



January 21 & 22: Others

Series Overview

Wealth is usually associated with someone who has lots of money, owns a big house or drives a luxury car. Others are rich in good deeds ... they generously lend a helping hand and provide clothes to those in need. And a person who knows lots of other people and their heart is full of joy is said to be rich in life. The truth is, there are lots of ways to be rich, but there is only one place to invest it—with God! The Bible tells us that He owns it all; we just manage it. We'll explore how following God's guidance for money management can bring rewards that reach beyond your wallet.



Take a second look ... visit cpcweb.org to watch sermon or get the highlights here!

Sermon Highlights

In *Matthew 25*, Jesus is helping us to think through how to manage the resources He's entrusted to us. In week one, we read where this wealthy owner called his servants together and handed out bags of money. He trusts them to manage it wisely while he is away for an extended period of time.

In week two, we saw how these servants managed the money. Two of them invested it wisely. But the servant with one bag buried it in the ground.

As we finish the story, it is really important to study the context of Jesus' teaching. *Matthew 24 & 25* is extended teaching on Jesus' return. The disciples have asked about the second coming, and Jesus is giving them an idea of what it will be like. The big idea of these two chapters is, "Be ready."

Matthew 24:44, You also must be ready all the time, for the Son of Man will come when least expected. (NLT)

Matthew 25:13, So you, too, must keep watch! For you do not know the day or hour of my return. (NLT)

Then Jesus uses money as the application. In other words, it doesn't have to be money. The idea is that you need to be ready to give an account of your life. Money is the application He chooses. Why is that? Because money is the most accurate reflection of our faith.

Do we really believe what we say we believe? We can say we believe Jesus is God and that He's the Lord of our lives, but the best indication of whether or not that is true is our finances. So Jesus is telling us this *now* so we can be prepared *then*.

Matthew 25:19-21, ¹⁹After a long time their master returned from his trip and called them to give an account of how they had used his money. ²⁰The servant to whom he had entrusted the five bags of silver came forward with five more and said, "Master, you gave me five bags of silver to invest, and I have earned five more." ²¹The master was full of praise. "Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together!" (NLT)

Here's what I've discovered when it comes to managing God's resources. We have these intentions of being generous one day. But here's the thing: If you are not doing it now, you won't do it then. This may be the most important financial principle we need to implement.

1. When should we invest? ... **Now!**

Matthew 25:16, The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. (NIV) We don't read that phrase regarding the servant with the two bags or the one who had one bag. Maybe that's why the master gave the five bags to this guy. He went at once.

Now is the right time to start honoring the Master with what He's entrusted to us. Remember, Jesus is talking about His return. What we see is that when Jesus returns, there will be a day of accounting, and on that day we will be rewarded based on how we've invested what He's entrusted to us. What we do now has consequences and rewards then!

2 Corinthians 5:10, Revelation 20:12

2. In what should we invest? ... **Eternity!**

If we really believed that our investment now carries with it a reward in heaven, it seems like we should celebrate the opportunity we have to make such an investment.

Matthew 25:24-25, ²⁴Then the servant with the one bag of silver came and said, "Master, I knew you were a harsh man, harvesting crops you didn't plant and gathering crops you didn't cultivate. ²⁵I was afraid I would lose your money, so I hid it in the earth. Look, here is your money back." (NLT)

3. Why should we invest? ... **Accountability!**

Whatever we have is what we're accountable for. It doesn't matter if we manage hundreds or millions. The reward is the same.

Matthew 25:26-27, ²⁶But the master replied, "You wicked and lazy servant! If you knew I harvested crops I didn't plant and gathered crops I didn't cultivate, ²⁷why didn't you deposit my money in the bank? At least I could have gotten some interest on it." (NLT)

This is not a time to bury our resources. Now more than ever, we look forward to the Master's return. We make the investment now because we know there will be a reward then. My prayer is that we will hear these words, "Well done, good and faithful servant!"



Take it to the source ... Bible Study

Introductory question: Have you made a loan to someone when you were pretty sure you wouldn't get the money back? What made you do it? How did it turn out?

Read *Matthew 25:16*, *2 Corinthians 5:10* and *Revelation 20:12*.

1. Would you say you respond quickly when God places something in your life that you know you should be doing? Why or why not?
2. Why do we seem to be slow to respond to spiritual matters, but quick to attend to things in our personal or financial life? What are some spiritual habits that could help you become someone who responds to God "at once"?
3. When was the last time you thought about the fact that you will one day stand before God to give an account of how you used your resources? How might this reality alter the way you invest the things God has entrusted to you?
4. The two servants who invested wisely were anxious to tell their master what they had done. Would you be anxious to give an account to God tomorrow? Why or why not? What can you or your small group do to help you be more anxious to see the Master's return?

Read *Matthew 25:19-25*, *2 Corinthians 9:6-15* and *1 Peter 4:7-11*.

1. What was one thing you did in 2011 that you would say was an investment in eternity? What investments are you planning in 2012?
2. Are you comfortable with the idea that giving money to God's work is an investment in eternity? Why or why not?
3. What are some practical ways your small group can help each other to take advantage of the opportunities that God places before you as individuals or together? How can you encourage each other to be better givers?

Read *Matthew 25:26-27*.

1. How do you respond to the idea that *wicked* and *lazy* seem to be used together in this parable? Why do you think laziness could be viewed as a wicked character trait?
2. What are some things that might cause people to evade their responsibility to wisely use the resources God has given them?
3. What is one resource you have individually, or that your small group has together, that you haven't really developed or utilized? What can you do in the near future to use this resource for God's kingdom and invest in eternity in a new way?



Take it home ... Practical Applications

In a quiet time of prayer, ask God to give you a better understanding of the value of investing in eternity. Spend some time thinking about what it will be like to stand before Him and give an account of your life and how you used the resources He gave you.

Prayerfully ask yourself if you have resources that have been buried somewhere. How can you use them to touch others and further the work of God's kingdom locally and around the world?

Sermons are just a click away! Watch or listen to sermons online @ cpccweb.org.

All Bible references are from the NIV unless otherwise stated.

© Connection Pointe Christian Church 2012