

Small Group Discussion Guide

For the week of November 6 - 12, 2022

Main Thought and Scriptures:

Amid the celebrations of the holiday season, we must resist the distractions and the pull to live only for ourselves because the Gospel calls us to live “beyond” to make a difference in the lives of others. That was the reason Jesus came. In this series, we will intentionally stretch to think and live beyond ourselves for Christ’s mission on earth. Jesus’ famous parable of the talents reminds us of the eternal significance of living beyond ourselves.

“(God’s judgment) ...will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. ¹⁵To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. ¹⁷So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. ¹⁸But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master’s money.

¹⁹Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰And 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.’ ²¹His 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.’ ²²And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.’ ²³His 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.’

²⁴He 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, ²⁵so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.’ ²⁶But 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? ²⁷Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents.

²⁹For 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. ³⁰And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Matthew 25:14-30 ESV)

From this parable, we see three important spiritual principles:

1. God has entrusted us with His resources (time, treasure, talent) to steward for His purpose. (v. 14-15)
2. One day, God will reward us according to how we lived and stewarded His resources. (v. 19)
3. God is faithful and will reward a life lived to love and serve Christ and others. (v. 20)

"...You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:37-39 ESV)

"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..." (Hebrews 6:10 ESV)

Discussion Questions:

(break into groups of 3-4 to discuss)

- As you reflect on the weekend sermon, main scriptures, and thoughts above, what is the Lord highlighting to you and why?
- What resources (time, treasure, talent) has God entrusted to you to steward? How do you think He wants you to use those for His purpose? What challenges do you face in doing so?
- What is one practical step you can take to apply this week's sermon and the lessons from this discussion?

Prayer:

(break into pairs to pray)

- Pray for one another to apply the lessons from this discussion.
- Pray for one unreached friend or family member who we can love and serve to point them to Jesus.