

# **To Seek and To Save the Lost**

## **The Parable of the Ten Minas**

*Luke 19:11-27*

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# The Parable of the Ten Minas

## Scripture

Jesus told the parable of the ten minas while passing through Jericho on his way to Jerusalem.

Let's read about the parable of the ten minas in Luke 19:11-27:

**<sup>11</sup>As they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. <sup>12</sup>He said therefore, "A nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return. <sup>13</sup>Calling ten of his servants, he gave them ten minas, and said to them, 'Engage in business until I come.' <sup>14</sup>But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to reign over us.' <sup>15</sup>When he returned, having received the kingdom, he ordered these servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by doing business. <sup>16</sup>The first came before him, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.' <sup>17</sup>And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.' <sup>18</sup>And the second came, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made five minas.' <sup>19</sup>And he said to him, 'And you are to be over five cities.' <sup>20</sup>Then another came, saying, 'Lord, here is your mina, which I kept laid away in a handkerchief; <sup>21</sup>for I was afraid of you, because you are a severe man. You take what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.' <sup>22</sup>He said to him, 'I will condemn you with your own words, you wicked servant! You knew that I was a severe man, taking what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow? <sup>23</sup>Why then did you not put my money in the bank, and at my coming I might have collected it with interest?' <sup>24</sup>And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the mi-**

na from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas.’  
<sup>25</sup> And they said to him, ‘Lord, he has ten minas!’ <sup>26</sup> ‘I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. <sup>27</sup> But as for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slaughter them before me.’ ” (Luke 19:11-27)

## Introduction

Jesus was on his final trip to Jerusalem. He would soon enter the city on Palm Sunday. He had to pass through the city of Jericho on his way to Jerusalem. As Jesus drew near to Jericho he encountered a blind man, whom he not only healed physically but saved spiritually as well (Luke 18:35-43). Then Jesus entered Jericho where he encountered Zacchaeus, whom he also saved after having stayed at his house (Luke 19:1-10).

Perhaps while Jesus was staying at the house of Zacchaeus he could see the winter palace of Archelaus, who had ruled Judea shortly after Jesus had been born.

When Herod the Great died in 4 BC, his son, Archelaus, assumed that he would be appointed king over Judea. Only the Roman Emperor could appoint him as king. So, Archelaus travelled to Rome to be crowned as king. However, the Jews sent a delegation to the Roman Emperor beseeching him not to make Archelaus king. When Archelaus returned he executed all those who had been unfaithful to him. It was this historical background that prompted Jesus to tell the parable of the ten minas.

## Lesson

The parable of the ten minas in Luke 19:11-27 teaches us about faithfulness.

Let’s use the following outline:

1. The Reason for this Parable (19:11)

## 2. The Teaching of this Parable (19:12-27)

### I. The Reason for this Parable (19:11)

First, let's look at the reason for this parable.

Luke said in verse 11 that **as they**, that is, Jesus' disciples, **heard these things** about Jesus' mission to seek and to save the lost, **he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately.**

The closer Jesus got to Jerusalem, the greater the excitement and anticipation that he was about to set up his physical kingdom immediately. But the disciples did not understand that Jesus was about to depart from this earth and go to the far country of heaven where God the Father would crown him as king of the kingdom of God. Jesus was hinting at his imminent departure, where he would go to receive his kingship and reign until some future time, known only by the Father, when he would return to earth in glorious triumph. Only then would the kingdom of God be visible to everyone.

### II. The Teaching of this Parable (19:12-27)

And second, let's examine the teaching of this parable. Jesus taught five lessons in this parable.

#### A. *Jesus Gives His Servants Gifts to Carry On His Work Until He Returns (19:12-13)*

First, Jesus gives his servants gifts to carry on his work until he returns.

In verses 12-13 **he said therefore, "A nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return. Calling ten of his servants, he gave them ten**

**minas, and said to them, ‘Engage in business until I come.’ ”**

In the parable each servant was given one mina, which was a Greek silver coin equal to 100 days’ wages. They were to engage in business until the nobleman returned.

Similarly, while Jesus is away (in heaven) he gives his servants gifts to carry on his work until he returns. As we wait for Jesus’ return, we are to carry on the work of his kingdom. But what, exactly, does the money in the parable represent?

The money in this parable represents the gospel. Each servant is to be faithful in multiplying the gospel.

So how do Jesus’ servants faithfully multiply the gospel he has entrusted to us until he returns? Kent Hughes says,

Each believer receives the same investment capital for his Christian life. “Joe Christian” receives the same as St. Paul and John Calvin and Billy Graham. We all have the good news of Jesus Christ and its marvelous effect in our lives. And we all have the same command, to “Put this money to work until I come back.” We must invest the investment Christ has made in us! We are to multiply our spiritual capital – invest the gospel – increase the yield of the good news of salvation through Christ!<sup>1</sup>

So, what does it mean to “invest the gospel”? How do we put the gospel to work in our lives? What return are we making on Christ’s investment in us? What profit will we have to show him when he returns?

Philip Ryken suggests ways to put the gospel to work in our lives:

We do it by growing in our own Christian lives through repentance, prayer, and daily dependence on the Holy Spirit. We do it by trusting God to meet our needs and guide our deci-

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<sup>1</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Luke: That You May Know the Truth*, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1998), 231–232.

sions. We also put the gospel to work by serving people in need, showing the love and mercy of Christ to people who are lonely, sick, homeless, grieving, and afraid. Then we put the gospel to work by loving our families with the love of Jesus and sharing our faith with our friends. And we put the gospel to work by making a personal investment in missionary work: praying, giving, sending, and going to the nations with the good news about Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, we put the gospel to work by carrying out our regular calling in a way that shows the supremacy of Christ. The worker can do this with his labor, the professor with his scholarship, the educator with her teaching, the lawyer with his justice, the doctor with his medicine, and the artist with her craft. As long as it is done with the intention of bringing glory to God, anything and everything we do is an investment in the kingdom of God. Jesus is coming soon. Get busy for him with the gospel!<sup>2</sup>

*B. Jesus Will Be Hated by Some While He Is Away (19:14)*

Second, Jesus will be hated by some while he is away.

Jesus said in verse 14, **“But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We do not want this man to reign over us.’ ”**

This sounds almost exactly like what happened to Archelaus. The nobleman traveled to a far country hoping to receive a kingdom and then return, but **his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, “We do not want this man to reign over us.”**

Jesus was really talking about himself. He was not really comparing himself to wicked Archelaus, but rather to the similar circumstances. Jesus was the nobleman – the Son of the Father – who was about to receive his kingdom. He would travel

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<sup>2</sup> Philip Graham Ryken, *Luke*, ed. Richard D. Phillips, Philip Graham Ryken, and Daniel M. Doriani, vol. 2, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2009), 319-320.

to a far country, as it were, to receive it, by passing through death, resurrection, and ascension before being crowned in the court of heaven and eventually returning to his people on earth. As Philip Ryken says, “Some of them would put him to death; others would refuse to believe in his resurrection, or acknowledge his ascension to the royal throne. Lodging their protest in the courts of heaven, they would say of Jesus, ‘We do not want this man to reign over us.’”<sup>3</sup>

And until Jesus returns, he will continue to be hated by some.

*C. Jesus Will Reward the Faithfulness of His Servants When He Returns (19:15-19)*

Third, Jesus will reward the faithfulness of his servants when he returns.

Speaking of the nobleman, Jesus said in verses 15-19, **“When he returned, having received the kingdom, he ordered these servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by doing business. The first came before him, saying, ‘Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.’ And he said to him, ‘Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.’ And the second came, saying, ‘Lord, your mina has made five minas.’ And he said to him, ‘And you are to be over five cities.’”**

Jesus has returned to his Father in heaven. He has received his kingship and his kingdom, and he is waiting to return to earth to rule and reign in a visible manner. Darrell Bock puts it this way, “Kingdom reception precedes a later period where it is fully administered. This detail parallels Jesus’ career: he has a kingdom that he receives when he goes to the Fa-

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<sup>3</sup> Philip Graham Ryken, *Luke*, 317.

ther, but the full exercise of his authority awaits his return.”<sup>4</sup>

One day Jesus will return, and then he will examine his servants to see how faithful they have been in investing the gospel. Jesus will want to examine our faithfulness.

In the parable, the servant who **made ten minas more** received ten times the reward, and the servant who **made five minas more** received five times the reward. So, Jesus will reward his servants in proportion to their faithfulness. While entrance into heaven is the same for all Christians, the rewards are different depending on our works. As Bishop J. C. Ryle said, “Our title to heaven is all of grace. Our degree of glory in heaven will be proportioned to our works.”<sup>5</sup>

So, let me apply this lesson in the words of Philip Ryken: “So let me ask again, in the expectation of eternity: What are you doing with what you have? King Jesus is watching to see whether we can be trusted to serve him. What we do with our time and our money – what we do with the gospel – has eternal significance. Why waste time thinking about earthly ambitions when God has greater glories in store?”<sup>6</sup>

*D. Jesus Will Judge the Unfaithfulness of Professors When He Returns (19:20-26)*

Fourth, Jesus will judge the unfaithfulness of professors when he returns.

There was one more servant who gave an accounting of what was entrusted to him. Jesus said in verse 20, “**Then another came, saying, ‘Lord, here is your mina, which I kept laid away in a handkerchief.’**” Rather than putting the money to good use, this servant did not use the gift that was given to

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<sup>4</sup> Darrell L. Bock, *Luke: 9:51–24:53*, vol. 2, 1535.

<sup>5</sup> J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on Luke*, vol. 2 (New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 1879), 305.

<sup>6</sup> Philip Graham Ryken, *Luke*, 322.



him. While the other servants did whatever they could to invest the money and make more, this servant hid what was given to him.

Philip Ryken says, “Many people do the same thing with the gifts that come from God. Rather than putting the gospel to good use, they are afraid to talk about their faith, afraid to give God more of their money than they think they can spare, afraid to do anything for Jesus that goes beyond their own abilities and therefore forces them to trust in the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. Holding back from the clear call of God like this is not humility; it is pride and rebellion and fear.”<sup>7</sup>

Instead of owning up to his failure to put his master’s money to good use, the servant actually tried to blame his master. He said to his master in verse 21, **“For I was afraid of you, because you are a severe man. You take what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.”** Do you see what he is saying? It wasn’t his fault for being afraid; it was his master’s fault because he viewed him as **a severe man**. Moreover, even if he had made more money, his master would just take it away. So why even bother working for the master if he would just take it away?

Listen to Ryken again, “Once again, this is the same attitude that many people have towards God. They see him as a harsh taskmaster, who never gives but only takes, never donates but only demands. This is slander and blasphemy! The truth is that God has given us everything we have, including the very air that we breathe. Furthermore, through Jesus, God has offered himself for our sins. How can we ever say that God has done nothing for us? When we go to the cross, we see that he has done *everything* for us. Therefore, anything God demands is only a small return on what we have already received.”<sup>8</sup>

Jesus continued the parable in verses 22-23, “[The mas-

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<sup>7</sup> Philip Graham Ryken, *Luke*, 323.

<sup>8</sup> Philip Graham Ryken, *Luke*, 323–324.

ter] **said to him, 'I will condemn you with your own words, you wicked servant! You knew that I was a severe man, taking what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow? Why then did you not put my money in the bank, and at my coming I might have collected it with interest?' "** Even on his own terms, this third servant should have done better. "If the thought of reward failed to motivate him," writes Richard Phillips, "the fear of retribution should have!"<sup>9</sup> This servant should have at least invested the money in the bank. But he did not even do that.

Carrying on with the parable, the nobleman **said to those who stood by, "Take the mina from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas."**

**And they said to him, "Lord, he has ten minas!"**

**"I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away" (19:24-26).**

The servant's mina was given to the first servant who had earned ten minas for his master. In other words, this wicked servant lost everything when his master returned.

Many scholars have questioned the status of this third servant. The parable does not say. But it seems to me that this third servant stands for someone in the church who professes to be a Christian but actually does not have a saving relationship with Jesus. J. C. Ryle described this person as a "professing Christian who is content with the idle possession of Christianity, and makes no effort to use it for his soul's good, or the glory of God."<sup>10</sup>

So, we all need to examine ourselves if we are church members. Do we profess faith in Jesus Christ but there is no fruit to show for it?

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<sup>9</sup> Richard D. Phillips, *Turning Your World Upside Down: Kingdom Priorities in the Parables of Jesus* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2003), 184.

<sup>10</sup> J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on Luke*, 306.

*E. Jesus Will Destroy His Enemies When He Returns (19:27)*

And fifth, Jesus will destroy his enemies when he returns.

The nobleman said in verse 27, **“But as for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slaughter them before me.”** This is what Archelaus did upon his return to Judea. He had all his enemies killed.

The lesson here is that Jesus will destroy all those who are opposed to him when he returns.

### **Conclusion**

Therefore, having analyzed the parable of the ten minas in Luke 19:11-27, we should commit ourselves to serve Jesus faithfully until we see him.

Darrell Bock says, “The parable thus mentions different fates for three groups: (1) reward for faithful stewards, (2) rejection for those who associate with Jesus but do not really trust him, and (3) judgment for rebels who openly reject him.”<sup>11</sup> To which group do you belong?

If you profess to be a Christian, let me encourage you to invest the gospel of Jesus in service to others. Use the gifts that God has given you to advance the kingdom of Jesus. Make a commitment to live today and every day for the glory of God and the extension of his kingdom. Amen.

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<sup>11</sup> Darrell L. Bock, *Luke: 9:51–24:53*, vol. 2, 1543.



# Mission Statement

The Mission Statement of the Tampa Bay Presbyterian Church is:

*To bring people to Jesus Christ  
and membership in his church family,  
develop them to Christlike maturity,  
equip them for their ministry in the church  
and life mission in the world,  
in order to magnify God's name.*

## Sermons by Rev. Freddy Fritz

This sermon, and other sermons, by the Rev. Freddy Fritz can be found at:

1. [www.tampabaypresbyterian.org/sermons](http://www.tampabaypresbyterian.org/sermons)
2. [www.sermoncentral.com/contributors/freddy-fritz-sermons-11181.asp](http://www.sermoncentral.com/contributors/freddy-fritz-sermons-11181.asp)
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**PRAYER:**

Our Father, thank you for the parable of the ten minas. Jesus taught that his servants are to be faithful in spreading the gospel that he has entrusted to us. May we use our spiritual gifts to serve Jesus for the sake of your glory and the extension of your kingdom.

And for this I pray in your name. Amen.

**BENEDICTION:**

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all, now and always. Amen.

**CHARGE:**

Now, brothers and sisters, go and serve God wholeheartedly!