

Don't Bury Your Talents

Hymn ["Give,' Said the Little Stream," Children's Songbook, 236](#)

Matt 25:14-30 "...And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability...Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them."

Ezra Taft Benson "The Church has urged its members to be efficient users of our resources and to avoid waste and pollution, and to clean up their own immediate environment, or that over which they have control. . . We have made an appeal to all Church members to clean up their premises, to plant gardens and trees, and then to use efficiently what they can grow. We have found that Church members have responded well to this appeal, thus becoming more self-reliant and responsibly concerned for their neighbors and their environment."

The parable of the talents is a lesson in appreciating a gift and improving on it. [The Come Follow Me manual](#) explains that, although in the Savior's time, a "talent" referred to money, the parable of the talents teaches us that the Lord expects us to improve on the blessings He has given us. The life-sustaining qualities of the earth—air, water, food—as well as the inspiring beauty of nature are true gifts of a loving Father. We can love and appreciate them, but if we do nothing to preserve and increase their value, it is as the man who buried his talent in the ground.

Consider the blessings of the earth Heavenly Father has given you and make a list of them. How can you use these gifts more wisely? How can you and your family improve the world around you to bless the earth, and our brothers and sisters?

Activity Ideas

For young children:

If you can access the classic children's book *Litterbugs Come In Every Size* by Nora Smaridge (try your local library or [here](#)), take time and read this with your young children. Discuss how everyone can become a "Neato" and make a difference in their world.

For older children:

Look for an area in your community that could use some improvement. Ask permission from land owners or city officials to adopt that space as a project and create a plan to make and keep it beautiful.

For all:

Take a clean-up walk! Equip each person with a bag and gloves for a walk around your neighborhood to pick up litter along the curb, sidewalk, or hiding in little crevices.

Treat Ideas

Easy:

Make microwave or over the stove-top popcorn and see a small cup of kernels turn into an overflowing treat.

Advanced:

Make little chocolate soufflés for each of your family members. Watch them rise to great heights in the oven. [Here's a recipe to try.](#)

Additional Resources

Want to see recycling happen in your ward building? [Contact us](#), and we'll help get you set up with the right tools. 

Read [here](#) about some of the efforts the Church makes by way of green building initiatives, energy and water conservation, and recycling and land management.

Look at the work [Clayton Thomas Kearl](#) is doing in Peru! He's spearheaded an initiative to stop the littering in Peru and clean up trash as he runs along the entire coast of the country.

Have you heard about the Swedish trend called [Plogging](#)? It's a combination of picking of litter and jogging, and everyone can do a version of this!

You can make a difference at any age! [Read about Ryan Hickman](#), who started his own recycling business at age 7.