

Invest Your Time and Talent

Pacific Heart Attitudes - part 4

September 25, 2022

DAY 1: Making a difference or living for what's "convenient?"

1. Every week, opposing forces collide inside us:
 - a. I want my life to make a difference.
 - b. I want to have time for myself and my comfort. I'll serve as long as it is convenient.
2. What would help us move toward the first force, above? A deeper conviction that when I serve the Lord, it matters, not just now but for eternity.

3. This week we'll look at the parable of the talents.

Matthew 25:14 "Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. ¹⁵ To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey.

¹⁶ The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. ¹⁷ So also, the one with the two talents gained two more. ¹⁸ But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

¹⁹ "After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. ²⁰ The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.' ²¹ "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

²² "The man with the two talents also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two talents; see, I have gained two more.' ²³ "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

²⁴ "Then the man who had received the one talent came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. ²⁵ So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'

²⁶ "His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? ²⁷ Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.

²⁸ "'Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents.

²⁹ For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. ³⁰ And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

4. What are your first impressions of the parable of the talents?

DAY 2: Why should I invest my life?

- **Ownership: God owns us.**

Matt. 25:14 Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants....

1. Here are the players in the parable.

a. the property owner. This is God.

b. 3 servants. These three people represent three kinds of people, and three kinds of responses to our God-ordained responsibilities.

c. The owner's property. The owner gives a share of the profits to the servants who till the land, plant and harvest the crop. We are "His" servants. That is a statement of identity. It's not just that we serve him. We belong to Him!

Psalms 24:1 The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it;

Psalms 100:3 Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

- **Stewardship: God entrusts us with what is His.**

Matt. 25:14 Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them.

2. Imagine the owner leaving the country for a few years. Outta sight, outta mind. Just because He's gone doesn't mean the servants kick back on their duffs and drink lattes. He is entrusting his property to them—to take care of it, fix it, invest it. Grow the herds, harvest the crops.

3. We invest what is His. We are stewards, not owners. We are stewards, not squatters.

4. If you take this entrustment seriously you treat it like it's your own.

5. I've been entrusted with a job. I need to work like I work for Him. I've been entrusted with a paycheck. I need to use it like I work for Him. I've been entrusted with things. I need to treat them like they belong to Him.

6. You've been entrusted with a computer. You need to use it in a way that honors him. You've been entrusted with people. Some live in your home. I need to treat them like they are His people.

7. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 3: Our opportunities, talents, and accountability.

- **Diversity: God gives different gifts**

Matt. 25:15 To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability.

1. The three servants were given three different amounts of equity to steward. (One “talent” would be worth approximately \$2,000).

2. Why do you suppose the owner gave three different amounts to these three stewards?

3. If you had been entrusted with only one or two talents instead of five, what attitudes would you have had to deal with?

4. Some of God’s great heroes had difficulty believing they had any gifts worth using!

Exodus 3:11 ... (Moses) "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"

Judges 6:14 (Gideon) The LORD turned to him and said, "Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian's hand. Am I not sending you?" ¹⁵ "But Lord," Gideon asked, "how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family."

Jeremiah 1:5 (Jeremiah) "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations." ⁶ "Ah, Sovereign LORD," I said, "I do not know how to speak; I am only a child."

- **Accountability: God settles accounts.**

Mt. 25:19 After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them.

Matthew 25:20 The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.'

5. With responsibility comes accountability: financial statements, CPAs, accounting, audits, IRS.

Romans 14:12 So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.

6. At the end of your life one of the questions you will be asked is: “What did you do with what I gave you?”

7. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

DAY 4: Reward or loss

- **Reward: God rewards us for our investments.**

Matt. 25:21, 23... "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!"

1. Down deep in every human heart you want to know you have done something significant, something that mattered. We call this validation. Deep validation doesn't come from self or others. That kind of validation only lasts a short time.

2. We want to know that what we did will outlast us, that God can take what we've done and multiply it in the lives of others. This simple response in this parable strikes at four yearnings in every human heart.

- Impact: What you did. Your life made a difference. Affirmed.
- Influence: Who you are. Someone was influenced. Appreciation.
- Investment: What you did was worth it. Extra privilege. Reward. Acquisition.
- Intimacy. Affection. Why you did it. Shared joy and fulfillment, happiness of which we only get occasional glimpses.

- **Loss: God removes what we will not invest.**

3. The third servant reported in. He had done nothing. He had completely rationalized doing nothing in his head. He had his reasons, of which he informed the owner.

Mat. 25:24 The man who had received the one talent came. 'Master,' I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. ²⁵ So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'

4. Servant #3 was the cynical one. Why didn't he invest what he was given?

5. He gave a back-handed slap at the Master. Here were his excuses: (A) What's the use? (v.24) (B) We live in a world where it's not really fair. Why bother? (v.24) (C) Fear. What could I do? It's safer to do nothing. I'm not taking any risks. (D) At least I didn't lose it!

6. Is that how the owner saw the situation? Jesus strikes right at the core of the human heart...

Matt. 25:26-30 You wicked, lazy servant! Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents....And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

7. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 5: How should I invest my life?

1. Every Christian can make an impact through serving by making 4 simple INVESTMENTS.

- **Invest your time.**

Ephesians 5:15-16 Be very careful, then, how you live-not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

- **Invest your talents.**

1 Peter 4:10 Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

2. Every Christian receives at least one spiritual gift at his conversion. (Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:7-11; Eph. 4:11-12).

3. Here are a few examples of spiritual gifts: serving, giving, hospitality, mercy, wisdom, teaching, faith, leadership, evangelism.

4. You can also invest some of your abilities. Some examples include sewing, car repair, financial wisdom, weed pulling, cookie baking, teaching children at church, volunteering at a church outreach or activity, etc.

- **Invest your treasure.** Matt. 6:19-21

Matthew 6:19 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

- **Invest your tongue. (conversations)**

1 Peter 4:11 If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised...

Matt. 7:12 In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

6. The Golden Rule. Add value: Tell someone who served what that meant to you. The more specific the encouragement, the greater the impact

7. What strikes you from today's devotional?