

Matthew 25:14-30

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Date: 15 November 2020

[0 : 00] And we read the Word of God found in Matthew chapter 25, starting in verse 14. We'll go down to verse 30. This account is also found in the Gospel according to Luke in the 19th chapter, but we'll be reading it from the Gospel of Matthew in the 25th chapter, starting in verse 14.

It says, For it is just like a man about to go on a journey, who called his own slaves and entrusted his possessions to them. To one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, each according to his own ability, and he went on his journey.

Immediately the one who had received the five talents went and traded with them and gained five more talents. In the same manner, the one who had received the two talents gained two more. But he who had received the one talent went away and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

Now after a long time, the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. The one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, Master, you entrusted five talents to me. See, I have gained five more talents.

His master said to him, Well done, good and faithful slave. You are faithful in a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. Enter into the joy of your master. Also the one who had received the two talents came up and said, Master, you entrusted two talents to me. See, I have gained two more talents.

[1 : 11] His master said to him, Well done, good and faithful slave. You are faithful in a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. Enter into the joy of your master. And the one also who had received the one talent came up and saying, Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you scattered no seed.

And I was afraid and went away and hid your talent in the ground. See, you have what is yours. But his master answered and said to him, You wicked, lazy slave. You knew that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I scattered no seed.

Then you ought to have put my money in the bank and on my arrival, I would have received my money back with interest. Therefore, take away the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. Verse 30. Throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Let's pray together. Lord, we are so thankful for this day that you have given us. And Lord, we rejoice in the opportunity we have of opening up your word. And Lord, we pray as we have opened it and read it.

[2 : 15] Lord, now that you would speak to our hearts and minds. We pray that the truths which we consider and those things which we look at would be so much more than a gaining of information. But Lord, as our cry always is, that it would be a transforming of our lives.

Lord, may these truths grip us to the very being of our existence. And may they move us to be faithful in your labor and faithful in your kingdom for your glory and for yours alone. And we ask it all in Jesus' name.

Amen. You may be seated. As we are looking at the parables of Christ, we have now come to the point where we are looking at our stewardship.

It's a matter of stewardship. And it is one in which Jesus is speaking in reference, direct reference to the soon coming kingdom. Immediately preceding this parable in Matthew 25, there is the parable of the ten virgins who is waiting on the coming of the bridegroom, the coming of the groom who is on his way.

And if you remember, five of them took oil with him and five did not. And he delayed his coming.

And when he came, those who had the oil were able to go with him. And those who did not had to

go and try to buy oil from somewhere else.

[3 : 24] And they arrived late. So it was within direct reference to his returning. It tells us in Luke 19, immediately preceding this story, as it's just a little bit different in the gospel according to Luke, but do not let the differences move you from it because it is a retelling of the same events.

But Luke says that Jesus told this because he was on his way to Jerusalem. So he was approaching Jerusalem. He was near Jerusalem. And as he was on his way to Jerusalem, there is this great shift in the gospel.

And maybe you've caught it, maybe you haven't. There is a shift in the gospels where Jesus sets his face to Jerusalem for the last time. He's on his way to his trial and eventually his crucifixion. And he knows that his hour has come and he knows that his time has come up. And it is during that time when he has set his face to go towards Jerusalem where he begins to speak of these great truths to those who are with him.

And it says in Luke 19 that he shared this parable with them because they thought his kingdom was about to come. And he was giving them a direct reference of this portion of time which we call the church age, that pause button, right?

[4 : 31] Because in the Old Testament, the Jewish people were looking for a soon-coming Messiah and their thought of the Messiah, which was an accurate thought and is an accurate thought, that the Messiah would come and set up an earthly reign and that he would have the rod of iron and he would reign with the keys of David and he would set up on the throne of David and his would be one of earthly and worldly power.

And the Messiah they were looking for was someone who would come in and would kick out Roman Empire and would kick out all the foes of the Jewish people and would immediately set up his reign and set his people free. And Jesus is going to do that.

We've read that in the book of Revelation. But what we have also seen is that there is a gap between his first appearing and his second coming and that is what we refer to as the church age. And what the Jewish people of the Old Testament, even the prophets as they spoke of it and even getting into the time of Christ, what they could not understand was the cross.

Because what kind of Messiah willingly lays down his life and what kind of Messiah is a dead Messiah? But we know the reality is that when he died, he did not die eternally, but he died for three days and he came back victoriously, right?

And now we have a resurrected Messiah, a resurrected Savior. But it is that church age that was so absent to so many people and Jesus begins to hear speak of truths, heavenly truths.

[5 : 42] What are parables? They are heavenly realities spoken in a worldly atmosphere, right? They are heavenly truths spoken in a worldly time frame, giving us something in this earth that we can look at to make application to a heavenly truth.

And Jesus is speaking about his departure and his return and what is to take place in the in-between. My friend, listen, we live in the in-between, right?

We live in the time from his departure and anticipating the time of his coming. And something that we need to understand in Scripture, those of us who have accepted Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and acknowledge him as coming, we are entering into, and I know some of you say, well, wait a minute, we need to get to Thanksgiving first, and we do, but we know, we don't have to look very far in the world, we are entering into where the world celebrates the Christmas season.

Now, I don't want to burst anyone's bubble, but the reality is we don't know if Jesus was born on December 25th, okay? That's just when we celebrate it. That's just the reality. It was a time set in a different age and different time, and it was just a time set in a different era in which the world set aside to recognize that, and we recognize that.

So we don't anoint that day, we anoint his coming, right? We appreciate his coming, and we're not here to get into all the historical aspects of it, but what we see is that we acknowledge his first coming, and we do.

[7 : 00] But we need to also understand this gap in which we live in, because if we acknowledge his first coming, there are twice as many prophecies in the Old Testament concerning his second coming. And if he assuredly came the first time as he did, as it was prophesied, then he will assuredly come the second time as he will, as it is prophesied.

So we can be doubly sure of that fact, and the question is, well, what are we doing in the gap? And Jesus gives us two parables, and we're only focusing on one of them here in Matthew 25.

The first one is a very easy application. The parable of the ten virgins is we must be prepared, right? We can't just say, well, he may be coming, he may not be coming. We have to be in readiness. We have to be ready. But we're looking at this one this morning, Matthew 25, verses 14 through 30, which is often called the parable of the talents, but I want you to see we must also steward our entrusted gifts.

So this morning, the title would be the stewarding of our entrusted gifts and how we are to live that out in that time where we anticipate his coming again. And it is a call for every follower of Christ. It is a call for every believer of Christ to live a life of stewardship, not just of your financial resources, not just of your time, but also of your giftedness. You say, well, I'm not sure if I've been giving the gift.

[8 : 16] I don't know if I have a gift. Well, friend, we can also go throughout Scripture and see in the New Testament that everybody that is born of the Spirit has been entrusted with a gift by the Spirit. All we need to do is go to Ephesians, the book of Ephesians, in Ephesians chapter 4, and we see that God gave some, and we need to be thankful for this, right?

God gave some to be pastors and teachers and prophets and things like that. He only gave a few to be pastors, but he has entrusted all with a gift for the body. We have all been entrusted with a gift based on our relationship with Christ.

And the moment we accept Christ, we are endowed with what we call a spiritual gift. You say, well, I don't know what my spiritual gift is. There are tools that we could use to figure that out, but also there is this great thing that you have that can help you figure it out, and that is the presence of Christ within you and the Word of God speaking to you.

But we are all entrusted with a spiritual gift, and we are called to be stewards of that which we have been entrusted to. So we are called to live in this time frame, looking forward to his coming again or his return, to live a life of stewardship of the gift which we have been entrusted with.

And we see from this parable four great truths which must have direct application to us. Number one, we see there has to be, there must be, and probably this is the one thing that is missing from so many believers that keeps them from living a life of good stewardship.

[9 : 36] There must be a recognition. There must be a recognition. We find this recognition in verse 14 and 15. It says, For it was just like a man about to go on a journey.

Now just stop right there. One thing we understand, Jesus is not speaking of himself, but he is speaking in reference to himself, right? So he is using this parable to display what his people should look like in his absence.

It says this man is going on a journey. It does not say he was going away. He is going on a journey. Now you may be reading another translation. I read New American Standard, and I think it's very particular in its wording.

Yours may say servant. Mine says slave. When we get to calling his people to him, it says, Some will say, well, that's his servants. And we understand the New American Standard translates that slaves. That's because the original Greek word is doulos, which literally means to be a bond slave of.

We like the word servant because it lightens the load a little bit, but the reality is they were slaves, okay? But what we see here in this application is there is a man about to go on a journey. Now if you're going on a journey, you are what?

[10 : 38] Returning, right? Now if you're moving away, you're going away. You might not ever come back, but if you're going on a journey, you're going to return. So the first recognition we have here, and even Jesus tells us in Luke, or Luke records for us in Luke 19, that the man was going away for a season.

The first thing we must recognize is that when this master departs, he is departing for the intended purpose of returning. We must recognize as believers in Jesus Christ that there is coming a day where Jesus is returning.

Right? Now we have to acknowledge that first because if we don't acknowledge that first, it really determines how we do everything else in response to that fact. This master was not leaving.

He was not moving away. He was going on a journey, and the intended purpose was to go away for a while and come back. So we know he is coming back, but we go on. And it says, who called his own slaves and entrusted his possessions to them.

Now we're still in the recognition portion of this, and this is something we need to also recognize. The master was going on a journey, and he called to himself. I like how the New American

Standard words it.

[11 : 42] He called his own slaves to himself. So we need to recognize who these people are. They are his slaves.

They're his. They're his. Now I know when we hear that word, we have this repulsive, 1800 American mentality of it, but I don't want you to have that. I just want you to take the word of God as it is literally written.

I've been studying. If you're going to come back tonight, okay, you come back tonight, we're making our way through the book of Leviticus, and we're going to be in Leviticus chapter 25. And Leviticus 25 is a pretty difficult passage, and it speaks of slavery there, and it speaks of things like that.

So, yeah, I've been studying up on this a little bit, and so I just kind of give you this as a side note because this is something that in our own world we're kind of repulsed by. Slavery is a major issue all throughout Scripture, and you say, well, does God condone slavery?

No, God does not condone slavery. There's a lot of passages that we can get to. But did God call his people to abolish slavery? Well, he did, but this is how he called them to it. He called them to transform individuals who would, in turn, change societies.

[12 : 44] God deals with the individual, right? Because if the church, at its birth, at Pentecost, boom, shows up, and all of a sudden you've got this group of believers, say there's 5,000 people or 10,000 people who are believers in Jesus Christ, and they understand the Word of God says you can't have slaves, and they need to turn around and change society.

Well, now you've got 10,000 believers who are going to turn over the Roman Empire, which had, at that time, some estimate, in the realm of over 6 million slaves.

Now, how is it going to turn over a world empire? How is it going to completely change that up? It's going to be seen as a threat to the empire, and it will be diminished by this empire very quickly. It will be diminished and put down very quickly. So what God has called his people to, what he would call them to reach individuals who would, in turn, change societies, and therefore you see the abolition of a number of things.

We see that in the story of when slavery was abolished from England and other countries, and we're just kind of on a complete side note here, but it is worth noting slavery is something that the Bible is very common with, and it is something that it sees as a possession.

[13 : 52] So what we understand is this master called that which was his, his slaves, to himself. Now, why is that important? Because in Scripture we are referred to as the slaves of Christ. Jesus is our Lord, and he is our master.

And what we are recognizing here is that when Jesus calls us, he is calling that which he has bought, redeemed, with his own blood, to himself. And it says, and he gave them that which was his possessions.

He called his slaves to himself and entrusted them with his possessions. So here's just a three-fold recognition. He's going on a trip. He's going to come back. He calls those who belong to him and gives those which belong to him something which is his.

I hope you're following with me here. Because the application is this. We'll just put it in black and white. The application is this. The moment you accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, you are no longer your own.

You have been redeemed. That is, you have been bought with the precious blood of Jesus Christ. And now you are his. He has bought you off the auction block of sin. Satan put you on the auction block, and the highest bidder was Jesus Christ.

[14 : 54] Some people were calling out numbers, and some people would say, well, I'll pay this, and I'll pay this. And Jesus said, I'll give my life. And he redeemed you with the blood of Christ. And when he redeemed you, he has purchased you. And now, according to Paul, you are his slave, right?

And you are the slave of Christ, but he is a glorious taskmaster. He's not a mean master. He's not a hateful master. He is a caring and loving and compassionate master. And he calls you to himself after purchasing you, and he gives you that which is his.

And he entrusts you with that. So here's what we recognize. Because the gift which we have been given is not ours. It's his. And it was given to us as his possession to do something with.

See, now this determines how we respond to everything else. Because when we see that which we have been trusted with, oh, that's mine. I can do with it what I want to. No, it's not. That's my

possession.

That's my gift. That's mine. I can do whatever I want to with it. Well, if that's your concept, then please come back tonight. Because in Leviticus 25, we'll see that just because you owned a piece of land, it did not mean it was yours. God said, that's my land.

[15:56] I've just made you a steward of it, right? So what we see here is even those things which we have been entrusted with as gifts, they're not yours. They're his. And here's one final recognition.

To one he gave five, to another two, and to another one. Here's what I want you to see. If you get nothing else from this, each according to his ability. And he went on his journey.

Here's the good thing about our master, Jesus, is when he calls us, his slaves, to himself and he entrusts a gift with us, he gives you that which you can do.

Each according to your ability. He said, well, I don't know if I can do that thing which I feel like he's calling me to do. I don't know if I can work out this spiritual gift inside of me. And I don't know if I have the ability to do it.

This is what we know. That the master knows us and he entrusts us with that which we can do. He never, never gives us that which there is no possible way in which we can do it.

[16:55] Now, we may not be comfortable doing it. I'm not ever comfortable standing up in front of someone. We may not be comfortable. But we may not be happy, quote, unquote, doing it. But we will find joy in doing it because he gives it to us according to our ability.

So there's the recognition. Now, once we recognize this, we are led to the second thing that is a response. How are we going to respond? If we are his slaves or if these people are his slaves, if the master is coming back and the master has given to his slaves his possession according to that which they could do, now everybody is faced with a response.

And we see this in the following verses. Verse 16 says, Immediately the one who had received the five talents went and traded with him and gained five more. And in the same manner, the one who had received the two talents gained two more.

But he who received the one talent went away and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money, what I want you to see is that everybody responded in some way to that which they had been entrusted to.

Unresponsiveness is not an issue in this parable. That's because the reality is what Jesus is showing us is that the moment we accept Christ, we are no longer our own, but we belong to him.

[18:03] And he calls us to himself and he entrusts something of his own to us. And we do not have the right to live unresponsively. We all respond one way or another.

And I love how it words it here. It says, Immediately the one who had five went out and gained five more. And immediately, in the same manner, the one who had two. Our response is to be immediate. And we understand that even the third one who went and dug a hole in the ground, he did it immediately.

The response is immediate. This is one thing that I have found that is true of every believer. The moment you accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. I mean, that very moment, God empowers you with the spiritual gift.

You are gifted of the Spirit. And he is giving you something to do for the kingdom. He is giving you something to do for the kingdom of God through the church of God. Because, as Paul says in Ephesians 4, until we all reach that level of perfection.

And I don't know if you've realized it or not. Maybe I'm the only one hindering us. Maybe everybody else here is perfect but me. But I'm not perfect yet. So I still need you to exercise your spiritual gifts, right? Because the Bible says in Ephesians 4, we are to strive together as the church until everyone is perfect.

[19:11] So as long as I'm still here, we won't all be perfect. So I still need you to exercise your gift. And you need me to exercise my gift. Because we are to build one another up until the day of perfection.

And the moment someone accepts Christ, and I'm so excited about that. Every time someone comes to Christ, I think God has given them something I need. And he has put it in his body. And I'm going to benefit from this person.

That moment, I don't need them to go through a growth period. I don't need them to go through a substantial point. Because it says immediately they can respond. Now your spiritual giftedness may

change over time.

But maybe it will be added to because you will be entrusted. We'll see this later on. But at that moment, they have something. And the question is, immediately you must respond. A lot of times what we tell believers is, well, you're a new believer.

You need to grow in the Lord, and you need to learn some more. Friend, listen, it's not about how much you learn. It's not about how much you know. It's not about, listen, if Jesus is your Lord, and he's my Lord. I don't care if he's been your Lord for six minutes and mine for 60 years.

[20 : 10] We can both labor for the kingdom. Because he's empowering and leading both of us, right? And we don't need to learn more. We should always study to show ourselves approved. Yes, a workman rightly dividing the word of God. We should always study.

But we shouldn't enter into a time of just being still. I understand we need to be still and know that he is God. And we need to be still as we labor. And we need to set aside part and time to understand who he is.

But sometimes our response is, well, I'm just going to dig a hole and bury it in the ground. And I'm going to say, well, when I know a little bit more, and I can get a little bit more comfortable, and I can, we'll never know enough. We'll never know enough.

I don't know how many times I've read the Bible. I don't count it. But I know every time I read it, I'm like, wow, I never saw that. Wow, I never saw that. I told someone the other day. I go back and look at some of the sermons I preached when I first started preaching.

And I've only been preaching 15 years now. And so I look back at some of those, and I'm like, man, I can't believe they let me keep preaching. They're awful. I mean, just to be honest, they're awful.

[21 : 08] Like, wow, I didn't know what I didn't know, right? I had no idea. And it was just, wow, but I knew God had called me. So I said, okay, well, I'm going to start preaching according to the ability he's giving me and just continue to push on.

But let us not ever get to the point where we say, well, I'll respond or I'll use my gift later. The urging is, is that we respond immediately.

We don't know when he's coming. We don't know. And this is why the slaves all responded immediately. So we see a recognition, we see a response, and we see a reward because there is his return.

It says that in verse 19, now after a long time, the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. This is amazing to me that the servants responded immediately, but the master delayed his return.

He said, well, I don't know how long it's going to be. Maybe he's going to be long. Maybe he is. Maybe he's not. I don't know. Maybe Christ calls us home tomorrow. Maybe I die and go and my body is laid in the ground before he calls his church home.

[22 : 13] But I don't know. I believe in the imminent rapture of the church, okay, according to my eschatology, which means that Christ can call his church to himself at any given moment. And then we would set into events the things that happen in the book of Revelation.

So I believe that there's nothing waiting in history for Christ to call his church to himself. Paul says that when the fullness of the Gentiles has come about, Jesus will call his church to himself. That will be the rapture.

I don't know when that last Gentile is. I don't know how many of that number is. God knows how many of that number is. But maybe somewhere today around the world, some non-Jewish individual will respond to the gospel, and they'll accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. And the father will go, that's it. That's the number. And he'll call his church to himself. I don't know. Or maybe there's a whole lot more to go. I don't know. But I know that if he delays, I want to be found faithful. If he comes soon, I want to be found faithful.

But either way, I need to respond immediately, right? So they didn't know because the Bible says no man knows the day nor the hour nor the time. But what we see here is the master delayed his return, but he did come.

[23 : 12] Friend, listen. Peter says that some have count the slowness of his return as it being false, right? But Peter says what? He says, do not let his delay in returning be counted as a transgression, but see it as God's patience, and it's not desire that any should perish, but that all should come to everlasting life.

Peter says the only reason that God has not sent his son to call his church back to himself yet is because God is loving and kind and patient. But we don't know when he's coming, but we do know the reality is he is coming.

Here is the reward because after a long time, the master of those slaves came, and here's what is going to happen. He settled accounts with them. This is a theme we find throughout most of Christ's teachings, and this is something we find in the book of Revelation, that when he comes, he calls his people, his servants, his slaves to himself and settles accounts.

There is a day of reckoning, and we acknowledge that. But what we acknowledge here when we see this is that each one stood before him as an individual. We don't see the three of them, he who had five, he who had two, and he who had one, all three going up in unison speaking at the same time.

What we see is a one-on-one settling of accounts. The one who had five went first. The one who had two went second. The one who had one went last. What I want you to understand is that when he comes, he settles accounts to individuals.

[24 : 36] As much as I believe in the church, as much as I believe in the body of Christ, as much as I believe that we are put in the body of Christ to work out our giftedness inside the body of Christ for the building up of one another, the day when he calls his church to himself, we need to understand this.

We will not stand as a body, War Trace Baptist Church, before Jesus Christ. We will stand as individuals before Jesus Christ.

And some of us like the body concept. Let's just be honest because it's easy to hide in the body, right? We can kind of get in the middle of the crowd and be here and just let everybody kind of, everybody else answer for us.

I'm sure the one who had one who dug a hole and put it in the ground would love to stand behind the other ones. But what we see is that in this day of accounting, they all stood as individuals. And only thing they were given an account for, the one who had two did not have to give an account of what this guy over here did with his five, nor did they have to give an account of what the one over here did with his one.

The only thing he had to give an account of is what did you do with your two? How did you use it? It is a day of reckoning, but it's also a day of reward.

[25 : 52] And we need to see this. Look in verse 20. The one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, Master. What does he say? Master, you entrusted five talents to me. See, I've gained five more talents.

And his master said to him, Well done, good and faithful slave. We were faithful in a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. Enter into the joy of your master. Also, the one who had received the two talents came up and said to him, Master, you entrusted two talents to me.

See, I have gained two more talents. His master said to him, Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. Enter into the joy of your master. These two both received a reward.

What we see is the very first thing they acknowledge is what they had been entrusted with. Master, you entrusted to me, and this is what I did with it. They acknowledged it, right?

And when they acknowledged it and they showed him what they had done with that which had been entrusted to them, he rewarded them. He said, Well done, good and faithful slave. We want to hear that, right? Well, we want to hear that.

[26 : 50] We desire to hear that. We long to hear that. Well done, good and faithful slave. But do you notice what the reward is? You've been faithful in a few. I'll put you in charge of many. The faithfulness earned them more responsibility.

Their faithfulness earned them greater responsibility in his kingdom. But the reward was, you will enter into the joy of your master.

Faithfulness earned them greater responsibility. The reward is greater fellowship. You will be near me. You will be with me. You will be in my joy.

Now, I want to point something out. As many times as I've read this parable, as many times as I've seen this parable, I don't know why, but in my mindset, I've often overlooked this, and I want you to see it. Yes, maybe you've picked up on it, and you should have told me about it, because I would have loved to have seen it before this morning.

But I want you to understand, not only were they rewarded with being more, given more responsibility, and rewarded with being more in his presence, they also kept what they earned. Did you notice that?

[27 : 56] The one who had ten said, Master, you entrusted with me five. I've gained five more. Now, my mindset, this is just how I work, right? I'm a very linear thinker, a linear thinker. I'll get my wording out right in just a moment.

Where I think that he came, and he brought it, and he gave it to Jesus, and Jesus said, great, go over it. But read the end of it, because they take the one away from the other one, and they give it to what? The wording says, give it to the one who has the ten.

Huh. He didn't give it to Jesus. He didn't give it to his master. He got to keep it. Isn't this amazing? The master gave five of the things which were his, and he went and earned more for his master. His master said, you can have it. Keep it. Because at the end, he gives him another one. Now he has eleven. Jesus is not a master who gives and then takes back. He's the one who entrusts us with the responsibility which we can handle, because the giftedness which he has given us is to enrich us, right?

It is to enrich us so that we will be more responsible in the kingdom, and we will be more in his presence. Now, I have a spiritual gift, or at least I feel like he has gifted me, with something that I will not use in the eternal kingdom.

[29 : 11] He called me into the pastor. He called me into few, Ephesians 4, but few are called to be pastors and teachers and prophets. Have you ever thought about this? What are the pastors going to do in eternity?

I'm not going to need to stand on the street corner and tell anybody about Jesus, because they can just walk up and see him. Right? I'm not going to have to proclaim the truth. I mean, Paul will be there, and Peter will be there, and I'm not going to say, open up for me the book of Romans, and let's see what Paul, because you can go talk to Paul, right?

Mine's working its way out of business. I'm one of the few in the spiritual gift territory that is losing my business, right? But he has gifted us with things which will enrich us, and he will enrich us for all of eternity with that.

So here's the reward. You are entrusted with greater responsibility, but you are invited into a greater relationship, a fellowship. Enter into the joy of your master.

By the way, our reward is just to be in his presence. So we see a recognition, a response, a reward, and finally we see a refusal, because what about those who refuse to do anything with that which they have been entrusted with?

[30 : 22] And we see this here by way of personal investigation, but we also see here in this parable. Verse 24 says, And the one who had received the one talent came and said, Master.

That's just like the other two, right? They both came and approached him and said, Master. The other two said, You entrusted with me this, and I did this. Now look at what he says. Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you scattered no seed. And I was afraid, and I went away and hid your talent in the ground. See, you have what is yours. Rather than focusing on that which he had been entrusted with, he began to look for a reason to do nothing.

You know, sometimes we have to look harder for a reason to do nothing than we do for a reason to use that which we have been given. Some people say that you have to use more muscles to frown than you do to smile.

Maybe that's the truth. I don't know. Maybe it's harder to be upset, and people, you have to really think about things to worry, and you have to really work yourself up into fear, and things like this, and all this comfort of the Spirit, and things of that nature.

[31 : 22] But what we understand is this. This man went to a lot of length to find out a reason not to do anything. And he began to shift his blame.

I didn't do it because of who you are. And I was afraid of who you are. Now, if he was really afraid of who he was, just as the Master says, you would have done something.

What we read in Luke 19 is, the Master says, according to your interpretation, so it will be. Since you think that I am mean and unfair, then to you I will be mean and unfair, right?

According to your interpretation or according to your opinions. Here, he refused to do anything, and he blamed the Master for his refusal. As believers, there are times where we are entrusted with a

gift, entrusted with a talent, entrusted with something to be used for the kingdom, and we blame the Master for our inactivity.

Well, Jesus just hasn't given me the opportunity. Or I don't really know. You know, if he made it as clear as Crystal Day, if he would show up in a burning bush, or he would talk to me through a donkey, or maybe if a rooster would crow three times, if it was really, really, really clear, then I would do it.

[32 : 39] You have something greater than a burning bush. You have something greater than a talking donkey. You have something greater than the appearance of the angels of the Lord. You have something greater than a crowing rooster.

You have the very Word of God contained for you from Genesis to Revelation in 66 books. As the Bible says in the book of Hebrews, this is the fullness of the Word of God.

And I'm so thankful I don't have to walk around looking for a bush that's on fire, that is not being consumed, and I am really thankful that no donkey has ever turned around and talked to me.

Because the Word of God speaks to our hearts and our minds, and by the Spirit of God shows us these things.

Let us be careful not to reason out our refusal to do anything. Because this is what this unfaithful servant did.

But his master answered him in verse 26 and said to him, You wicked, lazy slave. You knew that I reap where I did not sow and gather, where I scatter no seed. Then you ought to have put my money in the bank and on my arrival, I would have received my money back with interest.

[33 : 40] Therefore, take away the talent from him and give it to the one who has a ten. See, give it to the one who has the ten. He still had them. Give it to the one who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has more shall be given, and he will have an abundance.

But from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. Throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Because here is the reality, my friend.

This slave who refused to do anything was refused to remain in the master's presence. The master said, I'm not going to have you near me.

Because the faithful slave would have at least done something. I don't believe that any of us who have a true relationship with Jesus Christ are to the point where we say, Well, I'm just not going to do anything for the kingdom.

We're not in that aspect. I believe those false believers, those false professions of faith, who love the benefit but don't want the labor. That's who Christ is speaking of there.

[34 : 43] Because I do believe in the eternal security of the saints. I believe that if we are saved, we are eternally saved. We are absolutely 100% saved. I don't think that anything can snatch us out of the hand of the Father. But I also know that that which he has entrusted to us has been given to us to use until he comes again.

And he is coming. And he has only given us that which we are capable of doing. In our response, should be to immediately put it to use for his glory, for his purposes.

Anticipating that reward, sure. But realizing that reward is just to be more in his presence. Let's pray. Lord, I thank you so much for all that you have done. God, I thank you for your faithfulness. I thank you for your goodness and your kindness and your mercy towards us. Lord, I pray as we have heard your word that we would now live lives of response to your word. Lord, that we would not accept these things on deaf ears, but Lord, that we would hear them as the true word of God and that our lives would be lived according to your glory and honor.

We ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.

[36 : 02] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[38 : 32] Thank you.

Thank you.