



*"We proclaim Him, warning every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man mature in Christ." Col 1:28*

## **"Parable of the 4 Servants: Which One Are You?"**

### **Luke 12:41-48**

May 21, 2023

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46 the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in pieces, and assign him a place with the unbelievers.

47 "And that slave who knew his master's will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, will receive many lashes,

48 but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few. From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.

**41 Peter said, "Lord, are You addressing this parable to us, or to everyone else as well?"**

• Last week: Jesus is coming back, we don't know when, it will be unexpected.

• Peter is wondering, "Is He speaking to us?" This is a little unsettling. "Are we in danger of not being ready?"

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• Jesus answers with a question.

• By doing this he is causing everyone to think through, "Where do I fit in the parable?"

• So the answer to Peter's question is, "Yes, I'm speaking to all of you. You must decide what kind of a servant you are."

• Jesus is looking for a faithful and wise (φρονιμος) steward (house/estate-manager).

• This manager is managing other servants.

• He is to give the servants what they need at the exact time.

**"rations"** – portion of meat.

• Big responsibility. Make sure they are fed.

• Therefore you must manage the whole process from field to table – planting seed, cultivating, harvesting the crop, storing, preparing.

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- We are all managers. How are we managing the truth?
- Are you an unbeliever? Are you a believer?
- Pastor-Teachers are managers of their flock and their main task is to feed the flock the Word of God. Prepare sermons and deliver them.

### **Eph 4:11-12**

11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, (pastor-teacher)

12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;

### **John 21:15-17**

15 So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?"

He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You."

He said to him, "**Feed My lambs.**" (βοσκει)

16 He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?"

He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You."

He said to him, "**Lend My sheep.**" (ποιμαινε)

17 He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?"

And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You."

Jesus said to him, "**Feed My sheep.**" (βοσκει)

### **Acts 20:27**

27 "For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God.

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Let's look at 4 different servants and how they manage -

**43 "Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes.**

**Servant #1** – is doing a good job managing the estate.

- So the master returns and the servant is doing exactly what the master wants him to do.
- This manager is diligent, hard working, self-controlled, faithful, and wise.
- He is not off trying to figure out when the master is coming back. He is not just watching and waiting. He is active. He is working hard. He is "occupying."
- He knows he will be ready for whenever his master will return.

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#### 44 "Truly I say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions."

- Faithfulness; now, when his master is absent = Greater responsibility in the future.

#### Luke 12:31-32

- 31 "But seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you.
- 32 "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom."

#### Rom 8:16-17

16 The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,  
17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ,

#### Eph 1:13-14

13 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation  
— having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,  
14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance,

#### Rev 2:25-28

25 'Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come.  
26 'He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE  
**AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS;**  
27 AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER  
ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, as I also have received authority from My Father;  
28 and I will give him the morning star.

#### 45 "But if that slave says in his heart, 'My master will be a long time in coming,' and begins to beat the slaves, both men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk;

**Servant #2** – is deceived into thinking his master will not be coming back for a long time.

- He has total disregard for his master coming back.
- He mocks the master.
- He has been listening to the world.
- So he begins living like the world.
- This thinking has a profound impact on people.
- If we are not living for Christ and His expected return at any moment, then we begin living for ourselves.
- He does not care how he treats people.
- His heart has grown cold and worldly.

#### 46 the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in pieces, and assign him a place with the unbelievers.

- So the master returns, and the servant isn't ready.
- The servant then receives the wrath and condemnation from the master.
- This is an unbeliever and goes to the place of unbelievers.
- This servant receives the greatest punishment.
- Why? He knew the master was coming and very decisively and arrogantly goes in the opposite direction.
- This is not passive indifference. This is active rebellion.

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"I believe that these frightening words especially apply to unfaithful spiritual leaders who have used their office for their own advantage. They usually teach false doctrine because they want to dodge their sin, which is exposed by God's Word. They use religion to promote their own greed and immorality. Jesus pronounces this most severe judgment on them because they have taken that which should have benefited people eternally and used it to destroy them. Their final punishment shows that they never truly repented of their own sins and submitted their lives to the Master."

- Steven Cole

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- Servant #3** – had knowledge of his master's return but did nothing about it.
- He was not ready nor did he do anything.
  - He is not rebelling. He is passively indifferent.
  - He receives many lashes. He was not cut in pieces.
  - Here is support for degrees of punishment in Hell.
  - There will be different degrees of suffering in Hell.
- Servant #4** – had no knowledge of the master's return and what was required.
- These are those who have never heard the gospel.
  - Their punishment will be less severe.
  - **Note the 3 punishments in these last 3 servants:** Some cut to pieces; some received many lashes; some received a few lashes.
  - Compare those who have never heard to those born in our country:
    - Average household in US has 4.3 bibles.
    - Tens of thousands of evangelical churches.
    - Millions of people who claim to be born-again Christians.
- The gospel has been preached in the US from men like Billy Graham, Billy Sunday, D.L. Moody, Luis Palau, Greg Laurie, CCC, Nav, IV, YFC, YL, SVM, etc., etc.
- Bible schools, Christian colleges, Christian seminaries, Christian schools.
- **Principle:** If you have been given much, then much will be required.
  - Same way with believers – given much, much required.

## Matt 25:14-30

- 14 "For it is just like a man about to go on a journey, who called his own slaves and entrusted his possessions to them.
- 15 "To one he gave five talents, to another, two, and to another, one, each according to his own ability; and he went on his journey.
- 16 "Immediately the one who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and gained five more talents.
- 17 "In the same manner the one who had received the two talents gained two more.
- 18 "But he who received the one talent went away, and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.
- 19 "Now after a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them.
- 20 "The one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, 'Master, you entrusted five talents to me; see, I have gained five more talents.'
- 21 "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'
- 22 "Also the one who had received the two talents came up and said, 'Master, you entrusted two talents to me. See, I have gained two more talents.'
- 23 "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'
- 24 "And the one also who had received the one talent came up and said, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where I did not sow and gathering where you scattered no seed.'
- 25 "And I was afraid, and went away and hid your talent in the ground. See, you have what is yours.'
- 26 "But his master answered and said to him, 'You wicked, lazy slave, you knew that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I scattered no seed.'
- 27 "Then you ought to have put my money in the bank, and on my arrival I would have received my money back with interest.
- 28 "Therefore take away the talent from him, and give it to the one who has the ten talents.'
- 29 "For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away.
- 30 "Throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

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"Truth is dangerous. Better to have never known than to have known and rejected. Better to have never known than to have known, rejected, and rebelled . . . That's an important word to those of you who may sit and hear and hear and hear and hear and not respond."

- John MacArthur

### **Application**

1. Jesus is speaking in this parable to all of us.
2. There is only 1 servant in the parable who is ready for the return of Christ – the one who is doing God's will by discharging his responsibilities.
3. We are all responsible for what has been entrusted to us.
4. This parable is a warning to those who ignore His coming.