

Intro: "Had you invested \$10,000 in PG in January of 1970, today, you would own 5,727 shares, worth about \$363,000 dollars, and an annual dividend payment of \$12,026.70. or \$10,000 invested in health care giant Abbott Labs in 1990 would today have earned you 1,319 shares worth \$68,000. You would receive a steady, rising paycheck every year, and in 2011 that paycheck would be \$2,532."

Here's one we can grasp a little more practically: If you would have taken \$399 that many people spent on the original iPod in 2001 and invested it in Apple stock, that investment would have been worth \$26,374 at the end of last year.

FCF: Here's our problem: we can't see into the future. We often make unwise investments. Jesus spoke a lot about how we make investments with our lives... This morning I want us to consider

"The Economics of the Kingdom" **Luke 19:11-27**

Now, we live in an unpredictable economy. We don't know if our home values or retirement funds are going up or down, so it is encouraging to know God's economy runs by unshakable laws of investment.

The Point: Invest your life wisely as you live in the between the times.

Trans... Read 11-27

I. Engage in business by living under the authority of Christ. (19:11-14)

Story

- Verse 11 is the key to understanding this parable. Luke, again, helps us interpret it from the very beginning. Luke lets us know that Jesus told this parable for two separate but related reasons: 1) Because he was near Jerusalem... 2) Because they supposed (Thought) the kingdom was going to appear immediately. Jerusalem was the place Jesus was about to die, but Jerusalem was the place where people expected God's messiah to reign. The expectation of the disciples and many Jews was that the Messiah would set up a political kingdom and restore Israel. (Acts 1:6)
- That's why Jesus starts the parable in verse 12 by saying: "A nobleman . . ." This pictures the death of Christ (he is leaving, going to a far country), the reign of Christ (he has received a kingdom referring to his kingly authority over all things), and the return of Christ (he will come back again).
- The key instruction of the parable is found in the command of verse 13: "Engage in business until I come." He is referring to the time between his ascension and second coming. We live in between these two times, and what Jesus teaches us that how we live and invest our lives matters immensely. What are we to do in between these two times? Until he comes?

Engage in business

- The force of this command is an instruction for the servants to "make a profit." Business is whatever the king has told us to do. "obey everything I commanded you." When we have a clear vision of God and his will for our lives, we will want to make it our aim to please him by living according to his plan.
- Jesus is the prophet, priest, and king of the church. What he says goes. The commands of God are not optional. But what he says is always for our good. His commands are not designed to be burdensome but liberating.
- This understanding is the foundational to Christian living, and it is this reason that so many people reject God as we see in v. 14.

One of the key issues in the story is that the citizens of the kingdom hated the king and did not want him to reign over them.

- Citizens represent Jewish rejection of Jesus as we have seen throughout Luke. This also further prepares the disciples for the rejection Jesus was about to face in Jerusalem as he will be rejected by the people and crucified between two criminals.
- When we look at the cross at the end of Luke, we will find the crowd shouting "crucify him" But before God's grace reached us, we were also hostile to God. We were not his friend but held enmity in our hearts against him.
- We do not want him to reign over us, because we want to reign over ourselves.
- Who really likes to be told what to do? We like to call our own shots and tell others what to do. Who are you to tell me what to do? Are you smarter than me? And what lies behind this attitude toward God? Pride.

PRIDE & Humility

- **C.J. Mahaney** says that: "**Pride is when sinful human beings aspire to the status and position of God and refuse to acknowledge their dependence upon him.**"
- In the words of **Charles Bridges**, **pride is** lifting up our hearts against God and "**contending for supremacy.**"
- When we fail to pursue sexual purity, when we spend our financial resources on ourselves and give God crumbs, when we spend our days in worry and anxiety, not trusting in the character and plan of God, we are contending for supremacy with the very God who made us.
- And this is the essence of pride. God, I am wiser than you are. I should follow my own will, and consequently, since I am the one who is so wise, I should receive the glory for it.

- Humility allows us to submit to Christ. Humility says to God, “You know best. I exist for you. I’m not on the throne. You’re on the throne.” Is there anything in your life you are unwilling to submit to Jesus? Where do you resist his commands?

Trans: When we are filled with humility, we will gladly serve the king in his absence by living under his authority and submitting to his rightful reign. #2.

II. Engage in business by exercising faithful stewardship over what God entrusts to you.

- Verse 13. Ten Servants. Ten Minas. Each servant receives one mina. A mina was about 3 to 4 months wages (much smaller than Matthew’s “talents” which would have been about sixty times this amount.
- Minas are a picture of whatever God entrusts to us. They are gifts, skills, responsibilities, and opportunities. We are to spend our lives by investing what he’s entrusted to us.
- The goal is that we would, make some return each day on the investments of our lives. This is what verse 15 is pointing us to. We will all face the question: “What did you gain from doing business? What have you done with your life? What profit have you gained?” Jesus is looking for a return. Fruitfulness. What is your life producing? How are you promoting the things of God with your life and actions?
- We see in verses 16-17 that the business is good for the first servant. “Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.” That is a 1000% profit! We then find in verse 18-19 that a second servant steps up and says, “Lord, your mina has made five minas more.” 500% profit. Not bad... :)
- I don’t know about you, but when I meet Jesus, whether that is when I die or when he returns, whatever comes first, I want to present him with a major return on the gifts (we) he’s deposited within me!
- Some may object and say, “Well, that sounds prideful. You just said to be humble.” That is godly ambition. After all, Our work for God should not and will not inflate us with pride when we realize that “we are just unworthy servants who have done what was our duty?” For what do we have that we have not received.
- Think about all that God has entrusted to you: Family. Friendships. Job. Education. Money. Vocations: Singleness, Marriage, Parenting, Neighborhood, Skills, Gifts, Interests, **TIME**
- Time is a prominent theme in this parable. Jesus is exhorting his followers and all who hear to maximize the time God gives us, because, at the end of the day, we all only have so much time....
- **“Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.” (Ephesians 5:15-16)**
- **Jonathan Edwards**, in a discourse written in 1734 titled “The Preciousness of Time,” said: **“Time is so short, and the work which we have to do in it is so great, that we have none of it to spare.”** Then Edwards goes on to argue that time is more precious than money and says no one in their right mind would walk down the street and throw their money away. So if time is more precious, more valuable than material wealth, why would we be so frivolous with it? **“Time is a thousand times more precious than money; and when it is gone, cannot be purchased for money, cannot be redeemed by silver or gold.”**
- How much time do you waste in any given week? We have every reason to maximize every minute for his glory!
- Let me give you another area of opportunity to spend your life wisely: the mission of God.

MISSION

- You say, “You’re just on this mission kick, here we go again.” That’s right. I’m on a missions kick, but I’m not *just* on a missions kick, because there is a clear connection between this passage and the preceding one. Look back in v.11...
- We are to carry on the mission while our master is away... (19:10, seek and save the lost). How can you leverage your life to consistently being about displaying and declaring the gospel?

Easy Ways to be missional.

- Many of you probably saw the link in our newsletter last Wednesday with the eight brief articles that provide over 120 ways to be missional in your neighborhood, workplace, and city. We will throw them in again this week.
- They provide some very practical suggestions about how you can make your schedule more missional. Remember, we do not need to add being missional as another item on our task list for the week. We need to make our calendar missional. It’s intersection not addition. Here are a few suggestions:
 - **Host a neighborhood cookout.**
 - **Be a regular.**
 - **Participate in city events.**
 - **Serve your neighbors** (cut their grass, help them)
 - **Be the first to welcome** and greet **new people** (at work, in the neighborhood)
 - **Share meals with others.** Don’t eat alone! Invite co-workers, neighbors.
- Can you do that? Oh, I like to eat, ok. Visit the same gas station. Not too difficult.
- Some of these suggestions are great ways to get our feet wet. Address Fear: toes in the water... Dive in the water.
- If I did not invite you to join this mission, I would be no pastor worth following. To downplay the mission of God is to rob people of the joy and fulfillment that comes through participating in God’s purposes for us.
- We will never meet Jesus one day and say, “Man, I should not have tried to talk about you so much! I was way too bold.”

- Let's pray for the strength to be active in sharing our faith as a church. What happens if half us led someone to Christ over the next year? Fifty new believers. What if each of us brought two friends to church over the course of the next 7 months? 300 new visitors!
- Remember, everything we have belongs to him. He left the work in our hands to accomplish by the strength he provides. Let's maximize each day for his glory.
- Here's some encouragement: This is the natural result of staying connected to Christ. John 15:5. This is how we bear fruit and live productive lives for Christ. I'm telling you. When we are full of Jesus, he will flow out. As a general rule, the times we are most active in sharing our faith will be the times when our walk with Christ is the most vibrant. Pursue Christ and be about his mission.
- Finally, #3.

III. Engage in business as those who will give an account.

- Pic: Audit...
- We see that the servants must give an account... **"So then each of us will give an account of himself to God." Romans 14:12**
- We saw two servants who engaged in good business, and they received rich rewards!

Rewards

- The response from the king to the first servant in v. 17. The reward for faithfully fulfilling his responsibilities is greater responsibility and opportunity for service.
- And this reward is utterly disproportionate! Ten cities... Five cities... This seems to indicate that God will reward us far beyond what we deserve, and isn't this how grace works. If God has been gracious to us in this life, why would we expect any less in the life to come? That's no leap for me to buy that. . .

Consequences

- Sadly, not all will experience rewards. Look at *verses 20-24*. He took the mina and put it in a handkerchief? Our kids in the Subway Station downstairs could do that! C'mon man! He was careless and irresponsible, but what motivated his behavior? Fear. "I was afraid, because you are a severe man. "False accusations..."
- The king points out the inconsistencies in the third servant's logic. If you knew I was so unfair... then why wouldn't have you tried to do something with what I gave you? You could have at least gained a little interest! Additionally, the king's treatment of the first two servants proves his fear false.
- All of this stemmed from a misperception of the king's character. Is God just or unjust? Is God loving or self-absorbed? Is God consistent or whimsical?
- On top of all of this, there is further harsh criticism against the king in *verse 25* for his choice to give the mina from the third servant and give it to the one who had ten minas.
- Once again, the cry is injustice. It's not fair. 1) Is this your world? When you are in my house, you play by my rules. or Students understand that when they are in class, they play by the teacher's rules...2) They knew they were going to give an account. This was not a gift. It was a trust. The king told them that he would return to evaluate the results.
- God's grace is scandalous after all (expound?)
- Explain 26... What does the proverb refer to spiritually? Is this a disciple who escapes through the flames? Or is this a wicked servant who will experience eternal judgment? He is a Judas like figure. No real trust of the king...How can someone who has nothing lose something? Left with nothing in the judgment...
- Verse 27 tells us there is grave judgment for those who rebel against God and fail to follow him. Here's the truth of verse 27: Those who reject God now will be rejected by him then.

Conclusion:

How many servants have we looked at? Three. How many servants are there in v. 13? Ten. What about the other seven? Luke leaves the fate of the other seven open-ended as if to say, the story is still being written in the lives of every one of us.

How will you invest your life? Invest in what will last. Our cars, our homes, our trophies, none of these will last, but everything we do for God is immortal. Will you be ready to give an account to God? [**"We have only one life; it will soon be past. Only what is done for Christ will last."**] Don't waste your life, but spend it well for the sake of God and his glory...

Jesus provides an opportunity for us to joyfully spend our lives on what truly matters by investing in his kingdom. Jesus saves us from a wasted life.

Prayer: Invest in your relationship with God. Invest in Christian community. Invest in the mission of God.

Respond!