

Last week, Pastor James urged us to not neglect the giftings that God has given to us but to use them for His purpose—to build up His Kingdom. Why is it important that we use what we have for God's Kingdom and what does it look like?

Matthew 25:14-30 This is Jesus' teaching on Kingdom that is surely coming but at an unknown time. Jesus urges followers to be alert – to anticipate – to not be idle while waiting but to be diligently working for the Kingdom.

1. **Our identity in God's Kingdom. We are:**

- Servants: This passage tells of the master calling his servants (slave or bondservant) who are completely under the master's authority and does his will. We are servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. We do our Master's will.
- Freed from oppressive slavery under sin: When we become followers of Jesus in faith, we become part of God's Kingdom people. Born-again of the Spirit. A new creation. Adopted as daughters or sons of God. Freed into willing, royal servants of King Jesus.
- We are forgiven much so love much.

2. **We are given a responsibility** along with our identity in Christ. Servants do the will and carry out the desires and endeavors of their master. This passage shows the master entrusted his wealth to the servants. Jesus entrusts much to each of us. He didn't save us just so we can be idle residents in His Kingdom. He saved us and entrusted us with His great wealth. There is an expectation for us to do something with it. Verse 15 ...Each according to his ability.

3. **With responsibility comes accountability.** We will give an account to our King in His Kingdom.

- **Matthew 25:31-46** Parable of the sheep and goats. After a time... returned and settled accounts with them.
- Judgment will take place that separates His followers from the rest who rejected Him. Someday Jesus will return from the right-hand of the Father and complete His Kingdom. For those who reject is eternal punishment.. His followers will inherit the Kingdom. *Well done, good and faithful servant!*
- There will be another judgment for the followers to give an account for what they have done with the wealth that Jesus had entrusted them. **1 Corinthians 3**
- The accounting of the three servants:
 - #1 & #2 - *Well done, good and faithful servant!* These two were faithful with their responsibilities.
 - #3 *You wicked, lazy servant...* He was one of the servants, but his actions proved that he was unfaithful.
 - *I knew that you are a hard man...* This servant misunderstood the master's character.
 - *I was afraid...* This servant was afraid of failing his master. Not only fear but also lack of trust.
- Likewise, when we misunderstand God's character, we operate out of fear & distrust.

◆ What does it look like to invest the wealth that Jesus gave us? It means to be faithful with what God has given us where we are right now.

1. **Earning approval = Insecurity:** Striving for good performance can stem from the motivation of wanting to prove our worth to God, wanting to earn his approval/favor and being afraid that God is a harsh master.
2. **Security to Faithfulness:** Jesus measures our success not by performance but by faithfulness. Faithfulness is driven by the very fact that we have been fully accepted by the Father. We are fully loved and favored by the Almighty God. We are given value and worth by the Father all on the basis of Jesus Christ. Faithfulness stems from security.
3. **Security to Service:** Because we are secure in the Father's acceptance, approval, and love, we are driven to serve him and to give everything we have in this life to do whatever would please His heart. Faithfulness is not an effort to earn His pleasure; it is a response to His loving acceptance of us.
4. **With our Wealth:**
 - **Faithful with His Wealth.** Honor Jesus with everything in our lives - all we possess – all that we have.
 - **Our physical bodies.** Our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.
 - **Time.** Do we spend our 24 hours in a way that honors Jesus and carries out His will? Or wasting our time?
 - **Our job/position.** With excellence. Christians ought to be the best in character, integrity, and work ethics.
 - **Relationships.** Being faithful to the Lord in our relationships. Acting with love and kindness.
 - **Our true wealth.** Gifts of the Spirit. Using them to build up the church and serve fellow believers.
 - **The Gospel message.** Have a burden to see our lost family, friends, neighbors know Jesus.

Bible References: Matthew 25:14-30 | Matthew 24 & 25 | 1 Corinthians 3 | Romans 12:3

Reference song: Proud by Jordan Merritt