summer, and I said, "Why are you renting land over here from this man when you own a farm just across the river?" Well, he was a sensible

kind of man, and he said, "I will tell you why, under the direction of Mr. - So and so (calling the man's name), I find I can make more as a tenant than I can on my own farm without somebody to tell me how to do. Now, there was a one talent man who had sense enough to put his money in the exchange. He saw his position and realized that under the direction of some one else, he could accomplish more than he could without that direction, and there it seems to me is one place that we must work as educators. We must work with those people who have but one ability, and at least get them so they are willing to take the kind of direction that will help them to make the most out of that one ability. The one talent person is all over the country and he needs help. We want to take that fear that is in him out of him. They are the people who talk about other folks, who are all the time saying unkind things about people who accumulate something in this world, and who rise to some position in this world. They have been afraid and have buried their talent. They go and dig in the earth and hide it. If that one talent man could have been filled with the spirit of using the one talent, he would have accumulated another. They say that there is one of the prominent bankers in New York who was considered a very mediocre boy in college, that he had almost no ability, just enough to go through college. After he graduated from college, he got a very humble position in a bank, but he used all of his ability and he finally became president of the bank and one of the prominent bankers of New York. Two of his college mates were talking about him on one occasion, and one of them said, "Would you have believed that John would have been so successful in life?" The other one said, "John had just sense enough to make a good banker, and sense enough to not undertake anything else. John probably was a one talent man, but he had been trained somehow to use that one talent, and to use it to the very best of his ability, and it brought to him other talents, other abilities. If you do not use what God has given you, Jehovah will take it away from you, whether it be one, two, or five abilities.