

## **From Servitude to Stewardship**

**Matthew 25:14** ¶ For [the kingdom of heaven is] as a man travelling into a far country, [who] called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.

15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

**16 Then he that** had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made [them] other five talents.

17 And likewise he that [had received] two, he also gained other two.

18 But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

**19 After** a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.

20 And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.

**21 His lord** said unto him, Well done, [thou] good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

22 He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them.

**23 His lord** said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

24 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:

**25 And I was** afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, [there] thou hast [that is] thine.

26 His lord answered and said unto him, [Thou] wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:

**27 Thou** oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and [then] at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give [it] unto him which hath ten talents.

**29 For unto** every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

**Every one of us in this room** have at least one thing that is a common denominator.

- Regardless of our background, ethnicity, or social status
- This one thing is what we all share in common

**CHANCE.** Defn't: a possibility of something happening

**Amazing thing about this...** is that God gives everyone a chance

**A Chance to be SAVED:** 2 Peter 3:8 ...not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

**A Chance to KNOW HIM:** Php 3:10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings...

**And a Chance to WORK FOR HIM:** Matthew 9:

37 Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly [is] plenteous, but the labourers [are] few;

38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

**When God gives a Chance,** he gives the least likely an opportunity to do the most likely

14 ¶ For [the kingdom of heaven is] as a man travelling into a far country, [who] called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.

Another translation says... he entrusted his wealth to them.

**Who are they?** His Servants:

Greek doulos doo'-los Slave or bondman

Doesn't that seem strange to you that a wealthy master would entrust his wealth to **just servants?**

It's one thing to do that **IF** he is there to oversee them and keep a very close eye on them.

- Make sure they don't mess up with what has been given them
- Make sure they fulfill their responsibilities

**But he doesn't stay...** he leaves them with a CHANCE. The possibility of something happening

**And now the Master is gone...** they've got this money, his wealth which he's distributed to do something with... **AND THAT'S SCARY**

**God is not just going to give you that which you are prepared of...** but often what you are scared of

You see if God only gives you things which you are **already familiar with**, things that you're already **comfortable** with... then **FAITH** has lost his job.

- I don't need FAITH to do what I already know how to do.
- I don't need Faith to be a servant, I'm already a servant

**I need FAITH** when God takes me out of my comfort zone,

- away from that which is familiar to me
- away from that which I'm comfortable with
- And puts me in a position for which there is nothing on my resume that brings me into alignment with what He's about to do in my life.

**So God gives us a chance.** Say with me... I've got a chance

If you don't start saying that now, then your 2023 is going to look just like it did in 2022, which looked just like it did in 2021, which looked like it did in 2020.

**Because it's not the DATE that changes your world... it's your attitude that changes the world.**

We've got to start **talking** about what God has entrusted you with  
We've got to start **thinking** about what God has entrusted you with

**Prov 23:7** For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he

**If we can get it in our head and in our heart...**

- 2023 is the year for the Church to climb higher.
- For the Church to see a breakthrough
- For the Church to see backsliders come in
- For the Church to see expansion

And for that to happen, **I'm going to use what God has entrusted me with** to see it happen

**With an attitude like that.. it will happen!**

**So the Master chooses** these 3 servants to entrust his wealth to... these talents.

So the first thing these servants had to do was

1. **Receive the CHANCE.** If they hadn't received what he gave, the story would have stopped there with an offer.

**The problem** we have in our churches is that many Christians want to stay on the level they are most comfortable with

- And therefore do not want to receive anything more
- They're comfortable with just coming on a Sun morning
- Sitting in a pew, paying their tithes.

**But in order for the Church to grow**, the Master wants to take you from **being a SERVANT to being a STEWARD**

And to do that, you must RECEIVE what the Master is wanting to entrust you with.

**Here is this story**, they are introduced as SERVANTS,  
But then the master entrusts them with his wealth and in doing so, they now become STEWARDS

**When you go from SERVITUDE to STEWARDSHIP**

There is a certain amount of pressure involved.

(For example, Bro. Carper's battery operated nail gun) If I break it, there's more pressure on me to replace it immediately.

**Now that these 3 Servants were given a CHANCE to be Stewards**, there was a pressure now on them to ....

2. **MAKE A CHOICE** with what they had been given.

Now NOTICE this... **The MASTER LEFT.**

The text we read doesn't say he gave them instructions with what to do with what he had entrusted them with.

**He left it up to them to THINK.**

That's the difference between **SERVANTS** and **STEWARDS**

Servants really don't have to think... they just do what they're told to do

**But stewardship** takes it to a whole new level.

- You see they **KNEW** as a Servant what was expected of them
- They knew what the master was like

The one who had been given 1 talent said when his master came back...

24 ...Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:

**So as Servants**, they knew what the Master was like. They knew how to live, how to serve, how to obey.

**And that's the majority of Christians as Servants...**

- They have learned what the master is like
- They know the Word of God
- They know how to live
- They know how to serve
- They know how to obey

**But the Master wants to PROMOTE you from a good servant to a Profitable Steward.**

So they had **to make a CHOICE**

And that choice involved THINKING ABOUT what to do with what was given, without instructions.

**That's like OPPORTUNITIES** that God puts in our path...God may give you a CHANCE to be a witness, but we come up with excuses such as:

- I don't feel led of the Lord
- I don't feel the prompting of the Holy Spirit
- The Lord didn't speak to me about it
- I'll do it if it's the will of the Lord
- I'm just waiting for the Lord's direction

**And many times we MISS Golden opportunities** because we're waiting for the MASTER'S INSTRUCTIONS with all these excuses. (or "reasons" if you don't want it to sound so harsh)

- **A SERVANT** waits to be told what to do
- A **STEWARD** thinks about creative ways to make the next thing happen
- A **SERVANT** asks the Master, what do you want me to do with this?
- A **STEWARD** takes the initiative "with the understanding of what his master is like and what he expects" and pushes ahead to produce something for his master.

Do you understand what I'm saying tonight?  
God has given you some golden opportunities.

You may not really know what to do or how to do it, but that's where God's wonderful design of our body comes into play: he created us with a MIND to THINK.

**As a Servant** you were rewarded for being obedient, but now as a **steward**, you've got to be Creative.

**It's like the story of the Prodigal son...** the father divided unto them his living. They both received their inheritance

- One SQUANDERED IT
- One STEWARDED IT

## **BACK TO OUR TEXT**

He gave one 5 talents, one 2 talents, and the last one only 1 talent.

**That would have killed some of us right there.**

- Why does so and so have more than I do?
- Why does Sis. Beatrice get to sing more often than I do?
- Why does Bro. Peabody get to lead testimony service more than I do?

**2 Cor 10:12** “comparing ourselves among ourselves is not wise”

**So quit worrying about what so and so is doing** and focus on what you need to be doing.

**Notice that both the men who had the 5 talents and the 2 talents** doubled what they were given.

They both had 100% success rate!

## **YOU HAVE A CHOICE TO MAKE**

**These 3 men had a choice to make**

The one who was given 5 talents, went out and made 5 more

2 made 2 more

But the one... 25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth

Not only is there a CHANCE and a CHOICE but...

### **3. THERE IS A CONSEQUENCE**

**Mt 25:19** After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.

There is coming a reckoning day! Every one of us will give an account of what we have done and not done

Going to deal with this text in reverse order and talk about the last man with the 1 talent.

**For he also made a choice**, but unfortunately, it was not the RIGHT CHOICE.

- He was afraid and went and hid it.
- He did nothing with what he had been given
- He did not take the CHANCE.
- He **buried the possibility of something happening!**

**And the CONSEQUENCE of his Choice was devastating.**

This **UNPROFITABLE servant** was cast into outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

But I want you to notice 1 more thing as we close...

#### **4. THE COMMENDATION**

**(to both Stewards who doubled their talents)**

Mt 25:21 His lord said unto him, Well done, [thou] good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

**Listen Stewards**... there is coming a day of reckoning as well to those who have been faithful to work with what they have been given!

**To hear the Master say WELL DONE** is going to be worth

- Every effort you have made
- Every dollar you have spent
- Every snotty nosed kid you've had to deal with
- Every unruly child you've had to chase around the church
- Every rebellious teenager you've had to corral
- Every fundraiser you had to do
- Every nursing home you had to visit
- Every youth night you had to be a part of
- Every van ministry you worked in
- Every outreach you've ever done
- Every tear you've ever cried
- Every frustration you've ever had

The **commendation** is going to be worth it all

CHANCE / CHOICE / CONSEQUENCE / COMMENDATION

**chances are what we take and choices are what we make**

**If you had of known** this 17 year old boy, freshly saved, very backward, in a high school of 6,000 students, who only had 3 friends, who didn't even go to his high school graduation because he was scared of being in front of people, you would have never dreamed in a hundred years that God could do anything with him... **but God gave him a chance!** And 42 years later, with 35 years of ministry behind him, he's standing here tonight challenging you to do something with the chance that God has given to YOU!

**Let's come to the Altar and seek God**