

Matthew 25.14–30

Heavenly Minded AND Earthly Good

KINGDOM of Heaven / God NOT just an END OF LIFE EVENT!

3 Stories about the KINGDOM – *RULE of Living God* - in Matthew 25

Major Theme > BE READY for the Coming of the LORD, Keep Watch!

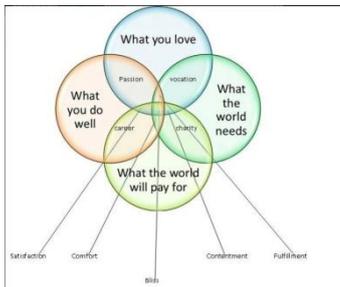
Saw 5 UNPREPARED Young Ladies – Knock, Knock, Knockin Heaven’s Door
SHOCKINGLY, TRAGICALLY Door Remains Closed – Forever LOCKED Out

Most of You LOTS of Life AHEAD – Don’t Plan on Knocking H’s Door SOON

You’re PRAYING the Prayer Jesus Taught His Disciples...

Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Matthew 6.10

And AT THIS POINT your FOCUS is on the EARTH Part of Kingdom Business



Life is Trying to FIND Sweet-Spot of CONVERGENCE

Get PAID for What you Enjoy & What Advances Kingdom

Oh, May the Stars Align for Each One of You

That’s the FOCUS of our Text Today...

1. Kingdom Opportunities

v. 1 “Then the kingdom of heaven will be like...”

All 3 of the PARABLES in Matthew 25 are KINGDOM PARABLES

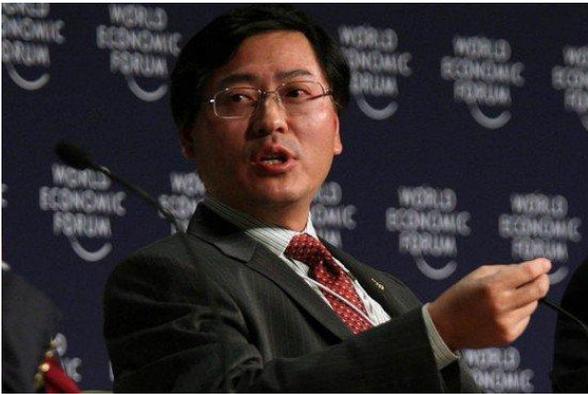
They’re PICTURES to Help us SEE What RULE of Jesus Christ LOOKS LIKE

The kingdom of darkness	-or-	The kingdom of light
The kingdom of this world	-or-	The kingdom of heaven
The kingdom of Satan	-or-	The kingdom of God

v. 14 “For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property...



Last Week HAMDİ ULUKAYA – Owner of Chobani Yogurt – 10% of 3 Billion Dollar Company Value to 2000 Employees – Longer Work, More they Get



Chinese computer maker Lenovo announced that its CEO, Yang Yuanqing, will share \$3+ million of his personal bonus with employees. This is the second year he has done that. About 10,000 manufacturing employees will each get a payment of around \$325

COMMEND these 2 Men for **GENEROUS** Concern for their **WORKERS!**

God of Bible Bigger **RESERVES** – Owns Yogurt, Computers & **GALAXIES**

v. 15 To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away.

TALENT? - Juggle, Ride Unicycle, Play Kazoo, Sing Underwater....

No! > **HUGE** Amount of **MONEY** / One Version of NIV “**BAG OF GOLD**”

Talent not a Coin > Measure of Weight – Coins could be Copper, Silver, or Gold

It is impossible to calculate how valuable the talents were. It is sufficient to say that each was a large amount. James Boice

Most Scholars **ESTIMATE** – 1 Talent = to At Least 20 years of Wages

Departing King Gives Huge WEALTH to SLAVES! Unthinkable Generosity!

KING is Sovereign God in ALL this VAST UNIVERSE

a billion opportunities God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth... God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.
Genesis 1.28-31

From GARDEN to End of the GALAXIES > Sovereign GOD is KING

Life is Not ZERO SUM GAME – God’s Kingdom knows NO SHORTAGES

v. 21 Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over *a little*

a little!!?- 5 TALENTS = 100 years of WAGES – Lots of Bags of GOLD!!

But for AN ETERNAL, SOVEREIGN God...this is just CHUMP CHANGE!

The Mighty One, God the LORD, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting. .. For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the hills, and all that moves in the field is mine. “If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world and its fullness are mine.
Psalm 50.1,2,10-12

2. King knows Our Abilities

a. Different Amounts 5, 2, 1 – Some say that’s UNFAIR??

v. 15 To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one...

IF God were to give us all what is FAIR...Where would we BE??

v. 30 And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

Darkness, because it is a life without God, who is the source of all light.

Outside, because it is without God, who is the Creator and center of all things.

Jesus is NOT FAIR – WHOLE World is place of OBVIOUS INEQUITIES

Mercy – God does NOT give us what we DO deserve

Grace – God DOES give us what we DO NOT deserve

Jesus > One who Gave More to One and Less to Another

People of God will Work, Use Talents God Gives, Not All in Same Way

God will Judge Performance or Nonperformance of Deeds, NOT US!

We are Not All-Knowing > Do Not Know who is Hiding his Talent in Ground

“Who are you to judge someone else’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand” Romans 14.4

b. Different Abilities v. 15 ...to each according to his ability.

MASTER Knows His People – Not Cookie-Cutter – Our MAKER and GOD

We Need to Remember Parable when we Make Comparisons between Christians

Master does NOT Compare > Like PARENTS who Compare their Children

Johnny so glad you got a B in Chemistry, but your SISTER got an A!

Master knows Making 2 Talents is THAT SERVANT burning on All Cylinders

King is TENDER, GUIDING to do THEIR Best > NOT EXPECT the Same

But DOES Expect SOMETHING > Calling of Creator is that we WORK!

TALENT refers to MONEY > Many make SPIRITUAL Application...

“Anything whereby we may glorify God is ‘a talent.’ Our gifts, our influence, our money, our knowledge, our health, our strength, our time, our senses, our reason, our intellect, our memory, our affections, our privileges as members of Christ’s Church, our advantages as possessors of the Bible—all, all are talents.”

John Ryle

Point of Story > Waiting for Christ's Return & Being Ready for it Not Passive
We Must Work Faithfully and Energetically for Him Now

Average LifeSPAN of Christian – 4.5 months Church / 11.5 Years WORKSITE

Bible teaches PRIESTHOOD of ALL Believers – ALL Christians Serve JESUS

Place you Will INVEST Most Kingdom Talents in WORKING WORLD

Called to be SALT IN the Earth / LIGHT OF the World

ESCAPE from World simply INVITES the Devil to have FREE Reign in It

This is my Father's world. O let me ne'er forget

That though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the ruler yet.

This is my Father's world: the battle is not done:

Jesus Who died shall be satisfied,

And earth and Heav'n be one.

Maltbie D. Babcock, 1901

3. King entrusts with Responsibility

v. 19 Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

a. Trusted - MATURITY is to be TRUSTED with RESPONSIBILITIES

Some People CHARGE that God & Religion try and MAKE us PUPPETS

Some REJECT Faith Claiming they are SEEKING FREEDOM!

NOBODY is MORE Free and RESPECTED by God than Follower of Christ

This is GOD'S World – He knows BEST HOW to Live In It – Truly Fruitful

We are MADE by God – He knows How we Achieve OPTIMAL OPERATION

Jesus Came to SEEK & SAVE Us – Reconnect Us w/ God, World, our Purpose

Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity... For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do. And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Hebrews 6.1,10-12

“It is not enough for Jesus’ followers to ‘hang in there’ and wait for the end. They must see themselves for what they are—servants who owe it to their Master to improve what he entrusts to them. Failure to do so proves they cannot really be valued disciples at all.” D. A. Carson

We MAKE Excuses for OURSELVES and OTHERS

He had LATE NIGHT, CO-DEPENDENT, ADDICTED, BAD PARENTS

Things can be TRUE, Always TERRIBLE > Everyone is RESPONSIBLE

Without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. Hebrews 11.6

Letter to EMPLOYEES who Received 10% TOTAL Value of his Company..

"This isn't a gift. It's a mutual promise to work together with a shared purpose and responsibility." Hamdi Ulukaya, CEO and Founder “Chobani Yogurt”

b. Tested

v. 20 And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.’

First 2 Servants NOT Surprised by MASTER’S Coming for Day of Reckoning

Both Men been Waiting for Moment > Pleased at Having Done so Well

Master Returns for Accounting: Faithful Servants report Doubled Amount Given

“Master, 5 talents you placed in my hands; look, 5 More Talents I have gained.”

“The man’s eyes are sparkling. He is bubbling over with enthusiasm, is thoroughly thrilled, and, as it were, invites his master to start counting.”

William Hendriksen

Master is Equally Delighted. “Well done,” “Excellent!” “Great!” “Wonderful!”

Same with Servant given 2 Talents / Bags of Gold

Says Same Thing > Receives an Identical Commendation

“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.”

Matthew 24.42

4. Kingdom creates Felicity

a. Relationship Faithful Servants LOVE MASTER > He TRUSTS Them

Master calls you to BE Person you’re Capable of Being

PLEASURE in Sharing their SUCCESS with HIM > HE made it HAPPEN!

v. 21 His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’

It was NOT about the GIFTS as Much as it was THE GIVER

Enter into the joy of your master.’

You have put more joy in my heart than they have when their grain and wine abound.

Psalm 4.7

2 Ways to Consider - Am I Ready for the Lord’s Return?

(1) Am I serving the Lord? / (2) Am I serving others because I love him?

As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy.

1 Timothy 6.17

b. Rebellion

Jesus MASTER STORY TELLER: Engaging, Inviting, Shocking, Arouse Anger!

Stories of Final Judgment > Greek *Krasis*: Root Meaning word is “Division”

Division between those Ready when Jesus Returns and Those who Not Ready

Women: 5 go into Wedding Banquet and 5 Shut Out

Servants: 2 are Commended and 1 is Judged

Sheep & Goats: Sheep inherit Kingdom Prepared, Goats receive Punishment

Contrast > Angry, Self-Justifying, Accusing Tone of 3rd Servant > Hid Talent

vs. 24–25 He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’

Are we SEEING 2 Master’s Here?

ONE Breaks his BANK and Spreads his Savings Out to 3 Unworthy Servants

Other HARD MAN / Word for ROCK > i.e. You’re MERCILESS JERK

The faithful servants served well because they loved him and wanted to please him, while the wicked servant failed to serve well because he actually hated and resented his master.

William Hendriksen

Man Hated Him > Hear his Contempt, Resentfully throws his Talent on Table

“Here is what belongs to you,” > Not a Bit More and No Less

Center of Story > 2 Portraits of the Master

EITHER Generous, Exciting, Multiplying OR Jerk, Hard, Cruel, Mean

Man’s Problem with GOD goes All the Way back to the GARDEN of Eden...

The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” Genesis 2.15-17

Like SERVANTS of our Story > God tells PARENTS “work & keep” World
 COMMAND to ENJOY All that God has CREATED for Them
 EXCEPT – One Small Tree, SYMBOL that God is Lord, Lawgiver, Truth-teller
 Serpent comes along to MESS UP MOM’S MIND

He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden’?”
 Genesis 3.1

Little FINGER / COMMAND – Move in FRONT of EYE becomes All you See
 SIGHT of ONE FORBIDDEN TREE BLOCKS View of Abundant GARDEN
 Now All Eve Saw was NEGATIVE Command > Lover becomes just Lawgiver

Anything GOOD you Get from this Harsh God you Need to PAY FOR, EARN

To GLORIFY God is NO LONGER to Enjoy Him FOREVER

After all, the Serpent whispered, “Isn’t it true that he placed you in this garden full of delights and has now denied them all to you?”...Eve’s ears were soon closed off to God’s word. The Serpent’s tactic was to lead her into seeing and interpreting the world through her eyes (what she saw when she looked at the tree) rather than through her ears (what God had said about it). So her eyes were diverted from the superabundant plenty...Now all Eve saw was a negative command.
 Sinclair Ferguson

2 Men BREAKING ROCKS in the STONE QUARRY

1 was Asked what are you DOING? – Can’t you See, I am Breaking Rocks!

2nd Asked same Question – You can’t See it Yet, but I am Building a Cathedral!

vs. 26,27 But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest.

Master > “If you knew I was that HARD, you Should have Worked HARDER!”

Wicked - because of his unjustified slander

Interpreted World by SIGHT Not the SOUND of God's WORD!

Lazy - was the real reason for his zero-growth performance

Many people do the same today. They use the theology of justification to excuse their failure to care for others. They use knowledge of predestination to excuse their failure to evangelize. They use perseverance as an excuse for being lazy.

James Boice

c. Rejoicing vs. 21 & 23 Enter into the joy of your master.'

INVESTING Talent in Service of MASTER is ENERGIZING > JOY!

NOT ONLY Did God MAKE WORLD > MADE US > FOR HIMSELF!

You have made us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in You.

Augustine

Why are we Here? Why do we Come Here? JOY of the Love of Jesus for You!

I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy, and I will praise you with the lyre, O God, my God.

Psalms 43.4

Not SHOW – PERFORMANCE is Not Great! But NONE Greater than our God!

Jesus COMPELLING, We want MORE of Him, Worship, Word, One Another

PROBLEM Prosperity Theology > Does Not make People want More of God

People FOCUS on GIFTS and FORGET the GIVER

You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Psalms 16.11

Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you.

Philippians 3.1

WHY is it SAFE – LOSE the JOY of the LORD – CENTER of Faith Falls Out

Paul told Philippian church REJOICE Four Times

If Forget to Rejoice tired of UMPIRING the Battle between Euodia & Syntyche
 Lose their Joy they'll HATE the DOGS that try to STEAL Away True GOSPEL
 Stop Living in Joy Never live in UNITY, LOVE, HUMILITY of Mind of Christ

You will ATTEND Church like Spectator looking for Better PERFORMANCES

When ASKED WHY he is NOT BELIEVER IN GOD....

Just in terms of allocation of time resources, religion is not very efficient. There's a lot more I could be doing on a Sunday morning. Bill Gates

Actually Worship is Best Way to Economize Time > You will LIVE FOREVER!

5. Kingdom endures Eternally

a. Heaven

v. 21 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'

vs. 28,29 So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.

Master RETURNS – Kingdom FULLY COME – Heavenly Home OPENED

Too Wonderful to Fully Understand or Describe > JOY of Work will Continue

More than FLOATING on Clouds and STRUMMING on Harps > Serve Master

Does that mean we are saved by works after all? Were Reformers wrong? No!

Necessity of Works Following Faith—if we are Truly Born Again

Not Justified by Works > Cannot Confirm Justification Without Works

If we are Not Working for Christ, We are Not Justified

Standard: Word of God? / Devotion: Love of God? / Passion: Glory of God?

Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, *who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross*, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12.2

Jesus DIED so We Could > Enter into the JOY of the Kingdom

b. Hell

v. 30 And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

Most Think of Afterlife in Pleasant Terms > Very Least Continue Known Life
 Very Few Consider it May Be Worse > Cannot Imagine God of Rigid Judgment
 Doctrine of “justification by death” R. C. Sproul

Jesus is Telling Story to BOTHER PEOPLE > Rattle their COMPLACENCY!

REALITY of Hell was NOT the Reason Faithful Servants PROSPERED

God’s PERFECT LOVE had CAST OUT ALL THEIR FEAR

DEVOTED to God and it was their DELIGHT to Serve Him Faithfully

To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor, and immortality, God will give eternal life. But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. For God does not show favoritism. Romans 2.7–11

“The foolish virgins failed from thinking their part too easy; the wicked servant fails from thinking his too hard.” Henry Alford

This is Evil World > All Sins Not Judged in This World, nor All Good Rewarded

If Moral Universe > Created & Ruled by Moral God, must be Final Reckoning

Scales WILL BE Balanced, Evil WILL BE Punished

Judgment is Most Logical Thing in Universe, Final Day of Reckoning

In the long run the answer to all those who object to the doctrine of hell is itself a question: "What are you asking God to do?" To wipe out their past sins and, at all costs, to give them a fresh start, smoothing every difficulty and offering every miraculous help? But he has done so, on Calvary. To forgive them? They will not be forgiven. To leave them alone? Alas, I am afraid that is what he does... "The damned are, in one sense, successful, rebels to the end; the doors of hell are locked on the inside. . . . They enjoy forever the horrible freedom they have demanded, and are therefore self-enslaved." C.S. Lewis, "The Problem of Pain"

Matthew 25.14 “For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. 15 To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. 16 He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. 17 So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. 18 But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master’s money. 19 Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. 20 And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.’ 21 His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ 22 And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.’ 23 His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ 24 He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, 25 so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’ 26 But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? 27 Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. 28 So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. 29 For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. 30 And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’