

The Stories of Jesus- Week 7- June 20th-June 26th

God Time – The Parable of the Talents

These scriptures are selected to help you gain a deeper understanding of who Jesus is. They are intentionally designed for you to engage in your time alone with God. You will find them complementary to the teachings on the weekend (gatherings) and to the LIFE Group materials.

Some tips:

Use a Bible that is easy to read. The ESV or The NLT are both good translations.

Use a prayer journal. After you read the passages jot down what “jumped out” at you while reading. Then take a few minutes to write a prayer response to what you have read.

There are only five days of reading provided so if you miss a day you have time to catch up. Do not get legalistic! If you miss a day or even a week...God still loves you!

Monday: John 8:21-24

Tuesday: Colossians 1:9-11

Wednesday: 1 Timothy 1:12-14

Thursday: Luke 16:8-10

Friday: Philippians 2:1

Diving Deeper

The Stories of Jesus - The Parable of the Talents Matthew 25:14-29

Jesus tells the story of 3 slaves who were each given a sum of money by their master. The master distributed 5 talents to one slave, 2 talents to another slave, and 1 talent to the last slave. The master was going away, and they were to serve the master's interests faithfully. They were expected to manage their assigned wealth responsibly regardless of the amount they were given. They also knew that one day the master would return and there would be an accounting. Two of the slaves handled their resources wisely and actually doubled their talents. But the one who received only one talent was fearful of losing it and as a result, he hid it in a safe place so that he could return it to the master. The master returns and the two that managed their wealth faithfully were rewarded while the one who hid his talent and did not put it to good use, was thrown out into the darkness. His talent was taken and

given to the one with the most talents. Instead of respecting the master and caring for his resources in a respectful manner, he allowed his fear of the master to dictate his actions.

What can we learn from this parable? Why would Jesus tell this story?

1. One day Jesus will return and when he does there will be an accounting to assess each believer's willingness to faithfully serve the Lord in some important and challenging way.
2. Jesus expects every believer to serve Him during His absence. Each believer will be called to serve the Lord in a way that is in keeping with his abilities and station in life.
3. As we serve, we have the opportunity for reward. Our reward doesn't depend on the magnitude of our effort but on our faithfulness to serve.
4. Believers need to be ready for Jesus' return and we get ready by doing what Jesus has given us to do. We will be measured according to the same scale of faithfulness, and as such, we each have an opportunity for equal reward. What matters is our faithfulness and our desire to please Him. "And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him." (Hebrews 11:6)
5. How are you using your talent? Talent refers to your natural abilities and spiritual gift. We all have been equipped by God with natural born abilities and a spiritual gift that you received when you came to faith. So, are you using those talents for Jesus in some way? To be ready means that you have been using your talents to serve Jesus knowing that one day He will return.
6. We are called by Scripture to use our treasure for the sake of the kingdom. Jesus said we can't serve wealth and God at the same time, but we can use our wealth to serve God. How you use your wealth will say a lot about your faith.
7. Eternal reward awaits those who serve Him well. We should look forward to the day He returns, and we should do so with no regrets eager to hear Him say: "Well done, good and faithful servant. Because you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your Master."

Questions:

1. If Jesus were to return today, would He find your faithfulness worthy? Would He put you in charge of many things?
2. What do you consider your natural abilities and spiritual gifts to be?
3. Are you using your talents for Jesus in some way? Do you struggle with serving God?