

What are You Doing With What You've Been Given?

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 25 July 2010

Preacher: Jon Hueni

[0:00] In Matthew 25, we'll begin reading at verse 14 and read through verse 30. Again, it will be like a man going on a journey who called his servants and entrusted his property to them.

! To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more.

So also the one with two talents gained two more. But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground, and hid his master's money. After a long time, the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them.

The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. Master, he said, you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more. His master replied, well done, good and faithful servant.

You have been faithful with a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness. The man with the two talents also came. Master, he said, you entrusted me with two talents. See, I have gained two more.

[1:13] His master replied, well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful with a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness. Then the man who had received the one talent came.

A master, he said, I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground.

See, here is what belongs to you. His master replied, you wicked, lazy servant. So you knew that I harvested where I have not sown and gathered where I have not scattered seed.

Well, then you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers so that when I returned, I would have received it back with interest. Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents.

For everyone who has will be given more and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have even what he has will be taken from him. And throw that worthless servant outside into the darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

[2:18] Well, we have been on the receiving end for another week of many, many blessings from heaven, haven't we? Indeed, all of our life we've been receiving, receiving, receiving from God.

And the question this morning is, what are you doing with what you've been given? What are you doing with what you've been given? It's not an unimportant question.

In fact, it's the question that will meet us in the day of judgment. And our answer to that question will be the difference between eternity in heaven or eternity in hell.

What are you doing with what you've been given? So it's a kind mercy for the Lord Jesus to come to us in life now and to press that question to us, which he does in Matthew chapter 25.

So today we have a study on stewardship from the parable, our Lord's parable of the talents. Jesus is less than a week away from his own crucifixion.

[3:33] And he's sitting on the Mount of Olives with his disciples around him and he's teaching them about the kingdom of heaven and what it will be like when he returns at the end of the age.

And he likens it to a story that he tells. It will be like this, he says. And so there was an owner of an estate who was going on a journey and he called his servants and entrusted his property to them. Now servants in those days rose to positions of great influence and responsibility at times.

They were faithful at some level, perhaps. And so they were given more responsibility. They didn't all have the same abilities and all the same business skills. So they were handled each according to their abilities.

[4:40] And so five talents of money were given to one, two talents to another and one talent to a third servant. Now a talent did not mean they could baton twirl or or do gymnastics.

A talent was a unit of money like a nickel, a quarter, a dollar. A talent was the highest unit of money. And it could take an ordinary laborer 20 years to earn just one talent. So these were huge sums of money that this wealthy estate owner was putting into the trust, into the care of these three servants.

Thousands and thousands of dollars in today's money. And the expectation is clear. He does not want his money to lie idle while he's gone on this journey.

And so he entrusted to them that they might put it to good use for him and to make a profit and to increase his own estate.

[5:46] Well, now that's precisely what the first two servants did. They did it at once, it says. They put his money to work and they doubled it. We're not told how.

Perhaps they purchased land and grew crops off of it and sold it and made a profit. Maybe they opened a business. One way or another, they worked with that money and produced a profit. But the servant with one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. Now, there were not safety deposit boxes in those days, so treasures were often buried.

If you wanted to keep it safe, you'd go out and bury it in some secret place. And that's the way you protected something of value.

And so this servant went off and buried his master's money. But that was not the expectation of the owner just to keep it safe. He could have buried it himself, right?

[6:49] No, the expectation was to use it to work with that money, to increase it. And that's why he entrusted it to them. Well, this servant, while the other two servants were working, he was idle.

And then we read that after a long time, the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. And, oh, it went very well for the first two servants.

And it went very bad for the third, the idle servant. Now, we want to pause at this point to consider the meaning of Jesus' parable so far.

Jesus himself is the master, the estate owner, who was going away on a journey. Indeed, he is just days away from his death, as we said, and then his resurrection and then his ascension to heaven. And he's going on a journey to heaven. And he will be away for a long time. And during his physical absence, we are all being tested.

[7:55] Life is a test. And one day, after a long time away, Jesus will return and call us all to give an account to him of what we've done with what he's given to us.

So, we need to see then from this parable that we are all stewards, stewards, managers of the Lord's things.

Now, the foundational truth behind stewardship is found in Psalm 24 and verses 1 and 2.

It is just this, that everything belongs to God. Everything. Psalm 24. The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world and all who live in it.

For he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters. It's his because he made it. The creator claims ownership of all that he's made.

[9:02] And that includes everything. It means the house you live in, the car you drive, the clothes you wear, the money in the bank, your job, your ministry, your children, your parents, your body, your soul.

Everything. Covers just about everything that we're used to saying, it's mine. And God says, you're wrong. It's mine.

And I'm only letting you use it for a while. Now, that's a radical view of this world and of our possessions.

But we must have that if we're to be faithful stewards. To recognize everything that I have is really his and I'm just given to use it.

I'm entrusted with it like this master did with his things when he went on a journey. He didn't just give it to them and say, there, now it's yours. No. You'll notice in verse 18 that once the master gave the talents of money to his servants, it still remained the master's money.

[10:10] What did the third servant do? He went out and hid his master's money. What does he say when he brings it back? When the Lord returns, he brings his talent and he says, here is your talent, your money.

So though it was given to them, it was given to them, not as owners, but as stewards, managers, servants to take care of it, to increase it.

We think right away of. Of Joseph, don't we? Who was a slave down in Potiphar's house in Egypt, and he was faithful, a good slave, and God gave him success in every task that he undertook. God blessed him. And so Potiphar rewarded him by doing what? By making him his steward. His manager. And he put him in charge of his household and he entrusted to his care everything he owned, both in the house and in the field.

He left in Joseph's care everything he had. With Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food that he ate. Joseph was a steward in Potiphar's house.

[11:25] Now, how much did Joseph own in Potiphar's house? Not much. How much did Joseph manage in Potiphar's house?

Nearly everything. He handled a lot of wealth and property and servants, but it all remained Potiphar's. When Joseph left Potiphar's house and went off to jail, he didn't take it with him, did he? No, it wasn't his. It was Potiphar's, and he was just using it in the interest of his master. And this is so important for us to get this point that everything that we've been given is only been given to us as stewards and not ultimate owners.

Because if you think you own things, you will use them differently than if you know that they really belong to the Lord and he's just entrusting you with the care of them and the use of them for a time. You see, the question a steward asks is never, what do I want to do with my things? No, the question of the steward is always, what does the master want done with his things?

[12:43] How can I put them to use for his best interest? What will profit him the most? What will bring him the most pleasure and increase his estate?

So you and I, every one of us here this morning are all stewards, just like these three servants in Jesus' parable. Something has been entrusted to you.

Something has been put into your care from the master on high. And that's true whether you're lost or saved.

It was true of the faithful servants and it was true of the unfaithful servant. It was true of the servants who went to heaven and it was true of the servant that went to hell.

All of them had been entrusted with something to use for the master. Now I'd like to apply this in several areas this morning.

[13:42] The first is the most direct because it's what the parable is about. It's about money. A talent was money. So let's begin where Jesus begins.

Your money. Do you see yourself as a steward of your money and not an owner? Not just the tithe belongs to him, but all of it belongs to him.

Do you think of it in that way? Or do you give your tithe and then the rest is mine, free and above, and I do with it whatever I want? You're missing something. It's been given to you as a trust to use for the master.

How does he want it used? Well, the Bible answers that question. You know that. The Bible has all sorts of things about money, about how to get it, how to save some of it, how to spend and enjoy some of it, how to give some of it away.

Are you using your money as he wants it to be used? J.C. Ryle quotes Lord Bacon in his commentary and says, money is like manure.

[14:59] Good for nothing in the heap. It must be spread. That's when its benefit is done. You gardeners know that it's not in the heap.

It's when it's spread and put around the plants that all those plants benefit. That's your money, man, woman, boy, girl. It's no good in the heap when you just hoard it and spend it and use it on yourself.

It's only useful when it's spread, spread out to others. So do good with it. See the kingdom of God increase with it.

Be generous and willing to share in this way. You will lay up treasures for yourself as a firm foundation for the coming age so that you may take hold of the life that is truly life.

That's simply saying you don't know what it is to live until you learn to give. It is more blessed to give than to receive. Jesus says. Is Jesus kingdom being increased?
[16:03] Is his estate growing? Is his honor spreading because of your use of the money entrusted to you? And that goes for all your possessions then, doesn't it?

Everything that money buys, your your your cars and houses and clothes and lands. How does he want them used? I'm just the steward.

But this parable of the talents has applications beyond money. Indeed, it's. It applies to everything that has been entrusted to us by the Lord.

What else has the Lord given to us, entrusted us with? Well, there is your time. Your time. God has entrusted you with life. He gives us life, breath and everything else.

And, you know, your your life is simply divided up into years and months and weeks and days and hours. That's time, isn't it? He's entrusted you with with time.

[17:04] Time is your life. And if you're wasting your time, you're wasting your life. The precious life that Jesus Christ has given to you, entrusted into your care that you might use for him.

And frittering away time is frittering away life. And young people are especially good at frittering away time. You are wasting your life when you waste time.

And older people are especially good at frittering away time. You're wasting your life when you waste your time.

It's a horrible thing to waste one's life. A gift of God. That doesn't mean that you're working endlessly. No, he wants some of your time to be used for rest.

For recreation. But it's not wasted time. It's purposeful time. It's purposefully being used for rest and recreation.

[18:11] That we might be able to give ourselves refreshed to our work. And to the work of the kingdom. No wonder God's word tells us to be redeeming the time.

To make the most of every opportunity that we have. Because the days are evil. Young people. Young people.

Are you remembering your creator. In the days of your youth. This period of time. Are you redeeming this period of time.

Right now. As a five year old. A ten year old. A fourteen year old. A twenty year old. However old you are young person. Are you remembering your creator. In the days of your youth.

With this time. That's been given to you. You're a steward. Of this part of your life. Is it. Is it being given back to God. To serve him. Every day of it.

[19:09] Every hour of it. Are you improving your time. Only one life. Will soon be passed. And only what's done for Christ.

Will last. At the close of every day. It would be a profitable. Question to ask. What do I have from this day. These twenty four hours.

That will last. For all eternity. What has been done for Christ. See yourself.

As a steward. Of the time. That Christ. Is entrusted. To you. Are you using. Time. To advance. His kingdom. Stewards.

That's what we are. Of money. Of time. Third. Of our body. Of our bodies. Do you have a steward's view. Of your body. He's entrusted me.

[20:06] With a body. To be used. For him. Put it to work. John. Use that body. To serve me. To do what I want done. In that body. And again. His word tells me.

What he wants done. With my body. You know. It has very specific things. To tell. What I'm to do. With my eyes. What my eyes. Are to look upon. And what they're not.

To look upon. My ears. What I listen to. And what I refuse. To listen to. My mouth. Oh. The Bible. Has all sorts. Of things. To say.

How God. Wants me. As a steward. To use my mouth. For the one. Who gave it to me. My hands. My feet. It's in that context. Of stewardship. That. The apostle Paul.

[20:59] Speaks. To believers. About the body. In first. Corinthians six. And he says. The body. Is not meant. For sexual immorality. So.

So he's given you a body. It's not meant. For sexual immorality. But it's meant. For the Lord. And the Lord. For the body. Do you not know. That your body. Is a temple. Of the Holy Spirit. Who is in you.

Whom you have received. From God. You are not. Your own. You were bought. At a price. Therefore. Honor God. With your body. You see. What he's saying. Your body. Isn't yours. You're just a steward. Of that body. I'm. I'm entrusting it to you. I purchased it. I not only made it. But for you believers. I have purchased it. With blood. And so. You are to use that body. Not for sexual immorality. But for. My glory. My glory. It's my temple. [21 : 56] He says. It's where I dwell. By my spirit. You taking care. Of God's temple. How are you using. His body. Is it in the way.

That he wants it to be used. You see. Our stewardship. Goes way beyond. Just money. And time. It extends to our body. In all of its parts. And what about our soul?

What about our soul? Are you feeding your body. And starving your soul? God. Gave you a soul. A soul. That will live forever. And he expects you. To take care of it.

Both for time. And eternity. What else are we stewards of? Well we're stewards of the gospel. We're stewards of the gospel.

Do we appreciate. What's been given us. In the gospel. You know. Not everybody in the world. Has the gospel. They haven't received. The gospel. There are all sorts. Of millions.

[22 : 53] Of people. Who have. Never. Once received the gospel. From God. You have. Oh. What a sacred trust. Has been put into your lap. This precious.

Treasure. Is what Paul speaks of it as. In 2nd Corinthians 4. The treasure of the gospel. Well what are you doing with it?

What are you doing with what's been given to you? Are you believing it? Are you obeying it? Are you running to Christ. And repenting of your sins.

And trusting in him. For the forgiveness of your sins. Are you living upon it. As your only hope. For heaven. As the best of good news.

Every day. You. You. You waking up. You living every day. With the gospel. As the best news. For that day. For you. Are you passing it on to others.

[23 : 52] Your children. Lost people around you. And around the world. You know. When Jesus returns. We're going to have to give an account. For what we did with the gospel. And the hottest hell.

Is reserved for those. Who have heard. And not believed. On the son of God. It will be more tolerable. For Sodom and Gomorrah. Than it will be for those. Who have received the gospel.

But have not responded to it. As the giver wanted. We're stewards. Of the gospel. And.

We could go on and on. And I would challenge you. To tease this on out. And. And to apply it on out. To everything you have. Think about what you've been given. Privileges.

That are yours. Simply because you live in the United States. You're a steward of that freedom to speak. Are you using it? The freedom to assemble. The freedom of religion. You're a steward of.

[24 : 53] Of your influence. That God gives you. Some of you have great influence. God has trusted you with that. Not everybody. But you have influence. You're using it. As the master wants.

To increase. His kingdom. But I want us to think. For a moment further on. Something that every believer. Has received. And that is. Spiritual gifts.

We are to be stewards. Of. Our gifts. First Peter. Chapter 4. And verse 10. Is the verse.

Each one. Should use. Whatever gift. He has received. To serve others. Faithfully. Administering. God's grace. In its various forms.

So again. We've received something. We've received something. What have we received now?

Because that's what we're stewards of. Well. We've received. A spiritual gift. Every Christian.

[25 : 53] Has. A spiritual gift. Or gifts. That they've received. From God. Each one. Should use. What he's received. That gift. That he's received.

Now that gift. Could be. Speaking. God's word. It could be. Serving. It could be.

Teaching. It could be. Encouraging. It could be. Contributing. To the needs. Of others. It could be. Leadership. It could be. Showing. Mercy. Those are just. Some.

That are mentioned. In Romans 12. No. Exhaustive. List. Many gifts. Were exercised. In vacation. Bible school. Very gifts.

So. Every Christian. Has this. Spiritual gift. That's been. Given. By God. We're stewards. Of it.

Okay. These. How are we. To use. These gifts. Well.

[26 : 49] He tells us. Here. In this verse. Each one. Should use. Whatever gift. He's received. To serve. Others. To serve. Others. These gifts. Are meant. To be used. To serve. Others. In fact.

That's what gifts. Are. They're just. Different. Abilities. Empowered. By the Holy Spirit. To serve. Others. They're different. Ways. That other people. Are served. And benefited. By us. Next. We see. These spiritual. Gifts. Are different. Forms. Of God's. Grace. Now. That's. Critical. Faithfully. Administering. God's. Grace. In. Its. Various. Forms.

Have you. Thought. About. Your. Spiritual. Gift. As. A package. Of. God's. Grace. It is. It's. God's. Favor. It's. God's. Goodness. That he.

[27:46] Means. To flow. To others. By. You're. Putting. It. To work. And. Lastly. These. Spiritual. Gifts. Are. Something. We are. To.

Faithfully. Administer. As. Good. Stewards. Now. The old. King James. Version. Is. A more. Literal. Translation. Of. This. Verse. And. It. Mentions.

The word. Steward. It. Just. Says. That. Very. Thing. Every. Man. As. Every. Man. Has. Received. The. Gift. Even. So. Minister. The. Same. One. To. There.

And. The. NIV. Translates. It. As. Faithfully. Administering. That's. What. A. Stewards. Called. To. Do. But. We. Have. These. Gifts. Of. God. Which. Are.

Packages. Of. His. Grace. His. Goodness. His. Favor. That. He. Means. To. Do. Good. To. Others. And. We. Are. To. Faithfully. Administer. We're. To. Be. Good. Stewards. Grace.

[28:51] That. Was. Given. To. Us. Not. To. Terminate. On. Ourselves. But. To. Enrich. And. Benefit. Others. You see. If. You're. Not.

Using. Your. Spiritual. Gift. To. Serve. Others. Then. You're. Burying. Them. Like. The. Third. Servant. And. God's. Grace. Is. Being. Wasted. And. It's. Not. Coming. To. Its. Intended. Recipients. Every. Christian. Is. A. UPS. Man. A. Delivery. Boy. And. God. Has. A. Package. Of. Grace.

Goodness. Help. And. He. Has. It. To. Send. To. Others. Through. You. Now. The. Package. Comes. To. You. From. God. But. It. Has. Their. Name. And. Address.

On. It. It's. Not. For. Me. It's. It's. For. Someone. Else. That's. The. Delivery. Boy. It's. Not. Meant. For. Me. It's. Meant. For. Them. And. I'm. Simply. To. Deliver. It. To. Them.

[29:47] From. God. And. You. Do. That. By. The. Exercise. Of. Your. Spiritual. Gift. You. Serve. Others. You. Bring. To.

Them. The. Good. Grace. Of. God. That. He's. Sending. To. Them. Did. Your. Pastor. You. Need. Me. God. Has. Given. Me. A. Gift. In. Which. He. Means. To. Do. You. Good. As. I. Deliver.

It. To. You. And. Did. You. Know. That. Some. Of. The. Good. That. I. Need. From. God. Comes. Through. You. I.

Need. You. The. Body. Of. Christ. In. This. Matter. Of. Spiritual. Gifts. God. Has. Made. Us. All. Mutually. Dependent.

[30:44] Upon. Each. Other. For. The. Grace. That. He's. Giving. Us. And. He's. Sending. It. To. Us. From. Our. Brothers. And. Sisters. Whom. He's. Given. Spiritual.

Gifts. To. To. Enrich. Us. How. We. Need. To. Be. Good. Stewards. Of. God's. Grace. In. Its. Various. Forms. Because.

If. You're. Not. Using. Your. Spiritual. Gifts. In. The. Body. Of. Christ. Then. The. Body. Of. Christ. Is. Being. Impoverished.

From. What. We. Could. Be. From. What. We. Should. Be. From. What. God. Intends. For. Us. To. Be. We. As. A. Church. Simply. Cannot. Afford. To. Have. Any. One.

Believer. Not. Ministering. Their. Spiritual. Gift. We. Cannot. Do. Without. The. Grace. Of. God. Which. Is. What. Is. Bound.

[31:36] Up. In. The. Gifts. That. He. Gives. Us. And. We'll. Give. An. Account. We'll. Give. An. Account. To. Christ. And. What.

Kind. Of. Stewards. We've. Been. Of. His. Grace. In. Our. Spiritual. Gifts. God's. Grace. Is. A. Terrible. Thing. To. Waste. What. Are. You. Doing. With. It. What.

Are. You. Doing. With. Your. Gift. To. Enrich. The. Body. To.

The. Rest. Of. Us. What. You've. Been. Given. Or. Are. You. A. Clog. In. The. Pipeline. Of. God's. Grace. In. Its. Various.

Forms. Well. God. Has. Given. Us. Much. And. We. Need. To. See. Ourselves. As. Stewards. We've.

[32:29] All. Been. Entrusted. With. Many. Things. From. God. Well. At. The. Master's. Return. He. Will. Settle.

Accounts. With. Us. One. Day. We. Must. Meet. Face. To. Face. With. The. Lord. Jesus. To. Give. An. Account. Of. What. We've. Done. With. Everything. That. He's. Given. To. Us.

Everything. That. He's. Entrusted. With. To. Us. And. So. The. First. Master. Comes. And. Says. Master. You. Entrusted. Me. With. Five. Talents. See. I've. Gained. Five. More. And. So. The. Second. Two. Talents.

Given. I've. Gained. Two. More. And. One. Day. It. Will. Be. Such. With. Us. And. We'll. Be. Ask. What. About. That. Money. That. Entrusted. To. You. What. About. That. Time. What.

About. That. Spiritual. Gift. What. About. That. Influence. What. About. The. Gospel. What. About. The. Church. Your. Spiritual. Upbringing. What.

[33:21] What. Have. You. Done. With. All. That's. Been. Given. To. You. And. We. Will. Have. To. Give. An. Account. Of. Every. Idle. Word. Jesus. Says. If. Every. Idle. Word. Certainly. Every. Moment. Of. Time.

Every. Dollar. That. We. Handled. Every. Scripture. Known. Every. Sermon. Heard. Every. Command. Given. Every. Spiritual. Gift. What. We've. Done. In. Our. Bodies. Every. Opportunity. To. Serve. What. Good. Have. We. Got. To. Our. Souls. From. What. He. Gave. And. What. Good. Has. He. Got. And. Others.

Got. From. What. He. Gave. Now. Faithfulness. Is. The. Thing. Required. Of. Stewards. You see. What's. Required. Of. A. Steward.

First. Corinthians. Four. Two. Now. It. Is. Required. Of. Stewards. That. They. Be. Found. Faithful. The. Question. Of. The. Day. And. Judgment. Is. What. Did. You. Do. With. What. I. Gave. You. Were. You. Faithful.

[34:14] To. Use. It. In. The. Way. That. I. Wanted. You. To. Use. It. According. To. The. Scriptures. Faithfulness. Faithfulness. And.

So. The. Lord. Says. Well. Done. Good. And. Faithful. Servant. You. Have. Been. Faithful. Over. A. Few. Things. I. Will. Put. You. In. Charge.

Of. Many. Things. And. So. So. The. First. Two. Servants. Were. Faithful. And. They. Gained. A. Hundred. Percent. More. Than. What. Had. Been. Given. To. Them.

And. So. They. Reward. And. Their. Reward. Is. To. Be. Put. In. Charge. Of. More. Things. Now. That. May.

Not. Sound. As. A. Reward. To. You. But. Ask. You. To. Look. Again. Men. Have. You. Ever. Been. Advanced. In. Your. Business. Have. You. Ever. Received. Honor. In.

[35:08] Your. Place. Of. Employment. You. Been. Faithful. Over. This. Much. So. What. Does. Your. Boss. Do. You. He. Gives. You. A. Bigger. Paycheck. But. Gives. You. Greater. Responsibilities.

Too. Doesn't. He. That's. Honor. He. He. Advances. You. With. Honor. That's. What's. Being.

Given. To. Us. Every. Faithful. Servant. Will. Receive. Honor. From. The. Lord. In. That. Day.

And. Everlasting. Happiness. That's. The. Two. H's. Honor. And. Happiness. Enter. Into. The. Joy. Of. Your. Lord. Come. And. Share. Your. Master's. Happiness.

His. Happiness. In. You. That. Fullness. Of. Joy. Which. Is. At. His. Right. Hand. And. Your. Highest. Joy. On. Earth. Is. Simply. A. Tiny. Taste. Of. Of.

What. Heaven. Will. Be. For. The. Faithful. Stewards. Of. Christ. Believers. Will. Be. Rewarded. For. Faithful. Service. Done. To. And. For.

[36:00] The. Lord. He's. Not. Unjust. He. Will. Not. Forget. Your. Work. Of. Love. But. Will. Reward. It. Though. It's. Been. Far. From. Perfect. Though. We.

Will. Discover. In. That. Day. That. Nothing. That. We. Have. Done. In. Way. Of. Service. To. Christ. Will. Be. Forgotten. But. That. It. All. Will. Be. Rewarded.

J.C. Ryle. Says. The. Faithful. Servant. Will. Discover. To. His. Amazement. That. His. Master's. I. Saw. More. Beauty. In. His. Efforts. To. Please. And. Than. He. Ever. Saw.

Himself. And. We. Will. Find. That. Every. Minute. Spent. In. Christ. Service. Every. Word. Spoken. To. Encourage.

One. Of. Christ's. People. Every. Witness. To. A. Lost. Person. Every. Prayer. Ever. Offered. Every. Penny. Given. Every. Lesson. Taught. Every. Cookie.

[36:59] Baked. And. Cup. Of. Cold. Water. Given. In. Jesus. Name. Will. Receive. Its. Reward. And.

Not. The. Least. Of. Which. Will. Be. To. Have. The. One. Who. Was. Pierced. For. Us. Look. Us. In. The. Eye. And. Say. Well. Done. Well. Done. Good.

And. Faithful. Servant. That. Will. Make. Up. For. More. All. Losses. And. Suffering. And. Expenses. Involved. In. Serving. Him. Below. Yes.

Every. Believer. Every. True. Believer. Will. Be. Rewarded. In. That. Day. But. All. Unfaithful.

Stewards. Will. Be. Damned. Because. Then. The. Man. Who. Had. Received.

The. One. Talent. Came. Mastery. Said. I. Knew. That. You. Are. A. Hard. Man. Harvesting. Where. You. Have. Not. Sown. And. Gathering. Where. You. If.

[38:00] Nothing. More. Was. Expected. Than. Not. Losing. It. See. Here. It. Is. I've. Kept. It. That. Wasn't. His. Master's. Intent. That's. Not. How. His. Master. Wanted. It. To. Be. Used. He.

Didn't. He. Was. Not. A. Faithful. Steward. A. Faithful. Steward. Says. What. Is. The. Master. Want. The. Master. Want. It. He.

Shirked. His. Responsibilities. What. The. Master. Wanted. I. Can't. Help. But. Think. That. He. Felt. Guilty. Perhaps. He.

Saw. The. Other. Two. And. What. They. Produced. What. What. Had. Been. Given. To. Them. Another. Five. For. The. Five. Talents. Another. Two. And. I've. Got. One. That. Means. I. Should. Have. Another. One. Starts.

To. Blame. Others. For. Why. He's. Only. Got. The. One. Talent. And. Made. No. Increase. He. Actually. Accuses.

[39:10] The. Master. And. Says. It's. Your. Fault. He. Accuses. Of. Being. Hard. Man. A. Cruel. Man. An. Unreasonable. Man. With. Expectations. That.

Are. Beyond. Reasonable. It's. All. Your. Fault. And. So. I. Was. Afraid. Of. You. And. That's. Why. Just. Hit. Pretending. To. Be.

A. Good. And. Faithful. Servant. At. Heart. Deserving. Of. Reward. But. You. See. That. Jesus. The. Master. Has. A. Different. Opinion. Of. This. Third. Servant. Doesn't. He. Gives. Him. Three.

Titles. Three. Three. Descriptions. Verses. Twenty. Six. And. Thirty. You. Wicked. Lazy. Worthless. Servant. Three.

Things. The servant. Was. Wicked. Lazy. And. Worthless. First of all. Let's look at the word lazy.

This was his true motivation for burying it. Jesus just cuts right through all the excuses.

[40:03] The reason you just went out and buried it is because you're lazy. You're lazy. And while the other two were active and working, you were idle. You did nothing with it.

You just. Buried it. No more responsibility. Don't have to do that. And you're done. Have you noticed how lazy people are always full of excuses on why not to work?

Why it's not just a good time for work? The Proverbs talk about it. I can't go to work today. There's a lion outside. Or I'll be murdered in the streets. It might rain this afternoon and I could only get a couple hours in.

And what's the use? If I can only get in a couple hours, I might as well not go. The lazy man has all sorts of excuses. There's always a good reason for not working. And so it is.

But there's always a good reason to him for not serving the Lord. For not using his gifts. Not spending and being spent in the master's cause.

[41:07] Not serving his church. Not making the most of every opportunity. But Jesus says you're lazy. You're lazy. But you're not only lazy.

You're wicked. You wicked, lazy servant. Did you know that laziness is wickedness, kids? That's right. Jesus says laziness is wickedness.

Positive wickedness. It's the ultimate selfishness. It's living for self rather than others and for the Lord. The Lord has given us things.

Body, strength, health, time, talents. To be used for him and others. And laziness is having self trump. The concerns of the master and of others.

On our time, talents, money and so on. The ultimate self indulgence. Laziness. Laziness.

Wickedness. You wicked, lazy servant.

[42:08] It's wickedness because it's destructive. The lazy man is destructive. He wastes what has been entrusted. He wastes the gain that he could have had.

This servant wasted another talent of money. That could have been brought into the estate of the master. He wasted a talent. That huge sum of money. You say, well, it wasn't there. He didn't make it. That's precisely the point. He wasted the opportunity to make it. So he wasted it. To bury your gift in the ground is to daily rob God of the return on his investment. Laziness is wickedness. And this man is wicked because rather than face up to his own laziness, he makes excuses and he tells lies and slanders his master and blames him for his actions. He's wicked. And thirdly, he's worthless. He's worthless. The old King James. Unprofitable. [43 : 13] Unprofitable. Now, why did the master put the talent of money in his hands in the first place? To make a profit. What he gave him was to be improved and increased. But what he put in his hands did not fare any better for having been in his hands.

It was a talent when it was given him and it was a talent when he returned it. Well, then he's worthless. He's useless. He is useless to the master. The master could have stuck it in the ground. He's not done anything for the master. So he calls him a worthless, unprofitable, useless servant. Now, according to Jesus, barren fig trees are cursed. And so is a wicked, lazy, worthless servant. Verse 30. Throw him outside into darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. That's the Lord's description of eternal hell. [44 : 17] Outer darkness. Weeping. And gnashing of teeth. No honor. No happiness. Darkness. Weeping. Gnashing of teeth.

Forever. Forever. Some of you are afraid of the dark. How will you ever live with outer darkness? Forever. And ever.

This parable has a meaning, young people. There are individuals who will hear these words from the Savior. Into the outer darkness.

Darkness. Forever. Forever. For you. Where there is only weeping and gnashing of teeth. You see, there's only two outcomes. On that day of judgment, when we give an account to God for everything he's given us, there's just two outcomes.

It's either honor and entering into the Lord's happiness forever. Or it's outer darkness. Weeping and gnashing of teeth forever. For. Jesus is making clear.

[45 : 25] That the thing at stake here is not just a few less rewards for an unfaithful steward. The thing at stake is your eternal destination, whether it will be heaven or hell.

There's a lot of people that just think, well, I'm a Christian. I just don't serve God. But I'm a Christian. And before Jesus went to the cross, he told this parable that you might have that idea shattered from your mind.

You are not a Christian if you do not serve the Lord Jesus with what he's been given, what you've been given. You are a wicked, lazy, worthless servant who will be condemned to hell.

Whatever you thought of yourself, professing Christians of all sorts, with all sorts of excuses for not obeying, not serving the Lord, will be exposed in the end as the wicked, lazy, worthless servants that they are, fit for outer darkness.

The things God gave them and heaped upon them, they never, they never thought, how can I use this for God? How can I take this day that he's given me and serve God in it?

[46 : 45] No, they just, they live lazily for themselves. And his church was not built up by them and lost people were not helped by them.

And the kingdom of God was not advanced by their prayers and gifts and service. You notice this man is condemned to hell, not for something he did, but for what he failed to do.

This parable condemns sins of omission. He did not use what had been given to serve his master. None are to be idle.

And how many this morning are like this servant who live in the lazy neglect of duty to serve God and others with what has been given.

And so what does God give you? Well, he gives you a Bible. And you're one of the few on the planet to have a Bible. And what do you do with it?

[47 : 55] He gives you a promise. If you pray, you'll hear. And what do you do with it? He gives you church. He gives you sermons.

And what do you do with them? You come in lost, you leave lost. You come in self-centered, you leave self-centered. What are you doing with what he's given you? What he's given you? What he keeps giving you?

All the money, the health, the abilities that you've been given. Where are you in this parable? Which servant are you? Every parable comes from Jesus to search us.

Have you found yourself in this parable? You must. We're either the one or the other. Have you been found burying your gifts in the ground?

That's a wicked thing. But oh, what a wonderful thing to say that there's yet mercy with the Lord.

The master has not come back from his journey yet. There is still time to repent.

[48:58] And to begin to serve the Lord. You see, alongside of our failure, we must look at Jesus' perfect faithfulness.

He was a faithful son over God's house. He is the faithful servant of the Lord. And so what did the father entrust to the son?

What did he give to his son? Well, the Bible says he gave him his elect to save. There's a people who have been given to him. Those that the father has given me.

He keeps talking about those. That's what the father gave to his son. He gave to his son certain sinners that he wanted him to save. Now there's son. And he gave him a body.

And what did Jesus do with what had been given to him? Well, he came to earth in that body. And he lived a perfect life in that body.

[49:55] He did everything with his body that the Lord wanted him to do. Everything with his money. His time. The gospel. The word. The church. His family.

He did everything with everything. As God wanted him to. And what is he doing? As he's doing that, he's working out a perfect righteousness to give to every one of his believing people.

But it didn't end there. We're not saved just with that. We still deserve to go to hell. We still deserve the outer darkness. And the weeping and gnashing of teeth for our sins.

And so in that body given to him. He does what the father wants. And he takes that body to the cross. And God covers the son.

And in outer darkness. He pours out his wrath upon his son. And he enters into the darkness of hell. And the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.

[50:57] My God. My God. Why have you forsaken me? He's a faithful servant. This Jesus. And then he's put in the ground.

And now what is he doing? Now he's rising again. Rising. Why did he die on the cross? To save his people from their sins. He's taking the punishment that their sins deserved.

So he's worked out a righteousness. A perfect righteousness by his life. He's taken the outer darkness for them on the cross. Now he's risen from the dead for them.

In that same body. He's come out of the tomb. And now he's ascending into heaven. And now he's seated at his father's right hand. And what's he doing there? He's presenting himself.

His body. His sacrifice. On our behalf. And he's pleading merit and mercies and grace for us. And he's sending to his people down on earth. The Holy Spirit to change our hearts.

[51:55] To deal a death blow with that self-centeredness. That wants to take all of his gifts and live for self. And he puts a new heart in us that wants to live for him.

And then he keeps sending grace. To help us when we fall. To call us back. To use what he's given. To serve him. He's a faithful savior.

And he keeps giving. Keeps doing what his father wants him to do. And one day. He will come back. In that same body. Which they saw him go into heaven. And he will come back.

And he will receive all. Of those that the father had given him. All of those. For whom he died on the cross. All of those. For whom he lived that perfect life.

All of those. Who in their lifetime. Received the Holy Spirit from him. And were made new creatures. And so. Trusted in him. And so in their lives. Did not just live for self.

[52:55] But for him. And were faithful to him. He will come back. And receive them to himself. And not one of them. Will be missing. Not one of them.

Will be unfaithful. But all that the father has given me. I will raise up in that last day. So beside your failure.

To serve the Lord. With what he's given you. Stands the perfect. Servant of the Lord. And you need his mercy.

So. Come with your failures. And don't make excuses. Like the third servant. Just come and tell him what you are. Lord. I keep taking from you. And I haven't given. My heart back to you.

I've not given you. The love of my heart. The service. Would you please forgive me. And you know what he'll do. He'll cleanse you from all unrighteousness. And he'll live in your heart.

[53:53] And he'll enable you to serve him. All the days of your life. Trust in him. Trust in what he did on the cross. In enduring darkness.

For sinners who will come to him. And then go and serve him. Go and serve him. And Christians. We're going to stand before the one.

Who sweat drops of blood. To work out our salvation. We're going to give account to him. Oh then let my life.

Show forth his praise. Let it be used. Everything that we are. And have be used. In his servants. Jesus. Jesus. Master.

Whose I am. Let's sing that. 494. Make it your response to the Lord Jesus. For his perfect faithfulness to the Father on your behalf.

[54:51] And if you're still serving yourself. You come to him right now where you're at. In your seat. And confess the selfish life that you've lived.

And cry out to him to save you. And make you his faithful servant. Let no one go away thinking that by your service.

You can merit your way into heaven. All your faithful service to Christ does. Is demonstrates. That your faith is resting on the faithful service.

Of Jesus Christ on your behalf. How do we know? How do we know those that are his? They are those who serve him. Like that woman. She had been forgiven much.

And so she served much. And so you. If you've been forgiven. By the merit of Jesus life and death. You will show it by faithful service.

[55:49] May the Lord help us as we go. Amen.