



JESUS STORIES

June 02, 2024 Sermon Study Guide Lead Pastor Brian Bales Jesus Stories: *Readiness-* Matthew 25:14-30

Parable of the Three Servants

¹⁴ “Again, the Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of a man going on a long trip. He called together his servants and entrusted his money to them while he was gone. ¹⁵ He gave five bags of silver^[b] to one, two bags of silver to another, and one bag of silver to the last—dividing it in proportion to their abilities. He then left on his trip. ¹⁶ “The servant who received the five bags of silver began to invest the money and earned five more. ¹⁷ The servant with two bags of silver also went to work and earned two more. ¹⁸ But the servant who received the one bag of silver dug a hole in the ground and hid the master’s money. ¹⁹ “After a long time their master returned from his trip and called them to give an account of how they had used his money. ²⁰ The servant to whom he had entrusted the five bags of silver came forward with five more and said, ‘Master, you gave me five bags of silver to invest, and I have earned five more.’ ²¹ “The master was full of praise. ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let’s celebrate together!’^[c] ²² “The servant who had received the two bags of silver came forward and said, ‘Master, you gave me two bags of silver to invest, and I have earned two more.’ ²³ “The master said, ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let’s celebrate together!’ ²⁴ “Then the servant with the one bag of silver came and said, ‘Master, I knew you were a harsh man, harvesting crops you didn’t plant and gathering crops you didn’t cultivate. ²⁵ I was afraid I would lose your money, so I hid it in the earth. Look, here is your money back.’ ²⁶ “But the master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy servant! If you knew I harvested crops I didn’t plant and gathered crops I didn’t cultivate, ²⁷ why didn’t you deposit my money in the bank? At least I could have gotten some interest on it.’ ²⁸ “Then he ordered, ‘Take the money from this servant, and give it to the one with the ten bags of silver. ²⁹ To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away.’ ³⁰ Now throw this useless servant into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ Matthew 25:14-30(ESV)

COMMENTARY

A Life Application Study Guide

James 1:22-25 tells us to put into practice what we are discovering in God’s word.

1. We are in week 5 of the *Jesus Stories* series and a study of the parables. If you recall, the word *parable* in Greek: *parabolē* is a side by side structured illustration, used to capture the attention of the listener/learner and intended to teach a deeper spiritual truth. In week one we discovered that not everyone listening to a parable will understand the truth that Jesus is speaking about. So, Brian in this teaching is asking us to listen with ears to hear, observe with eyes to see and hearts to comprehend the message in this parable.

- What comes to mind when you hear the word faithful?

- Now consider what it may mean to be unfaithful particularly in a relationship. Often, the act of unfaithfulness will result in a break in trust between 2 people. When have you experienced this break in the trusting of someone in your life? What was the outcome?

- How might we break a trust with God as we look at this parable teaching today?

2. We have each been trusted with spiritual gifts to invest here on Earth. We've also acquired skills, talents, education, and experiences which could be defined as silver or as wealth.

- Where have you made an investment of one or all of your spiritual gifts, skills, education, talents, wealth?

- How willing are you to risk investing these things even when you don't know the outcome or the return?

3. If we are expected to invest all of these in the Kingdom for God's glory, how would you say you are doing?

- How has fear influenced you to hold onto what you have rather than trusting God with the return on your investment in the Kingdom?

- How has the enemy used fear to control you and keep you from being effective?

4. Create a list of what you believe God values most.

- What's at the top of your list and how did you arrive at your answer?

- Is your heart on the list of the things that God values most?

- Where on your list are the people that He has placed in your life?
- Who has God called you to invest in here on Earth?

5. We are called to live a life that is ready, ready is both an action word and a state of mind.

- What do your *faith life* efforts imply about your readiness? Where have you seen God at work increasing the dividend of your efforts by including others in the process? (1 Cor 3:5-9)
- How and where are you using your God given gifts even when you feel less than qualified? How are you allowing the Holy Spirit to work through you and partner with you? (1 Corinthians 12:11)
- When have your circumstances challenged you to keep going, keep investing and do it joyfully when joy has not been evident? We may not see the outcome of our efforts until we arrive in Heaven. How do think of your investment as a deposit placed in Heaven? How might this shift your actions and focus?

- How does this passage influence your perspective and this teaching? *“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Matthew 6:19-21*

MAKING IT REAL

1. Does our perspective need to change? This week pray for Ears to Hear, Eyes to See and Hearts to comprehend.

2. Does our belief about putting forth effort require a change?

3. Do our efforts require a redirect from the Holy Spirit?