

RESPOND

Assess what God has entrusted you with. Take some time to meditate on all of your responses. Conclude by writing a letter of action to God. Share your acknowledgment of the valuable things from the Lord, your gratitude for the ways He invests in you, your confession of the times you wasted God's valuables due to your fear, laziness, etc., and your intentions for using your gifts, skills, and abilities to grow God's kingdom. How will you use the next week to avoid wasting God's good to bring a greater impact within your spheres of influence?

Avoid Wasting God's Goods

“Using Your Gifts to Bring Greater Impact”

Mark 5:24-34

Matthew 25:14-30 (NIV)



¹⁴“Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. ¹⁵To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. ¹⁶The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. ¹⁷So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. ¹⁸But the man who had received one bag 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. ²⁰The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five bags of gold. 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 two bags of gold also came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with two bags of gold; 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 one bag of gold 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. ²⁵So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold 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? ²⁷Well 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“So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. ²⁹For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. ³⁰And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

DISCUSS

- This parable focuses on the responses of a master to his three servants who were given bags of money for while he was away. Why do you think the boss gave the money amounts based on the servants’ abilities and not the servants’ potential? What could be the gain or loss for the master based on how much he gave each servant?
- The Lord invests in His people by His actions, His communication His healing, and His provisions. All of these and more are valuables the Lord shares with us. What are valuables you received from the Lord? What makes them valuable?
- When someone makes an investment, the goal is a bigger return in the end. How should you use your gifts, skills, and abilities to bring the Lord a return? How does His investment in you ultimately grow His kingdom?
- The two servants who doubled the investment were extended the same sentiments of gratitude in response. If the Lord asked you today for an account of what you have done with His investment in you, would He have the same response? Why or why not? What can you do to further grow His investment in you as it relates to serving on your college campus?
- The servant’s decision to bury the money confirms his understanding of the value of his master’s investment. Why is it important to realize the servant’s decision not to use his gifts was a result of fear and/or laziness? How might God’s purposes in you not be fulfilled because He chooses to use someone else? Using the master’s responses as an indicator of how the Lord might respond, write three ways you will avoid allowing fear and/or laziness to cause you to waste God’s investment in you.