

Luke 19:11-27

Waiting and Working for the King

Intro: Today is a special Sunday for us. We are welcoming new members. We are humble and thankful for every addition God gives us.

- There are several aspects of joining a church. Yet essentially, a local church is about worshiping Jesus, and being part of Jesus's mission together until he returns.
- Church is not something just transient or temporary until the culture is morally improved and decent. Church life is not something that stops once a person hits certain milestones of maturity.

Jesus plans for his church to continue, persevere, endure, and even flourish spiritually until he returns. Jesus's return is central to grasp this parable.

- The parable is about what Jesus expects until he returns.

1. Jesus wants his followers to wait (11).

- V11 tells us why Jesus told this story.
- It was mainly because of false expectations.

The false expectation was that Jesus was going to march into Jerusalem with pomp and power. People like Herod, Pilate, and Caesar would be dethroned as the Messiah began his rule.

- Jesus has an overriding lesson: the church needs to *wait* to see that.
- The reference to a distant country (v12) may have been a clue that the second coming would take some time.

It's human nature to want things to happen quickly. But when it comes to Christ's kingdom, a key factor is waiting.

(Titus 2:13) "waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ."

2. Jesus wants his followers to work (12-19).

- This story would have struck a chord with the audience Jesus taught. It had parallels to Herod the Great and his son Archelaus. Both had to take journeys to Rome to receive their right to exercise rule over Palestine. Jewish history records that when Archelaus went, there was a delegation of 50 Jews and Samaritans who traveled to Rome to protest to Caesar. Another 8,000 Jews living in Rome joined them to do essentially what v14 describes.
- As the nobleman in the story travels away, he gives his servants money and a task, “Do business”.
- The mina was equal to 100 days worth of pay. The talent (Mt. 25) was 20 years worth of pay.
- Each servant is given 1 mina.
- When the king returns, he pulls 3 of the servants aside to account. Two servants had put the money to work (v16-19); one just sat on his hands and came up with nothing.

A few lessons for disciples.

1. Work for the king during his absence (v13). This would also correct another misunderstanding. Jesus wants his disciples to see themselves as servants and laborers in the interim. Clearly, by other conversations disciples had with Jesus, they saw themselves as more than servants...judges, princes, vice-regents. Sitting on thrones next to Jesus.

Here, that is corrected. Disciples on this earth need to see themselves as servants.

- The word *doulos* (bondservant/slave), used here, becomes Paul’s favorite form of identity.
- A good servant works for the king in his absence.

When I was a teenager I worked at a pizza shop in Pittsburgh. The owner was a pretty tough guy with the bluntness you get in the Northeast. He also took care of employees and paid them well. One day, toward the end of my shift, he stepped out for a few minutes. I wanted to run by the local Barnes & Noble store after work, so I got the phone book out to call and see what time they closed. In the middle of my call, the owner returned and saw me on the phone. He jumped all over me, “What do you think you are doing, I don’t pay you to make personal calls.”

He was right. Even in his absence I needed to be doing his work. All the resources were his. If I was a co-owner it might be different, but my job was to be at his service.

2. Be faithful in the small things (v17). Faithfulness is prized over ability and giftedness. *Faithfulness* is the key concept in this parable.
3. All work will be generously rewarded. There is a generous reward. The fact is, a mina could hardly buy a barn. To be entrusted with 10 cities is an exponential reward for faithful stewardship.

The rewards for true gospel service will be exponentially repaid.

- Question: What does a mina practically look like?
- It seems different than the parable of the talents (Mt 25:14-30). The talents are given unequally (5, 2, 1); they seem to represent ability and opportunity.
- But note that all 10 servants are given just one mina.
- It makes sense to see that the mina represents gospel truth.
- Note that it says, “your mina has produced” (v16 & 18).
- Paul talks about being “entrusted with the gospel” (e.g. 1 Tim 1:11)

Apply:

A good servant increases gospel influence in their own life, and in the lives of others. Is the gospel producing fruit in your life? Is it transforming the way you think, live, spend money and time? Do you make gospel investment in others? Beginning in the home (ground zero of gospel), we are also called to make gospel investment in friends, neighbors, and strangers. Two ancient words: evangelism and discipleship are about gospel investment.

Parables call us to action. Gospel investment is always about action.

Jesus expects that those who have the truth of the gospel will have something to show for it when he returns.

3. Jesus want's his followers to be warned (20-27).

- The last section is how the king settles accounts, and it is a warning.
- (v20) This servant did nothing. He sat on his hands. He carelessly hid the treasure.
The point: Many encounter the truth of Christ, yet they do absolutely nothing with it.
- The third servant represents one who associates with Jesus (e.g. inside walls of the church) but has zero external proof of it. They are closely tied in with the faith community, but there is no real commitment.
- This servant assumes the King is going to be unfair and angry (v20-21);_really the king is radically generous!
- This servant does not know the King as gracious and therefore does not really trust him. There is simply no relationship—only an unhealthy paralyzing fear.

That's the acid test to see where our hearts are at. Do you see King Jesus as gracious, so that you can trust him with your entire life?

- In Matthew's parable, the unfaithful/unfruitful servant is expelled from the kingdom (cf. Mt 25:30).

The final rejection (v27)

- V14 & 27 have a connection. The rebel citizens are the enemies—they resist the reign of the king. Jesus is probably referring to the rejection of Jewish leadership. Yet it's a warning to all who resist Christ as King.

Conclusion

We are warned about two paths of rejection.

1) Soft rejection: Living a silent, unfaithful, unfruitful life of spiritual carelessness. It is wasting what Christ has given, but the root of it is that you don't know the King's grace and don't really trust him.

2) Hard rejection: Boldly declaring that you don't want Jesus to rule. Being visibly and openly opposed to Jesus as King.

Consequences for rejection is the same — judgment

Rejecting the Lord Jesus always leads to judgment, whether hard or soft. The King will return with his full authority.

And let's not forget that the same King, who warned rebel citizens of slaughter, who spoke words of sharp judgment, is the one who rides into Jerusalem to be slain and bear God's sword of judgment.

May God give us waiting hearts and working hands until our Redeemer King returns.