

Don't Bury Your Talents

1. Don't be indifferent about your investment.

“For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. 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.' 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.' 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.' 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.' 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.' 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. 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. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'” Matthew 25:14–30 (ESV)

Life Application: A heart that has been transformed by Christ will lead to a life consumed with serving the people God has placed around us.

Life Application: Holding on to something is not necessarily the same as taking care of it.

2. God will not hold us accountable according to someone else's ability.

“To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away.”
Matthew 25:15 (ESV)

Life Application: Stop feeling guilty about what we can't do; invest in what we can do.

Life Application: Investing our lives is not usually a matter of changing our situation but changing our perspective.

3. Don't hesitate.

“He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more.”
Matthew 25:16 (ESV)

Life Application: Jesus never said in the Gospels, “Follow Me later.”

Life Application: We don't invest because we think it's ours in the first place.

4. Invest according to the priorities of Jesus.

“Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'” Matthew 25:34-40 (ESV)

“So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.” Galatians 6:10 (ESV)

D.A. Carson said, "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."

"But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth." 1 John 3:17-18 (ESV)

Life Application: Will we be commended for our love, or will we be called out in our laziness?

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Connect Group Questions:

Read Matthew 25:14-30, and discuss the following questions:

1. How does the reality of Christ's return affect the way you think and feel right now? How would you live differently today if you expected Jesus would return tonight?
2. While the first servants in the parable of the talents reported their gains with joy, the lazy servant blamed his master for his laziness and lacked love for his master. What does this servant's reaction say about the importance of seeing God's character rightly? How can you make sure you are seeing God rightly?
3. Have you ever been asked individually or in a group setting to serve in a church or ministry related context? What has your initial response been to those kinds of requests?
4. Have you ever sensed that God was urging you to do something, yet you refused to do it because you felt inadequate or unprepared? If so, what was it? Why did you refuse?
5. When have you ever said yes to something God was urging you to do for which you felt unprepared? What was the impact of that experience on your faith?
6. Where do you serve? Were you nervous the first few times you did this? What has been the most challenging thing about serving in this area? What has been the best thing about serving in this area? What has God taught you through serving in this area?
7. What talents—or resources—has God given you? What are you doing with them?
8. When you examine your life, are you investing your life according to the priorities of Jesus?
9. What would sacrificial love and service to brothers and sisters in our church and city look like? Do you know the needs in our church? Do you know where your brothers and sisters in need live in our city? How might you or your group minister to them?
10. What do you think God is calling you to do today?