

Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ

The Parable of the Pounds

Last time...Zacchaeus sought to see Jesus and did...and so much more

Barriers to seeing Jesus were broken

Salvation came to his house that day by the Son of Man that came
to seek and to save the lost

This time...Jesus is aware of the disconnect between the Plan of God (His mission) and the plans
of men

He speaks of the Plan of God...in parable form – the (prophetic) Parable of the Pounds

We will be in Luke 19 again

v11-28

But before we jump in, some historical context will help us Gentiles understand Jesus’
parable

Josephus recorded Jewish history (for the Romans)

Herod the Great, and Edomite, left the Roman client province of Judea to
go to Rome to be given the kingdom of Judea;

A client province was governed by a Roman governor

An upgrade from client province was a “kingdom”

The designation of “king” was given to loyal locals as a
reward for their loyalty

Before he died, Herod the Great proposed to Rome that they subdivide the
kingdom of Judea into smaller provinces and those provinces be
given to his sons

The Jews appealed this proposal because they hated Herod and feared the
ferocity of Herod’s sons

They sent a delegation of 50 leaders to the Caesar in Rome to oppose
Herod’s proposal

Rome’s administrative policy to minimize such appeals to Caesar was to
make those appeals a life-or-death event...

life for whom Rome agreed and death for whom Rome disagreed

Rome sided with loyal Herod rather than difficult and troublesome Jews...
and the Jewish delegation was slain

Since this was recent history for the Jews, they would “get the gist” of what Jesus was
saying...and we have better understanding

v11 parable, because...night to Jerusalem...they thought that the kingdom:
After His rest stop and Divine Appointment with Zacchaeus Jesus is on the move
again, getting close to Jerusalem

Apparently after the crowd heard what happened in Zacchaeus' house,
Jesus punctuated His statement that He is come to seek and to save the
lost with a parable

This parable, and now, because

1. they were near to Jerusalem; the crowd will disperse soon
Note: He will be stopping in Bethany first
2. the crowd thought He was going to set up the kingdom of God when
He got to Jerusalem

The crowd has a great anticipation that Jesus, mighty in word and in deed, was
going to restore the kingdom to Israel now

But, in accordance with the Plan of God, Jesus is walking to...a Cross
God the Father and God the Son are in one accord but the people, including the
disciples, are on a completely different page

The Messiah of God is God's Servant that has come to suffer as His sin sacrifice
to conquer death and to throw off the bondage of sin from Adam's race
The Messiah of Israel was a political leader to throw off the bondage of the cruel
Roman Empire from Israel (different dimension, smaller scale)

v12-13 certain nobleman...far country...kingdom...return...servants...pounds...Occupy:
A certain nobleman: Jesus Christ, the Messiah near the end of His 1st Coming
from heaven to earth

went into a far country: left here (earth) and went to heaven,
foretelling of His Ascension back from whence He came/was sent

to receive himself a kingdom: the kingdom (a people and a realm) is to be given
to Him in heaven, not on earth

and to return: and again will leave heaven to return to earth – His 2nd Coming

His ten servants: disciples; not the “12 soon to be 11 and then 12 again”
disciples/apostles but all followers/learners
Why 10?
10 = testimony

delivered them ten pounds: gave each disciple a pound, a small amount
(vs a talent) of “kingdom treasure/riches” entrusted with them

Occupy till I come: “Busy yourselves/trade until I come/return.”
(He must first leave before He can return)

Clearly, Jesus is saying that He is leaving, NOT staying in Jerusalem to set up the kingdom of God as the people believed
He is leaving for a “far country”, His disciples are staying here

v14 his citizens hated him...not have this:

But, the citizens of the kingdom the nobleman was to receive hated/detested Him
John 1:11

So much so that they sent a message/eldership/embassy after He had left
“We will not have this man to reign over us”

They will not submit to the nobleman, they will work against Him and bring
dissention to the kingdom

In about one week, “captured” by Rome vs leading a rebellion against Rome,
Matt 27:25 Then answered all the people, and said, His blood *be* on us,
and on our children

Prophetically, about “one week” before Jesus returns to earth with His kingdom
Rev 11:1, 8 (because John 5:43 will be fulfilled)

v15 And it came to pass:

The nobleman did not return after hearing the rejection of the citizens,
He returned

- a long time afterwards
- after receiving the kingdom
 - Rev 12:7-12
 - Rev 14:6-7
 - Rev 19:1-16

Jesus’ 2nd Coming

Then He called His servants to report personally (every person) to Him on their
trading activity of his pounds (kingdom riches)

The Greek word of “gained by trading” is the same as “occupy” but with a prefix
of “dia”

It means “thoroughly occupied oneself”

The nobleman said “Busy oneself” (v13), wants to hear a report of
“thoroughly occupied oneself” (v15)

Rom 14:10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

2 Cor 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad

v16-17 the first...gained ten pounds:

Your pound (not my pound) gained (“worked additionally”) ten pounds
(Your gain, not my gain).

With and energy and urgency, the first servant put the Lord’s pound to work...
he shared his Lord’s riches...
the work = salvation and redemption...seeking and saving the lost
such that it realized a ten-fold gain

To which the nobleman responded with

- a testimony of the servant: good, faithful
1 Cor 4:1-2 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.
Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.
- a reward: faithfulness (tested) with the least (just one of the Lord’s pounds) is rewarded with a hugely generous out-of-proportion authority over ten cities

The first servant, in his Lord’s absence, was busy about the Father’s business of seeking and saving the lost...v10 as an ambassador of the “absent” Lord

v18-19 second...likewise:

The second servant reports: Your pound made five pounds

The second servant also shared his Lord’s riches and also receives

- the same wonderful testimony of his Lord
- a disproportionately generous reward

Notice: The basis of the Lord’s reward is the faithfulness of the servant to put the Lord’s pound to work, not the additional work done by the Lord’s pound

The difference in reward between the first and second servants may be the difference in the depth/breadth of faithfulness of the servants

But remember regarding parables: the principles vs the particulars are what must be understood

v20-21 another...napkin...feared...austere man:

Another (“the other”) servant reports

Lord, see, here is Your pound

I wrapped it up in a towel (I did not share it)

Because I feared You because you are an austere/rough/severe man

But the nobleman has NOT shown himself to be austere/severe

- did not take vengeance on His citizens that detested and resisted Him
- rewarded His faithful servants in a way not commensurate (cities) with their test of faithfulness (one pound)

So what stirred the spirit of fear in this servant so he kept the Lord’s riches

“under wraps”?

Did he not understand/know the heart of the nobleman?

Was he afraid to lose the one pound, fearful that he perhaps would have personally make up the loss to the nobleman?

For whatever unfounded reason, this servant did not put the Lord’s pound to work, he hid it

We hear echoes from SoM

Matt 5:13-16

salt of the earth losing its savour, good for nothing

Let your light shine vs hide it under a bushel basket

v22-23 Out of thine own mouth:

The nobleman is not pleased with the other servant.

This servant receives for his fearful inactivity:

- a testimony of his Lord: wicked servant
- a reward/judgment because his test result – fail, not faithful
- a penetrating question: If you were concerned about the safety of My pound, why did you not at the very least give it to the bank where it would earn the interest on money loaned until I returned?

The basis of the reward/judgment is the servant’s unfaithfulness, which, given the evidence in the parable, is selfish and based on not knowing his Lord (His heart and mind)

Therefore, in v22, “Thou knewest that...” is not an admission by the nobleman that he is an austere/severe man but the words of the servant by which he will be judged

And rather than receiving a reward for faithfulness, the fearful-of-losing
servant...loses
1 Cor 3:10-15

v24-26 Take from him...shall be given...shall be taken away:

Others present at the reporting of the trading activity are commanded to take the
one pound away from the unfaithful, fearful, slothful servant and to give it
to the faithful servant with ten pounds

Why?

Because He is the Sovereign Lord; who are we to ask why?
For I say unto you...Thus saith the Lord

Because His ways are not our ways and His thoughts are higher than our
thoughts

The nobleman's judgment:

- starts in his own house first with His servants
1 Peter 4:17 For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at
the house of God: and if *it* first *begin* at us, what
shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of
God?
- the pound given to the unfaithful servant is taken from him and given
to a faithful servant; his reward is stripped away but his standing
as a servant is not (eternal security)

The wisdom of putting the Lord's pound to work yielded an
increase for the good and faithful servant

The foolishness of hiding the Lord's pound resulted in the loss of it
by the unfaithful servant

Echoes of the kingdom parables

Matt 13:10-15

But the nobleman's judgment for the citizens who rejected Him...

v27 But those mine enemies:

The pounds and the rewards pertained to the nobleman's servants

In contrast to the servants are the nobleman's enemies, the citizens (v14)

They did not receive Him

They did not believe Him

They did not submit to him

They resisted Him and labored industriously to thwart and frustrate His
receiving of the kingdom

But none of that had any effect on His receiving the kingdom
They get a reward too...the one they choose

Theirs is losing the kingdom

John 7:32-36

John 8:21-24

Matt 21:42-46

they are awaiting Him in Jerusalem

Saying “No!” to Jesus Christ is costly

Matt 10:39

He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his
life for my sake shall find it

v28 he went before:

Jesus had been in the midst of the crowd leaving Jericho

Now, He is leading

No man goes before Him

He is going to the Cross

A disciple follows the Leader...Matt 16:24

In the Parable of the Pounds, Jesus is teaching that He will be going away, but will return with
His kingdom to reward both the righteous and the wicked, each according to their deeds
Rev 22:12

Summary/Lessons from the parable

1. Jesus gives His kingdom riches to His servants equally
2. All are commanded to trade/share these riches until the Lord returns
3. The “Trading Floor” is hostile i.e. very few want what is being traded
 - * Surrender for victory
 - * Death for life
 - * Pride for humility
 - * Condemnation for exaltation
 - * Lust for love
 - * Flesh for Spirit
 - * Works for grace
 - * Self for Jesus
4. Jesus expects a gain on His kingdom riches entrusted with us
 - i.e. we are not to be idle, but we are not responsible for the results
5. Jesus will return and as King
6. We are accountable to Jesus the King for that which He entrusted us
7. Our eternal reward is determined by the gain resulting from our faithfulness
8. The lazy and fearful will be stripped of any reward
9. The most faithful servants will receive even greater rewards
10. Those that would not be ruled by Him will be tried, judged, sentenced, and executed
before Jesus the Judge

In the parable we should hear the warning of an approaching Roll Call and therefore conduct a heart exam...now:

What have I done or what am I doing with what God has entrusted into my keeping?
One day I am going to have to give an answer to the Lord, I will be required to stand before Him and to give an accounting to Him of what He has entrusted into my keeping.

Am I occupying?

Am I using that which God has invested in me for the kingdom of God and for its expansion?

When the kingdom of God does come, many people who have been very prominent in the worldly affairs and in worldly things will be heavenly paupers.

And many people who have been earthly paupers will be rulers over large territories.

It's our faithfulness in using what God has entrusted to us to use His for Him and for His glory

May we not be fearful but of a sound mind and make the most of the opportunities the Lord gives to us to put His pound/riches to work

Matt 28:19-20 is the business at hand

Our faithfulness is being tested with little...

That which Jesus has entrusted to us

The opportunities to share His love and His grace

The opportunities to speak of Him and the Gospel of Jesus Christ
are but the least of what our King has prepared for us

1 Cor 2:9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him