

Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia Children's Ministry

2017 VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

God cares

about the

little things



Thursday

3rd-5th Grade

God cares about our service

The Objective is the key concept for this weeks lesson. It should be the main focus of the study

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The “Main passage” is the basis of the study, where the other verse support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the “reward box” found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God’s Word

Objective This lesson will use the parable of the talents to show that we can serve the Lord with whatever we have.

Key Verses

Matthew 25:14-29—Main Teaching Passage

Memory Verse - Ephesians 2:10

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

Hook

Ask the students to make a list of the most important jobs that people do. They might come up with ideas like doctors, police officers, presidents, etc. Write those things down on the board. Then tell the students what you do as an occupation. Write that down on the board and ask them if that job is important. Explain how your job is important (Example: I am a stay-at-home mom. I care for my children etc.)

Now write, “being kind,” “generosity,” and “loving you neighbor” on the board and tell the students that these are things that God asked us to do. Are these things less important than any of the jobs written in the other list?

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

In Matthew 25 Jesus told His disciples a parable about a Master with three servants. The Master went away, but before leaving, he entrusted the three servants with his property, each according to his ability. To the first servant he gave 5 talents (a talent is a unit of money), to the second he gave 2 talents and the third he gave 1 talent. The first two servants were faithful. They used the talents wisely and when the master returned, they had doubled their money. The third servant, however, buried his talent in the ground, and when the master returned, he only had that same one talent to give back to him.

The master rewarded both of the first two servants. He told them “well done, good and faithful servant.” He rewarded them by giving them more responsibilities. The other servant had his one talent taken away from him. He was called wicked and lazy and was sent out away from the master. The passage then closes by stating that to those who serve faithfully and well will receive more, but to those who do not serve well, even what they have will be taken away from them.

The master here symbolizes Jesus. He has gone away, but has given us work to do while He is gone. We can be faithful and be about His business, working to bring about the Kingdom here on earth. Or we can be lazy and neglect the Lord’s work that He has prepared for us to do.

This whole passage is keyed off of verse 15, “Each according to his ability.” This tells us that anyone can be serving the Lord, no matter how old or young, not matter how big or small. We are capable to doing what the Lord has given us to do today according to our ability.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK

Yesterday we looked at how God cares about and sees our failures. We saw that if we mess up we can go to God and seek forgiveness and He will be just and faithful to forgive us. He cares about us, and He cares about what we do, so if we mess up, we disappoint our King. Today we are looking at the other side of that story. Today we see that God also cares about the things that we do well. He cares about us and what we do, and He takes joy when we serve Him well. God doesn’t just see the small sins in our lives, He also sees the small victories.

In today’s passage Jesus tells a story about three servants. Each of them are given some money according to their abilities. The first is given five, then second two and the third is given one portion of money. Notice that the third servant wasn't asked to do the same work as the first servant. They were not being judged against each other, they were being judged against what the master had asked them to do.

The first two servants were faithful and served well. They invested

LOOK (Continued)

their treasure well and were able to give back to the master more than what they were given. The last servant however did not follow suit. He buried his talent in the ground and did not use it in the way that the master had asked.

You and I have been given time and different talents and treasures from the Lord. We have to be thoughtful about the way that we use those three things:

Time—How do we spend the time that God has given us? Do we use it well, or do we waste time doing things that we shouldn't

Talents— What abilities has the Lord given you? How can you use those things for God?

Treasure— Are we going to use our money in ways that bring lasting impact to God's kingdom or are we going to use it on frivolous things?

Whatever the answers to the above three things are, we need to remember one important thing. God isn't asking you to be like Billy Graham or Hudson Taylor, who both travelled the world telling people about Jesus. You aren't old enough, and you don't have enough money. Maybe you will do that later in your life, but right now God still cares about what you are doing. You don't need to act like Paul the apostle to bring God pleasure, you simply need to do the things He is asking you to do right now.

Every time you are kind and polite to someone, you bring God joy. When you read God's Word and pray to Him, it give Him pleasure. When you love your neighbor, when you tell the truth, when you help people in need, God sees those things and He is blessed by them. God sees your little acts of service and your big acts, and He cares about them both.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class, memorize Ephesians 3:10.

Review the lesson by asking the class what kinds of things they can do to serve God today.

Pray: Ask the Lord to show the class ways that they can honor Him.

Parent Question: How can I use my time, talents, and treasure to serve God?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Matthew 25:14-29 by David Guzik

B. The parable of the talents.

1. (14-15) Jesus describes a master who gives instructions to his servants before departing on a long journey.

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey.”

a. A man traveling to a far country, who called his servants and delivered his goods to them: This was not a strange idea in the ancient world, where servants (slaves) were often given great responsibility. This was often the safest and smartest thing a man could do with his money.

i. “The best thing he could do with his money in his absence, dividing it among carefully selected slaves, and leaving them to do their best with it.” (Bruce)

ii. “This parable takes up the question which that of the bridesmaids left unanswered: what is ‘readiness?’” (France)

b. To one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one: A talent was not an ability (though this parable has application to our abilities), but a unit of money worth at least \$1,200 in modern terms, and likely much more.

i. “The talent was not a coin, it was a weight; and therefore its value obviously depended on whether the coinage involved was copper, gold, or silver.” (Barclay)

ii. “The English use of ‘talent’ for a natural (or supernatural) aptitude derives from this parable...But of course the Greek talanton is simply a sum of money...it was generally regarded as equal to 6,000 denarii.” (France) “If a talent were worth six thousand denarii, then it would take a day laborer twenty years to earn so much.” (Carson)

iii. In the application of this parable it is appropriate to see these talents as life resources – such as time, money, abilities, and authority.

c. To each according to his own ability: The servants were given different amounts of money according to their ability. One servant only received one talent, yet we should see that this was not an insignificant amount. Some received more; but everyone received something and everyone received a large amount.

i. “The talent which each man has suits his own state best; and it is only pride and insanity which lead him to desire and envy the graces and talents of another. Five talents would be too much for some men: one talent would be too little.” (Clarke)

2. (16-18) The servants manage the master’s money.

“Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And

likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money."

a. He who had received the five talents went and traded with them: Each of those who had received talents from their master did with them as they saw fit. Two of them traded with their talents and earned more talents (made another five talents...gained two more also).

i. Went and traded implies direct action. "The point is that the good servants felt the responsibility of their assignment and went to work without delay." (Carson)

ii. We aren't told how they traded with their talents. Perhaps they loaned the money at interest, perhaps they used the money and bought things and sold them for more money. The point is that they used what they had and gained more by using.

iii. We can say many good things about the work of the first two servants:

- They did their work promptly.
- They did their work with perseverance.
- They did their work with success.
- They were ready to give an account to their master.

b. He who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money: The third servant did almost nothing with his master's money. He took some care that it would not be lost (by hiding it), but he did nothing positive with his master's money, in contrast to the first two servants.

3. (19-23) The first two servants are judged.

"After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'"

a. After a long time the lord of those servants came: The long delay would tempt the servants to think that they would never give an account for their management, yet they most certainly would.

b. You have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things: The reward was the same for both servants, even though one was given five talents and the other was given two talents. Each performed the same according to the resources they had received.

c. Well done, good and faithful servant: This shows that the master looked for goodness and faithfulness in His servants. Whatever financial success these servants enjoyed came because they were good and faithful. The master looked first for these character qualities, not for a specific amount of money.

i. "It is not 'Well done, thou good and brilliant servant;' for perhaps the man never shone at all in the eyes of those who appreciate glare and glitter. It is not, 'Well done, thou great and distinguished servant;' for it is possible that he was never known beyond his native village." (Spurgeon)

ii. "It is better to be faithful in the infant-school than to be unfaithful in a noble class of young men. Better to be faithful in a hamlet over two or three score of people, than to be unfaithful in a great-city parish, with thou-

sands perishing in consequence. Better to be faithful in a cottage meeting, speaking of Christ crucified to half-a hundred villagers, than to be unfaithful in a great building where thousands congregate.” (Spurgeon)

d. Enter into the joy of your lord: This has the echo of heaven in it. The idea is that there is a place of joy belonging to the master of these servants, and they are invited to join the master in that place. There is a sense of heaven about this destiny for the two faithful servants.

i. “This is not the servant’s portion, but the Master’s portion shared with his faithful servants...not so much that we shall have a joy of our own as that we shall enter into the joy of our Lord.” (Spurgeon)

ii. We can say of the reward for the first two servants:

- They received praise from their master.
- They received a promise of future blessing.
- They received glory, “the joy of your lord.”

4. (24-30) The third servant gives account.

“Then he who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.’”

a. Then he who had received the one talent came: The master judged each of the servants individually. If they were taken as a group, they did very well: 8 talents given and 15 talents returned. Yet each one was judged on their individual faithfulness and effort.

i. “Remember, my hearer, that in the day of judgment thy account must be personal; God will not ask you what your church did – he will ask you what you did yourself.” (Spurgeon)

b. I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown: The servant who merely buried his talent tried to excuse himself because of his master’s great power. In fact, he believed his master to be in some sense omnipotent: reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed.

i. A hard man: “Grasping, ungenerous, taking all to himself, offering no inducements to his servants.” (Bruce)

ii. F.B. Meyer expressed the thinking of this servant: “I can do very little; it will not make much difference if I do nothing; I shall not be missed; my tiny push is not needed to turn the scale.”

iii. “It is the genius of wicked men to lay the blame of their miscarriages upon others, oftentimes upon God himself.” (Poole)

c. Look, there you have what is yours: The third servant seemed proud of himself. Because the master was so powerful and (in the mind of the servant) didn’t need his help, the third servant thought that the master would be pleased that he did nothing and could say, “Look, there you have what is yours.” He seemed to have no idea how much he had displeased his master.

i. We can say in the third servant’s favor that at least he still understood that what he had been given belonged to his master. He said, “you have what is yours.” Many modern servants of God think that when God gives them something, it no longer belongs to God; it belongs to them and they can do with it as they please.

ii. Yet “albeit this man was doing nothing for his master, he did not think himself an unprofitable servant. He exhibited no self-depreciation, no humbling, no contrition. He was as bold as brass, and said unblushingly, ‘Lo,

there thou hast that is thine.” (Spurgeon)

iii. We can say of the work of the third servant:

- He didn't think.
- He didn't work.
- He didn't even try.
- He made excuses.

5. (26-30) The third servant is judged.

“But his lord answered and said to him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”

a. You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown: The condemnation of this third servant – here called a wicked and lazy servant – was strong. The sovereignty of the master never excused the laziness of the servant. It condemned that laziness all the more.

i. Those who don't work for the Lord, or pray, or don't evangelize because God is sovereign condemn themselves by their laziness. By their actions (or lack of action) they show that they are like the wicked servant in the parable. They do not know their Master's heart at all. “The lord of the unprofitable servant tells him, that the fault lay in his own sloth and wickedness, and his dread of his lord's security was but a mere frivolous pretence and unreasonable excuse.” (Poole)

ii. The charge against this servant who merely buried his talent was that he was wicked and lazy. We rarely see laziness as a real sin, something that must be repented of before the Lord. If laziness were a calling or a spiritual gift, this man would have been excellent.

iii. “Not dishonest – the master had not misjudged as to that – but indolent, unenterprising, timid...Slothful, a poor creature altogether: suspicious, timid, heartless, spiritless, idle.” (Bruce)

iv. We might say that this servant did not have a proper fear of his master, but an unfitting fear of risk and failure.

b. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest: This man could have done something with what he had. Even if it had not doubled, it would have gained some interest for the master's money.

i. “If we cannot trade directly and personally on our Lord's account, if we have not the skill nor the tact to manage a society or an enterprise for him, we may at least contribute to what others are doing, and join our capital to theirs, so that, by some means, our Master may have the interest to which he is entitled.” (Spurgeon)

ii. “The Old Testament forbade Israelites from charging interest against one another (Exodus 22:25; Leviticus 25:35-37; Deuteronomy 23:19; cf. Psalm 15:5...); but interest on money loaned to Gentiles was permitted (Deuteronomy 23:20)...By New Testament times Jewish scholars had already distinguished between ‘lending at interest’ and ‘usury’ (in the modern sense).” (Carson)

c. For to everyone who has, more will be given...but from him who does not have, even what he has will be

taken away: There are those who have things (like the servant with one talent), but hold them in such a way that it is as if they have nothing. These ones will find what they had taken away. Those who hold what they have received as faithful men and women, to them more will be given.

i. "See that ye receive not any grace of God in vain; neither envy those that have much; a proportion is expected." (Trapp)

ii. "We need not wait for the great future, to obtain this multiplication or withdrawal of our talents. They are already waxing or waning in our hands." (Meyer)

d. Cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness: Because he was wicked and lazy, the third servant demonstrated that he was not a true servant of his master at all. It is fitting that he (and those who show the same heart) was cast forever out of the master's presence.

i. Just as there was a sense of heaven in the destiny for the two faithful servants, there is a strong sense of hell in the destiny for the wicked and lazy servant.

ii. In the larger context of Matthew 25, the main point of this parable is clear: our readiness for Jesus' return is determined by our stewardship of the resources that He has given us.

iii. Some think that readiness for Jesus' return is a very spiritual and abstract thing. It really isn't – it is a matter of being about our business for the Lord. In light of this parable, we must ask ourselves: What have we done with our knowledge? Our time? Our money? Our abilities? The sins of omission [what we don't do] may ultimately be more dangerous than the sins of commission [what we do].