

## WELL DONE THOU GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT

**TEXT: MATTHEW 25:14-30**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

1. The parables in Matthew 25 deal with faithfulness (25:21, 23).
2. These parables deal with the theme of reward and retribution (cf. 25:1-13, 26-30, 46).
3. This morning we will look at the parable of the man traveling into a far country (25:14), often referred to as "the parable of the talents" (25:15).
4. The key word is "servant" (25:14, 19, 21, 23, 26, 30).
5. We will consider the relationship of a servant, the requirements for a servant, and the recompense of a servant.

### **I. THE RELATIONSHIP**

1. The relationship begins when a man decides to change masters (Romans 6:16-23).
2. In John 8:34, our Lord said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin."
3. Are you a servant of God or a servant of sin?
4. In I Thessalonians 1:9, the apostle Paul said the Christians in the church of Thessalonica "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God."
5. They were servants of sin, in bondage to idolatry, but they "turned to God" from their idolatry. They became servants of the living and true God.
6. Hebrews 9:14 says the blood of Christ purges the conscience of Christians, enabling them to turn from their dead works "to serve the living God."
7. We need God's power in order to serve Him. We cannot do it in our own strength. Some people try and serve God in the flesh, and that is always disastrous. It is unacceptable to God.
8. W.H. Griffith Thomas said, "Power is needed for God's work, and that He alone can give; true service is heart service, and for that, the heart must be changed."
9. When the heart of a man is changed by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, he becomes more like His Lord and Saviour. Jesus said, "It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord" (Matt. 10:25).

10. The Lord is our example. The Bible says we "should follow his steps" (I Peter 2:21).
11. Our Lord said to His disciples, "For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them" (John 13:15-17).
12. This is the basis for the relationship.

## **II. THE REQUIREMENT**

1. Two words describe the requirement: "good and faithful" (25:21, 23).
2. And two words describe the devil's servants: "wicked and slothful" (25:26-30). What a contrast! Who are *you* serving?
3. We need to make up our mind who we are going to serve. Our Lord said in Matthew 6:24, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."
4. Joshua said to his fellow Israelites, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve" (Joshua 24:15).
5. And then Joshua added, "but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

## **III. THE RECOMPENSE**

1. "After a long time," the Lord will return, and there will be a day of reckoning (25:19). "After a long time" indicates an indefinite length of time.
2. It is a long time for us, but not for God because God is eternal. Second Peter 3:8 says, "that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."
3. As I said earlier, our Lord's parables in Matthew 25 deal with reward and retribution. Our Lord said in John 12:26, "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour."
4. What we see in Matthew 25:21 and 23 are the servants being honored: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."
5. The task is done, the struggle is past, the victory won, and God's servants will be honored and rewarded.
6. But some will not be honored, and they will not be rewarded (Matt. 25:24-30). They are "wicked and slothful" (25:26).

7. The word "unprofitable" (25:30) means "useless, and good for nothing."
8. The word "slothful" (25:26) means "sluggish and lazy."
9. We all know what "wicked" means!
10. This wicked servant slandered his Master as hard and exacting (25:24). I met a wicked JW last week who slandered God. He compared God to the Muslim terrorists who chop off heads.
11. I have heard some of their foolishness before but this really shocked me. And the man repeated it for emphasis!
12. God will judge those who reject the Gospel and slander God.
13. Hebrews 10:30 says, "Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord."
14. The author of Hebrews is quoting Deuteronomy 32:35, "To me belongeth vengeance and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand."
15. This was Jonathan Edwards' text when he preached his famous sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God."
16. Edwards said, "There is no want of power in God to cast wicked men into hell at any moment."
17. And that is what the Bible teaches. Matthew 25:30 says, "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."
18. "Outer darkness" (Matthew 25:30) refers to hell (cf. Matthew 25:41, 46).
19. Our Lord referred to the "outer darkness" of hell three times in the Gospel of Matthew. Here in Matthew 25:30, and also in 8:12 and 22:13.
20. In Matthew 8:12, our Lord said sinners "shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."
21. Matthew 22:13 says, "Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."
22. Second Peter 2:17 says "the mist of darkness is reserved for ever" for impenitent sinners.
23. Jude 13 is similar -- "to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."
24. The mist of darkness "reserved for ever."
25. The blackness of darkness reserved "for ever."
26. The theme of neglected opportunities is seen in these parables. The foolish virgins neglected to put oil in their lamps (25:1-13).

27. The unprofitable servant neglected his opportunities. Matthew 25:19 says the unprofitable servant's lord was gone for "a long time."
28. Sinners think they have plenty of time to get right with God. Matthew 25:3 and 25:8 says this is "foolish."
29. Matthew 25:13 says, "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. According to the Bible, we are saved to serve.
2. But few people want to serve God today. They only want to serve themselves.
3. Second Timothy 3:2 and 4 says, "For men shall be lovers of their own selves...lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God."
4. Commenting on these Scriptures, H.A. Ironside said, "This is the age of the egotist in matters spiritual as well as carnal. They find their God 'within' them, we are told, and not without. They make no secret of it. When they profess to love God, it is themselves they love...The church of God has gone into the entertainment business! People must be amused, and as the church needs the people's money, the church must, perforce, supply the demand and meet the craving! How else are godless hypocrites to be held together? How otherwise can the throngs of unconverted youths and maidens be attracted to the "services"? So the picture show and the entertainment, in the form of *musicale* (sacred, perhaps!) and minstrel show, take the place of the gospel address and the solemn worship of God. And thus Christless souls are lulled to sleep and made to feel "religious" while gratifying every carnal desire under the sanction of the sham called the church! And the end? What an awakening!" (*II Timothy*).
5. Recently I saw a video on the Internet. It was Victoria Osteen, the wife of Joel Osteen, preaching to their huge crowd of worldlings in their Houston, Texas church -- the largest Protestant church in the United States. Here is what she said:  
 "I just want to encourage every one of us to realize when we obey God, we're not doing it for God—I mean, that's one way to look at it—we're doing it for ourselves, because God takes pleasure when we're happy. That's the thing that gives Him the greatest joy. So, I want you to know this morning: Just do good for your own self. Do good because God wants you to be happy. When you come to church, when you worship Him, you're not doing it for God really. You're doing it for yourself, because that's what makes God happy. Amen?"

