

PARABLE OF THE EVIL SLAVE

PARABLE OF THE LABORERS IN THE VINEYARD

PARABLE OF THE UNJUST STEWARD

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Matthew 24:45-51**.

“Who then is the faithful and sensible slave whom his master put in charge of his household to give them their food at the proper time? **46** Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes. **47** Truly I say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions. **48** But if that evil slave says in his heart, ‘My master is not coming for a long time,’ **49** and begins to beat his fellow slaves and eat and drink with drunkards; **50** the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect *him* and at an hour which he does not know, **51** and will cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

- B. The contrast is obvious.

COMMENTS.

- A. Jesus speaks of two kinds of servants with the difference being very obvious. Remember the context of His speaking of His return.
- B. The faithful servant is:
1. Giving food in due season.
 2. Working when the Master returns.
- C. The unfaithful servant is:
1. Beating his fellow servants.
 2. Eating and drinking to excess, all for himself.
 3. Not working or expecting the Master to return.

PARABLE OF THE LABORERS IN THE VINEYARD

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Matthew 20:1-16.**

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. **2** When he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. **3** And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the market place; **4** and to those he said, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.’ And *so* they went. **5** Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did the same thing. **6** And about the eleventh *hour* he went out and found others standing *around*; and he said to them, ‘Why have you been standing here idle all day long?’ **7** They said to him, ‘Because no one hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You go into the vineyard too.’

8 “When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last *group* to the first.’ **9** When those *hired* about the eleventh hour came, each one received a denarius. **10** When those *hired* first came, they thought that they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. **11** When they received it, they grumbled at the landowner, **12** saying, ‘These last men have worked *only* one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the scorching heat of the day.’ **13** But he answered and said to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? **14** Take what is yours and go, but I wish to give to this last man the same as to you. **15** Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with what is my own? Or is your eye envious because I am generous?’ **16** So the last shall be first, and the first last.”

- B. The parable teaches about salvation; works are important (Jn. 5:28,29).

Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, **29** and will come forth; those who did the good *deeds* to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil *deeds* to a resurrection of judgment.

- C. The parable teaches about rewards; God is just (1Cor. 3:8).

Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor.

- D. The parable teaches about wrong attitudes in service.

I. BEWARE OF MAKING BARGAINS WITH GOD.

- A. Did you notice there were two kinds of workers?

1. Some would not work until they knew how much they would make.
2. Others trusted the master to do what was right.

- B. The first group had nothing to complain about because they received exactly the amount they had bargained for.

- C. Do not make bargains with God. Let Him write the contract and pay the wages, for He is just and generous (Eph. 3:20).

Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,

- D. God is interested in good works, but is more interested in good hearts with right attitudes. If our hearts are right our works will be acceptable, or if our hearts are selfish our work will suffer.

II. BEWARE OF WATCHING OTHERS.

- A. When we get our eyes off of the Lord and start watching other believers certain definite symptoms show up in our lives:

1. Envy (of their talents and possessions).
2. "An evil eye" (we can see no good in their lives).
3. Covetousness because we compare what each one has.
4. Complaining because we are not satisfied with what God has given.

- B. Peter has exhibited this attitude on two occasions.

1. The context of this parable (Mt. 19:27).

Then Peter said to Him, “Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?”

2. Peter, Jesus and John (Jn. 21:21,22).
So Peter seeing him said to Jesus, "Lord, and what about this man?" 22 Jesus said to him, "If I want him to remain until I come, what *is that* to you? You follow Me!"
- C. All of the above leads to a very bitter attitude toward God.
- D. We need to:
 1. Be watchful and helpful not critical or envious (Heb. 3:12,13).
Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. **13** But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is *still* called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.
 2. Not judge, but leave God to be gracious (Rom. 14:4,10).
Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand. **10** But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.
 3. Be co-laborers with the Lord, not competitors against ourselves.
- E. Let's be sure and "obey our own signal" by watching God and not others.

III. BEWARE OF OVERCONFIDENCE.

- A. "They supposed that they should have received more" (Mt. 20:10). These workers were overconfident and ended up being disappointed.
- B. 1Corinthians 4:5 is applicable here.
Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, *but wait* until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of *men's* hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God.
- C. We see the external actions but we cannot discern the hidden motives, and it is the motive that determines the value of the ministry.
- D. One of the main lessons of the parable is that workers must watch their motives and be sure they are serving God because of their love for Him, not because of a promised reward.
- E. Three warnings and relationships in this parable:
 1. Making bargains with God man and God.
 2. Watching other workers man and man.
 3. Being overconfident man and himself.

PARABLE OF THE UNJUST STEWARD

INTRODUCTION.

A. Scripture text: **Luke 16:1-15.**

Now He was also saying to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and this *manager* was reported to him as squandering his possessions. **2** And he called him and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an accounting of your management, for you can no longer be manager.’ **3** The manager said to himself, ‘What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig; I am ashamed to beg. **4** I know what I shall do, so that when I am removed from the management people will welcome me into their homes.’ **5** And he summoned each one of his master’s debtors, and he *began* saying to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ **6** And he said, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ And he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’ **7** Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ And he said, ‘A hundred measures of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’ **8** And his master praised the unrighteous manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light. **9** And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of the wealth of unrighteousness, so that when it fails, they will receive you into the eternal dwellings.

10 “He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much. **11** Therefore if you have not been faithful in the *use of* unrighteous wealth, who will entrust the true *riches* to you? **12** And if you have not been faithful in *the use of* that which is another’s, who will give you that which is your own? **13** No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

14 Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, were listening to all these things and were scoffing at Him. **15** And He said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God.

B. I believe Jesus tries to teach two things in this parable.

1. The wise use of opportunities.
2. The danger of covetousness.

COMMENTS.

In the crisis of this steward he saw the following things:

A. **He saw himself.**

1. Only in the face of a crisis did he realize he was a steward.
2. His master gave him the privilege of using His vast wealth, and expected him to use it faithfully.
3. The steward did not own any of it, he just possessed it to be able to use it.
4. Christians are stewards of God's possessions, we must:
 - a. Be a good steward of our time.
 - b. Be a good steward of our gifts and abilities.
 - c. Be a good steward of the Gospel.

B. **He saw life.**

1. Luke 15 :11-32 precedes this parable. Look at the three types of people talked about:
 - a. The prodigal wasted life (destroyed his future by living for the present).
 - b. The elder son spent life (destroyed the present by hoping for the future).
 - c. While the steward needed to learn to invest his life in the present in light of the future!
2. Stewardship has to do with how a believer uses everything he possesses, and not just his money.

C. **He saw his master.**

1. The one in the story had forgotten that stewardship involves not only responsibility and privilege, it also involves accountability (2Cor. 5:10).

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

2. The real issue in the giving of time, talent and treasures is not in portion, but in proportion.

D. **He saw his possessions.**

1. Wealth is only a means to an end, a means of helping others and investing in the future.
2. Money, in and of itself, is worthless, nothing more than a medium of exchange.

E. **He saw his friends.**

1. His friends could be real friends! Jesus is reminding us that we must use our opportunities to make friends for heaven.
2. It is a sin for a Christian to measure his worth by riches. God has used Abraham and Job, not because of their riches, but in how they used their riches, and the attitudes they had about their riches.
3. There is another truth here; the person who is unfaithful with material wealth (as a Christian) may not be able to be trusted with spiritual wealth. (Again we refer back to the spiritual wealth of Abraham and Job who were also granted great financial wealth).
4. The Pharisees were covetous people, therefore they had trouble understanding and receiving the spiritual teachings and blessings Jesus had to offer.
5. Verses 16:10-12 may be outlined as follows:

The Material

Mammon

That which is least

Unrighteous mammon

That which is another's

The Spiritual

God

That which is much

True riches

That which is your own

F. Now ask yourself in light of this parable:

1. Are you wasting your life?
2. Are you spending your life?
3. Are you investing your life?