

Title: Faithful or Unprofitable
Text: Matthew 25: 14-30
Date: December 13, 2012
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

Our subject is: Faithful or Unprofitable?

All God's true saints made so by, elected, redeeming, quickening grace, shall be found faithful and profitable servants in the day of judgment.

Ephesians 2: 10: For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Therefore all those in whom God works grace shall do the works he has foreordained. He gives more light as we walk in his light. But those with a mere profession, worked of themselves, shall be proven unprofitable in the day of judgment.

Our text is Matthew 25: 14-30.

I. CHRIST IS THE KING AND THOSE HE CALLS ARE HIS SERVANTS

Matthew 25: 14: For *the kingdom of heaven is* as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.

Christ Has Travelled to a Far Country

Christ Jesus has come and accomplished blood atonement for all those given to him of the Father. Christ has gone into a far country—risen to a far country. God is satisfied with his Son. All those for whom Christ died have been reconciled to God by the death of Christ. And each one must be called to life and faith in Christ and shall be. All power in heaven and earth is Christ's. That was the motive he used when he told his disciple to go "into all the world and preach the gospel." Christ has "power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him." And he is doing just that.

Christ Calls His Own Servants

Christ calls his own servants through whom he works. Christ faithful servants are those he has called effectually by his grace. All believers, truly called into the kingdom of God are faithful servants: some are given responsibility as pastors and teachers and deacons, some are given opportunities to serve him in other ways—but all believers are servants of Christ in his kingdom.

But some have heard the call with the natural ear and professed to be his servants but prove they are not. All in this earth are Christ servants whether they know him or not, whether they know they are or not. Christ is working all things together for our good, using even those who despise him for his own glory. But the unprofitable servant represents one who claims to be Christ's servant but really is not.

Matthew 20: 14: For many are called, but few are chosen.

Christ Gives Spiritual Gifts to his Servants

Christ delivers to his servants his goods. The unprofitable represents those who have the gift of the gospel but refuse to walk in the light they are given. The faithful servants, God true saints, are given Christ's goods by Christ.

In our text "talents" means "money." But money is used as the illustration. But these are spiritual gifts—are the manifold grace of God—the riches of his grace. These gifts are not of us, they are of Christ given freely to us.

1 Corinthians 4:7: For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?

They are spiritual gifts to be used for the good of his kingdom. Christ said, "Freely ye have received, freely give"

1 Peter 4: 10: As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

II. CHRIST DOES NOT GIVE TO THE SAME MEASURE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS TO EACH SERVANT. HIS GIFTS DIFFER ACCORDING TO HIS ABILITY TO GIVE THEM AS NEEDED—

Matthew 25: 15: And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

According to His Several Ability

This does not mean that Christ looks for some ability in us and gives different measures of gifts because some have more ability. The "His" refers to Christ's ability. Christ's ability is to give according to Christ's power, authority and wisdom. It is Christ's ability to judge how to best serve his interest and kingdom, so Christ gives to some more, others less. Our ability is determined by the gift of grace given us and the proportion of faith given to us, not by any ability we have of ourselves.

Romans 12:6: Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, 6: whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; 7: Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8: Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

1 Peter 4: 11: If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

III. CHRIST GIVES US GIFTS TO USE FOR THE PROFIT OF HIS KINGDOM

Matthew 25: 16: Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents. 17: And likewise he that *had received* two, he also gained other two.

Spiritual Gifts are to be Used to Profit Spiritually

Bear in mind, talents means money, not natural talents. But money is simply the illustration he used. Christ is not teaching us how to invest our money to get a good return on our investment.

Talents represent every kind of spiritual gift he gives which we are to minister with for spiritual profit: for our own spiritual profit and growth, to spiritually profit our brethren, and for the spiritual profit of Christ's lost sheep who Christ calls out through the gifts of his ministers.

1 Corinthians 12:4: Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. 6: And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

Believers use these spiritual gifts but only Christ gives the increase, the profit. Paul said,

1 Corinthians 3: 6; I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. 7: So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. 8: Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

Colossians 2:19: [It is Christ] the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

We Are to Use the Gifts in Proportion to what we are Given

The men that were given five and two talents went and traded with exactly what they were given, with the ability God gave them. They did not consult with flesh and blood, to their own wisdom. They did not look to their own carnal interest—freely they had received freely they gave.

They represent the believer who trusts Christ. We do nothing in our name and strength, but in the name and strength of Christ our Lord and Master who sent us.

Christ has given us spiritual graces, spiritual gifts to use for the edification of his kingdom. We are to sow in the same abundance as he has abounded toward us. The man with five sowed five. The man with two sowed two.

Disregard difficulties and discouragements, bear the cross, reproaches, persecutions and all difficulties with courage and confidence knowing Christ's presence and hand is in the work.

We Shall Profit in Proportion to What We Trade With

Matthew 25: 16:...he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents. 17: And likewise he that *had received* two, he also gained other two.

This principle applies to all God's spiritual gifts. God promises we shall profit in proportion to how we use the gifts he has given. Sow to the spirit and Christ increases us personally in spiritual knowledge, our gifts are improved and enlarged by him. Sow to the spirit and Christ uses us to edify our brethren. Sow to the spirit and Christ calls out his elect, adding to the church daily such as should be saved.

In proportion to our sowing so shall we reap. That is the Bible; that is God's word. Christ knows the heart he has given, he knows the motive, he knows if it is constrained by his love and Christ makes it profitable, Christ said,

Luke 6:38: Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

2 Corinthians 9: 6: But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully....8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: 9 (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever. 10 Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)

This heavenly principle applies to all areas of spiritual growth in the kingdom of God. The principle of the kingdom is giving—freely ye have received freely give. In proportion to our sowing so shall we reap, that is the truth Christ declared.

Illustration: Who will profit more personally, the true believer who denies this world and seeks Christ first in the study of the scriptures and the hearing the gospel or the mere professor of religion who neglects these things making his earthly food and raiment and riches preeminent?

You who God has given faithfulness to come and give yourselves to know more of Christ, have done so. And Christ is growing you in proportion to your sowing, making it profitable, as he promised.

But those whose treasure is in the earth neglect...then neglect more...then neglect more...until eventually they are swallowed up by the earth they love. That is who the other man represents—a false professor of Christ who sows to the flesh.

Sowing to the Flesh is Unprofitable

Matthew 25: 18: But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

Notice this man sowed to the earth. A little later we will see it profited him nothing. He represents those who sow to the flesh.

Some claim to believe the truth of God, that he is sovereign, that he has provided all in his Son and shall provide all lesser things, but they prove their hypocrisy by looking out for self, their own house, the riches of this world, the temporary gratification of their flesh. We reap what we sow.

Galatians 6:8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting

Faithful Rebuke

Why do we have scriptures like this? One reason is to rebuke us. Every believer finds ourselves sowing to the flesh rather than the spirit. Scriptures like this rebuke us and by his word, Christ turns us by his grace because he loves his child.

Do you understand what grace and faithfulness it is of God our Father not to let his child profit in earthly things. He does it to make us lay aside the weight and sin that would turn us from Christ, that we might run the race looking to Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

What God did with believers in Haggai's day grated against their flesh, but it saved them from their flesh, the same as it does us. He said in Haggai chapter one that they were "*earning wages to put it into a bag with holes.*" What a faithful Father to teach us we are wasting our lives, we are wasting all that he has given to us. God is the reason it comes to nothing,

Haggai 1: 9...I did blow upon it. Why? saith the LORD of hosts. Because of mine house...

The Lord of his house will save his children from sowing to our flesh so that we do not reap corruption and for the good of his whole house. Only a fool gets angry about that kind of rebuke.

Proverbs 14:16 A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident.

Our faithful Father turns his child because he will not suffer his child to perish with the wicked. Oh, what grace and love!

IV. ALL SHALL GIVE ACCOUNT TO THE LORD JESUS IN THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

Matthew 25: 19: After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.

Christ Shall Return and Reckon with All

When Christ returns he will reckon with his servants for how we used the blessings and opportunities God gave us to serve him in this world. All Christ's true servants shall be found faithful by his grace, the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, and shall be given the same reward which the joy of being with the Lord forever.

Matthew 25: 20 And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. 21: His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. 22: He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. 23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

Believers get a taste of that eternal joy in this life as we serve him. There is no greater joy for a believer than freely sowing the spiritual gifts God has and continues to so freely and abundantly give to us. On the contrary, our joy is greatly interrupted when we sow to the flesh.

Using Christ's Sovereignty as Excuse

Matthew 25: 24: Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: 25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, *there* thou hast *that is* thine.

The unprofitable servant did not really know the master in love and newness of life because he used what he did know to excuse his wickedness and laziness. Mere professors twist the truth of God to excuse themselves.

We have heard men do something like this, saying, “Well, God is sovereign. If he wanted me to sow toward this then he would make me do it.” God IS sovereign. He HAS made it obvious what he would have us to do. It is nothing but the deceitfulness of a wicked heart that twists the truth to excuse laziness.

Luke 19:22 And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant.

Knowing our Savior IS God our Sovereign is the very confidence of his true child for we know Christ will provide all.

He is not hard—Christ regards a cup of cold water as faithful service to him, anything good done to one of his brethren is done to him. God only expects us to do what we can with what he has given. The man to whom two talents were given was not expected to do the same as the man to whom five were given.

Some will say, “I can’t do more.” God does not expect you to do more but he expect you to be faithful with what he has given you.

2 Corinthians 8:12 For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.

Illustration: “She hath done what she could.” (Mark 14:8).

In one sense, Christ is reaping where he has sown and gathering where he has strawed because Christ gives the grace and provision and he gives the increase. But in another sense he reaps where he does not sow and straw because Christ is using us earthen vessels to sow and straw his vineyard. We know the power is of God, not of us, and knowing that, makes us more eager to serve him, not less. That seems to be the Lord’s point in the parable. Read the next two verses

Matthew 24: 26 His lord answered and said unto him, *Thou* wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: 27: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and *then* at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

Brethren, Christ has given himself for us. He has suffered the wrath of God for us. He has justified us and made us complete in him. He has give us life and faith and all things that pertain to life and godliness. He is providing us all things. He has all power in heaven and earth. Not one sheep shall be lost. When the last one is called—and not until the last one is called—then we are going home to glory. This messaged does not kill evangelism it promotes it. We shall not fail because Christ shall not fail.

V. THOSE WHO WALK IN THE LIGHT GOD HAS GIVEN, SHALL BE GIVEN MORE LIGHT AND THOSE WHO DO NOT, HE SHALL REMOVE THE LIGHT THEY HAVE.

Matthew 25: 28: Take therefore the talent from him, and give *it* unto him which hath ten talents. 29: For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. 30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Where God’s gifts are given effectually the servant obeys—God never removes our gifts or our calling. We have them by his all-sufficient grace and he gives more grace. But for those to whom he sends the gospel, who have the general call, who have the outward form but refuse the light they have, he will take even what the outward advantages that they have from them. They did not truly have inwardly to begin with. They only had the outward call and the outward form of a servant. But he will take that away. Be sure to get this

principle, “Unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.” The best example is natural Israel.

Isaiah 2:5: O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.

1 John 1:7: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

Amen!