

Use What God Has Given You

by Erlo Stegen

The sermon calls believers to actively use their God-given resources and talents in anticipation of Christ's return and accountability.

Scripture: Luke 19:11

Topics: "Faithfulness", "Stewardship"

Description

Erlo Stegen emphasizes the importance of using the gifts and resources God has given us, drawing parallels between the parables of the talents and minas. He reminds us that Jesus will return to ask for an account of how we have utilized what He entrusted to us, urging us to reflect on our willingness to accept Him as our King. Stegen shares poignant examples, including a mother's faithfulness with her inheritance and soldiers who sacrificed for their kingdom, illustrating that true faithfulness is recognized and rewarded by God. He challenges the congregation to consider their own lives and what they have done for the Kingdom of God, stressing that everyone has received something to use for His glory. Ultimately, he warns against complacency and encourages active engagement in God's work, as the day of reckoning will come for all.

Transcript

This is not the same parable of Matthew 25 where one servant received 5, another 2 and another 1 talent. That parable was told when He was near Jerusalem. He had entered into Jerusalem and was on the Mount of Olives. He was speaking to the common people. But this one He spoke to the 12 disciples and the community.

But there are similar points: Jesus gave them talents and went to sit at the right hand of the Father and then came back. When He came back, He asked that they all be brought because He wanted to see how much they have made. Concerning the 5, 2 and 1: He gave to each one according to their strength in the other parable.

In that parable He gave them 5, 2 and 1 and left them with the command to use the minas while He goes on His journey. When He would return, He wanted to know what they had done with the minas.

14. But while He was away, some said that they didn't want Him as their King. Symbolizing the Jews shouting out: "We don't want Him as King! We have Caesar as our ruler, not Him!"

I don't know where you stand concerning this. What do you say: "I don't want Him as my King", or do you allow Jesus to be your King?

The similarity in all these parables is that Jesus is coming back. It will be announced and He will seek you out, no matter where you try to hide. He will ask you to give an account. Also those who say: "We don't want Him to be ruler over us!"

In this parable He gives each one a similar amount, namely 10. We all have eyes, ears, noses etc, and also Jesus died for all of us, rose from death and ascended to heaven. What Jesus gave all of us spiritually, is the same. When He returns, He will say: "I gave My life for you, I died for you, went to hell for you, ascended to heaven for you - what have you done with it?"

Example:

There is a certain lady overseas in Scotland. Her husband passed away. She had 2 sons. The father had given the inheritance to the widow. The 2 sons lived in a wicked way and squandered the whole inheritance on drinking. She realized that the whole inheritance was coming to an end and decided to take a part of the remaining money. In those days 1,000 pounds were worth a lot of money and she decided to give that money to the Mission Society in London before the whole money is used up.

When the sons heard that, they were extremely angry and fought against her. The mother said: "I don't regret doing that. You are squandering the money - I have given it to the Lord."

Eccles 11:1 - "Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days." She said: "I know what I am doing - I will receive it after many days.

The two sons squandered everything that they could and she wisely used her small portion. Young people can be very foolish in the way they use money, and if God spares you till you have grey hairs, you will be wise. God says that grey hairs speak of wisdom.

When they had nothing, soldiers were needed for military duty in India. The two of them joined because they had nothing left - at least they would earn something there.

When they were in India, there were some missionaries closeby. The eldest son met up with them and he got converted. After a short time, he passed away.

The mother at home had been praying for her children every day. One evening when she was about to go to bed, she read her Bible. She had that good habit not to go to bed without having read the Bible, on her knees and in prayer, not just flippantly like a newspaper.

While she was reading, the door was opened and the youngest son stood there telling her that he repented and that Jesus had forgiven his sins. He told her that they met up with missionaries in India. The eldest son repented and died afterwards. "I also repented, and now came back home."

The old mother cried out: "O God! My thousand pounds which I had cast onto the waters and I received back after many days! Here I hear that my children have come to the Lord!"

In the first instance this parable is a spiritual parable, but it also has reference to our earthly life and the things which we do.

16. The first one told Him that he had gained 10 minas.

17. "Well done! You were faithful in little, you will be given much!"

Example:

In the time of Queen Victoria of England there was a war overseas and she was looking for soldiers to go and fight the battle. An army was sent and they returned victoriously. Then she asked that all of them should come and appear before her one by one. She said: "I want those who were heroic". It wasn't every single soldiers but those who had been heroic in battle.

And so they came, some with crutches and sticks, some bandaged on their heads, others came with various wounds. Each one had the privilege of meeting Queen Victoria, and each was congratulated and given a medal of honour.

At the end there came a man who was carried on a stretcher. His arms were both missing, lost in battle. Also both his legs had been amputated near the top. No arms, no legs. A soldier who was incapacitated completely. But because of their kingdom he had been a hero, willing to lay down his life for the kingdom, for the land of his fathers.

When the queen saw him, the tears flowed down her cheeks. She came to him and gave him an extra very expensive prize. It was placed upon his chest, she kissed him on his forehead and said: "Well done, good and faithful servant!"

When I heard it, I wept because I thought of the Day when my King will come back and even if I no longer have arms or legs, if only I could hear the words: "Well done, good and faithful servant!"

That Day is coming where everyone who is here will have to give an account. Everyone here has received something. What will you be able to give to Him? Or will it be: "Moet ek gaan met leÃ« hande?"

There is this similarity: Jesus will go and come back again. But I want to say this: We go to preach in other countries. Jesus goes with His servants, and when He comes back, is there something which you have done? Or is there nothing? Can you say: "Lord, this is what I did while You were away"?

I want to remind everyone of you: Jesus will come back and He will look for you and will find you there where you hide away. When He comes, what will you be able to show for what you have received? You have received services every Sunday, etc. - what have you done with it?

Before I continue, I want you to think: What have you done with what you have received for the Kingdom of God?

Queen Victoria said: "Well done!" to her faithful servants. But you, what have you done for His Kingdom?

Look back at your past: What have you done for Him? What good fruit has God been able to bring forth through you? What have you cast on the waters that will come back to you one day? By denying yourself, you are casting on the water. "You have been faithful over little - you will receive much."

It won't be Queen Victoria and her congratulations and kiss but the Lord Himself. Will He embrace you and say: "Well done, good and faithful servant!"?

20. The second one made 5, but the third one said: "Here is your mina... I knew that you are a hard man and I was afraid of you. You reap where you haven't sown."

22-23. The king rebuked him sternly with an awful rebuke: "I will judge you with your own words... Why didn't you put my money on deposit in the bank..."

24. And so he gave order that his mina be removed from him and given to the one who had 10.

Jesus expects that what He gives you and has invested in you, that you use it and make more.

Example:

A Sunday School teacher with a very big class said that Jesus expects us to use what we have received so that we will have interest when He returns. Then she asked: "Who would like to work for the Lord?" 60 put their hands up and she took out R60 and gave each one R1. "One day I will come and ask what you have done with this money."

They said that they didn't want to buy Cokes and stuff with it, just getting fat, but they wanted to use it for the Lord. So they bought spinach, cabbage and carrot seeds and asked for a piece of ground where they could plant and sell the vegetables. Out of R60 they made R600, and put that back into the ground, wanting to have fruit.

That is a spiritual lesson, but also in a material sense: that we use what we have for God's Kingdom.

At the end I have a question: The person who didn't use his minas, Jesus said that everything should be taken from him. He was cursed. It had to be given to the one who had lots. Why was he damned? Was it just blatant laziness? What was the reason? If you think about it, why was it that he was cursed and what he had, given to the one who had a lot? Jesus said: "The one who has much, will be given more." He is no communist, saying that everyone should receive the same. Yes, in the beginning He gave the same to everyone, in the fact that He died for all.

I think it is because Jesus wants the Gospel to go right over the world, but the one who says: "It is difficult" and buries what he had. He didn't have the same passion / vision as Jesus. I think that is why he was doomed and damned. It burns on the heart of Jesus that the Gospel should go all over the world. That what was the most important to the Lord Jesus, wasn't on his heart. That is why he lost everything and went into eternity like that. He didn't share with Jesus what Jesus had in His heart. Do you have that? "Die vuur wat in die hart van Jesus brand, brand dit ook in u hart?" Do you have fellowship with Jesus in that burning desire He has? Otherwise we will see you going into hell, saying: "We were given much, but we said that it was too difficult. He is so strict." Jesus will judge you by the words that come out of your mouth.

The time hasn't yet come for you to be called to give an account for what He has given you, whether it has given interest or not. But That Day is coming.

You might think that you still want to study etc, but we don't know who will die first. Someone here will be the first. What have you done with what He has given you?

He said: "It is difficult" instead of thanking Jesus for what He had done for him and had given him. He should have earned interest on what he had been given. But you go into the city, live the way you want to, live immorally. Even if I am not around, God sees you and He is coming. I wonder whether you will be one

where everything you have, is removed from you.

Maybe you say: "I haven't received much", but He says that it doesn't depend on how much you have received but whether you have been faithful with the little which you have received.

Do you hear this? Jesus will come One Day and ask you to give account.

Jesus said that it would have been better had he given it as deposit to the bank. You know who is the bank? Those who work for the Lord. So if you have a nice story or words from the Lord, give it to them to use in the services.

Remember that no one hasn't been given anything. All of you have received something, even if you call it small. God wants you to be faithful in that.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/erlo-stegen/use-what-god-has-given-you/>

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