

# USE IT OR LOSE IT

**By Rod**

*This sketch is a modern version of The Parable of the Talents from Matthew 25 vv 14 – 30.*

## CAST

*Narrator A    The main storyteller*

*Narrator B    A joker*

*The Lord        A successful businessman*

*Graduate with first*

*Graduate with second*

*Graduate with third*

*The last four simply mime the actions as A and B narrate the tale.*

Narrator A    Once upon a time there were three graduates who went to work as trainees for a magnate..

Narrator B    What, you mean like a fridge magnet?

A                No, a city magnate, and what is more.... a Lord.

B                Oh, like Lord Wetherspoon; he's a bar magnate. Or Lord Ladbroke; he's a horseshoe magnate.

A                Give me strength! We're talking about a lord who worked in the city and was a very successful businessman.

B                Oh, like Lord Harris, the carpet magnate.... he made a pile.

A                Look, will you stop interrupting so that I can get on with the story.

B                Be my guest.

A                Thank you. Now where was I? Ah yes, once upon a time there were three graduates who went to work in the city as trainees for a lord who was a very successful business tycoon.

B                Was he a big cheese?

A                Don't even think it.

B                Lord Wensleydale...?

A                The Lord had to go away for a while on a business trip, so he called the three trainees together and gave them some working capital. To one who had a first class degree...

B Damien Hirst.

A His name doesn't matter.

B No, that's what they call a first class degree. Damien Hirst, First.

A Oh - thank you. So to one he gave five hundred thousand pounds, to another who had a second class degree he gave two hundred thousand pounds...

B An Attila or a Desmond?

A What?

B Was his second class degree an Attila the Hun, two-one, or a Desmond Two-two?

A Oh I don't know... and it doesn't matter any way . So can I move on?

B I was only asking...

A Well please stop asking, so I can tell all these people the story. In which the lord gave to the third – who had a third- ...

B A Douglas Hurd

A *(Irritated)* To the third he gave one hundred thousand pounds. And then he went away.

B Since he was a magnate, he probably went to the North Pole.. or the South Pole if he didn't find that attractive.

A *(Pressing on)* The one who had received five hundred thousand pounds had considerable talent as an inventor and entrepreneur. He went at once and invented the world's first ever curved nail.

B Curved nail! What's the point of that?

A You can hit it in round corners.

B Oh, that's clever.

A He had the nails manufactured in China...

B That was pretty daft. China would be sure to shatter if you hit it with a hammer!

A He had it manufactured in the country of China - out of galvanised steel.

B Oh I see. Well, when it came to selling -did his invention hit the nail on the head?

A Yes it did. It filled the shelves of Homebase, it flew off the shelves of B and Q and ..

B I need it to keep up the shelves in my shed.

A ..and it was a great success.

B He nailed it then?

A He did indeed, and he made loads of money. He doubled his working capital.

B Good for him. What about the other two graduates?

A The one who had been given two hundred thousand pounds had considerable talent in playing the financial markets.

B I never understand all that subprime .. bear market .. gilts ..footsie .. financial stuff.

A He dabbled in double derivatives.

B Eh?

A He flogged financial futures.

B Come again.

A He saw an opening in overseas options.

B He did what?

A In other words... he made...*(looking at B)*

B Ah, I get it, he made loads of money.

A That's right, he doubled the lord's money.

B I see a pattern emerging here. What was the third graduate good at?

A He had a talent for ... being cautious. He was rather frightened of what the lord would say if he lost his money, so he put it in his government backed Lloyds TSB current account, where he thought it would be as safe as the Bank of ..

B Athens?

A No, the Bank of England. Where it earned precisely nought percent.

B That's next to nothing.

A That is nothing.

B What happened when the lord returned from his business trip?

A He called the three graduates together and asked them to give account of how they had used his money. When the first graduate told how he had doubled his five hundred thousand pounds..

B That's a million!

A .. the lord was delighted and put him in charge of his company's Product Development.

B I expect he started work on inventing the world's first ever curved metal ruler for measuring round corners.

A That's not a bad idea. And when the second graduate told the lord how he had doubled his money on the money markets he was delighted.

B How delighted?

A So delighted that he made him his Financial Director.

B I expect he started to trade in triple transferables or something.

A That's not a bad idea either. But when the third graduate told the lord what he had done with his money because he was frightened of losing it..

B You mean frightened that the lord would 'lose it' with him you mean.

A Precisely. The lord was very angry. "You idle, good for nothing graduate. You could at least have put it in a Savings Account."

B Nationwide are offering 3.2% at the moment. And he could have put some of it in an ISA. The Halifax have a five year fixed term rate of 4.4% - and that is tax free.

A The lord took the money from the graduate and gave it to the one who had made a million. Then he fired the third graduate on the spot.

B So he was back on the graduate scrapheap?

A Alas he was, and all because..

B He failed to make loads of money?

A No, because he failed to use the talent that he did have.

THE END