

# “Work Till He Comes!”

Matthew 24:45-51; 25:14-30

East Berlin Community Church

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## Introduction

- What do you do while waiting?
- The waiting period between Christ’s first and second advents
  - Acts 1:6-- *“Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”*
  - Acts 1:7-- *“It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.”*
  - Matthew 24:36-- *“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.”*
  - Acts 1:9-11-- *“for while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”*
- While we are waiting the return of Jesus Christ, we are to be
  - Watching, alert to the signs that His coming is near as seen in the parable of the Fig Tree
  - Ready, spiritually prepared for His coming, as seen in the parable of the Ten Virgins
  - Working, faithfully serving Him until He comes

## “Work Till He Comes!”

### A. Parable of the Faithful and Evil Servant

- Matthew 24:45-51-- *“Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. But if that evil servant says in his heart, “My master is delaying his coming,” and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”*
1. **Believers are represented as faithful, wise servants.**
    - a. Every believer is a bond servant of Jesus Christ.
      - 1 Corinthians 6:20-- *“For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”*
    - b. There will be a blessing for believers found faithfully serving Him
      - Matthew 24:46-47-- *“Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods.”*
    - c. Paul underscores the importance of faithful service.
      - 1 Corinthians 4:1-5-- *“Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by a human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. For I know of nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one’s praise will come from God.”*
  2. **Unbelievers are represented by the evil servant.**
    - a. Every person owes all that they are and have to their Creator. All have a stewardship from God.

- b. Their attitude: *"I've got time! My master is delaying in coming!"*
  - c. When Jesus returns in judgment, they will be assigned a place in hell.
    - Matthew 24:51-- *"cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."*
  - d. These evil servants are distinct from hypocrites. Hypocrites are pretenders-- professing believers; whereas these "evil servants" are open and honest about their unbelief. Honest humanists.
  - e. Both end up in hell.
3. **Jesus' thrust:** Use the dreadful prospect as a means of motivating unbelievers to believe in Him NOW. **DON'T PROCRASTINATE!**

## B. Parable of the Talents-- Matthew 25:14-30

1. **The Cultural Background**
  - Matthew 25:14-18-- *"For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money."*
  - a. Wealthy people had special slaves or stewards who functioned as overseers of their households and financial affairs.
    - Genesis 39:4-- *"So Joseph found favor in his sight, and served him. Then he made him overseer of his house, and all that he had he put under his authority."*
  - b. When the master left town, these stewards were given the "power of attorney" to conduct business on behalf of the master.
  - c. A "talent" was a very large sum of money, depending on whether it was made of gold or silver.
  - d. The servants who received five talents and two immediately took the money and invested it on behalf of their master, and gained more.
  - e. The servant who received one talent dug a hole and hid the money in the ground, a common practice to hide or protect valuables.
2. **The Spiritual Application and Outcomes**
  - a. **The Five and Two Talent Servants**
    - Matthew 25:19-23-- *"After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'"*
  - 1) Jesus Christ is the "owner" who has gone off on a long journey.
  - 2) We, His servants, are given resources-- gifts, talents, abilities-- to take and invest in God's work.
  - 3) We are all given differing amounts, but all are to use what we have been given.

- 4) When Jesus returns, we will give an accounting of what we did with what He had given to us.
- 5) Those who do well will receive not only the verbal commendation, *"Well done, good and faithful servant"* but will also enter into the joy of the Lord, that is, into the kingdom. They will be made *"ruler over many."*

b. **The One-Talent Servant**

- Matthew 25:24-30- *"Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.' But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"*
  - 1) He blames his returning master for his failure to invest. He accuses his owner of being a cruel, dishonest man and thus he sought to protect rather than invest what was given to him. His assessment of the owner reveals that he really did not know his master!
  - 2) The master condemns his slave on the basis of his own words.
  - 3) Even if the wicked servant's assessment was true, it does not excuse his failure. He had no real concern for his master and did not believe he was returning.
  - 4) The distinguishing mark of the first two servants was that they used their opportunity to serve the Lord before His return and thus proved the genuineness of their salvation. Whereas the third servant put aside everything God had given to him to serve himself.
  - 5) In the end, the professing believer who fails to use what God has given to him to do God's work loses everything. The third servant was not merely fruitless; He was faithless.
  - 6) A genuine believer who fails to use what God has entrusted to him will suffer loss at the judgment, but he will be saved,
    - 1 Corinthians 3:15-- *"is burned (and) he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire."*
  - 7) But the faithless servant will spend eternity in hell.
    - Matthew 7:25-- *"I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!"*

### Application for us today!

1. **As believers in Christ, God has given to each of us a stewardship, a responsibility, a task He wants us to do while here on planet earth.**
  - a. **All of us are recipients of the same Great Commission**
    - Matthew 28:19-20-- *"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*
  - b. **All of us are to be witnesses**, ready to give an answer for the reason of the hope that we have in Christ.
    - 1 Peter 3:15-- *"sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear."*

2. **As believers in Christ, all of us are given resources, gifts, talents, abilities to invest in people and in God's work.**
  - a. **We are to lay up treasures in heaven rather than here on earth.**
    - Matthew 6:19-20-- *"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal."*
  - b. **As we see the day of Christ's return approaching, we are not to sit back, relax, and do nothing, but rather work until He comes.**
    - 1) Christians at Thessalonica were thrilled at the prospects of the rapture of the church.
      - 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17-- *"the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord."*
    - 2) Some mistakenly thought that waiting meant quitting their jobs, sponging off others, and waiting for the Lord to come.
    - 3) Paul admonishes that they need to work until He comes.
      - 2 Thessalonians 3:10-13-- *"For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies. Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread. But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary in doing good."*