

## IV. Christian Stewardship in Biblical Perspective *Lifestyle Stewardship*

### “The King and Christian Stewardship in the Kingdom, Part 1”

Luke 19:11–27

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February 2, 2020 • Morning Sermon

This is our fourth study on a lifestyle of Christian stewardship for Christ. This is a wonderful parable we will be looking at in this study found in Luke 19:11–27 which says [11] *As they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately.* [12] *He said therefore, “A nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return.* [13] *Calling ten of his servants, he gave them ten minas, and said to them, ‘Engage in business until I come.’* [14] *But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We do not want this man to reign over us.’* [15] *When he returned, having received the kingdom, he ordered these servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by doing business.* [16] *The first came before him, saying, ‘Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.’* [17] *And he said to him, ‘Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.’* [18] *And the second came, saying, ‘Lord, your mina has made five minas.’* [19] *And he said to him, ‘And you are to be over five cities.’* [20] *Then another came, saying, ‘Lord, here is your mina, which I kept laid away in a handkerchief;* [21] *for I was afraid of you, because you are a severe man. You take what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.’* [22] *He said to him, ‘I will condemn you with your own words, you wicked servant! You knew that I was a severe man, taking what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow?* [23] *Why then did you not put my money in the bank, and at my coming I might have collected it with interest?’* [24] *And he said to those who stood by, ‘Take the mina from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas.’* [25] *And they said to him, ‘Lord, he has ten minas!’* [26] *‘I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.* [27] *But as for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slaughter them before me.’”*  
The grass withers, the flower fades, God’s Word abides forever and by His grace and mercy may His Word be preached for you.

We have a great privilege. Christ is our identity. We belong to Him and He belongs to us. We are Christian, followers of Christ but there are multiple vocations that Christ has given to us. He has called us to be disciples, learners, soldiers, servants and stewards which we are focusing on this year where our lifestyle is to be that of a steward. We have looked at I Corinthians 4 to help us get the understanding of stewardship.

There were certain things that identified the steward. One is that a steward owned nothing. Two, his master owned everything. Three, the steward’s job or his business was to oversee, manage, invest and be productive. Four, he is accountable. Five, he has one objective and that is to be faithful, productive and focused with the resources his master allocated to him as he does with them what the master has told him to do with them. He would take care of business for the master.

Now translate that into being a Christian. As a Christian, do we own anything? Our answer should be ‘no.’ We own nothing and more than that we are owned by the Master. We have been bought with a price therefore we are to glorify God in our bodies (I Corinthians 6:20).

Two, our Master made everything and it's all for His glory. Three, what we have has been allocated to us by our Master and He has given us instructions on how to take care of business with what He has allocated to us. It is a Gospel saturated lifestyle led by the Word of God and the Spirit of God to do with what He has deposited in our care. Four, we are accountable and it's called the judgment day that has two parts. One is the judgment of eternity for those who rejected Him and the other is a judgement of stewardship for those who are in the Book of Life. Five, as stewards we want to be faithful, focused and productive.

Then we looked at this in real life and we looked at the life of Joseph. His father made him a steward. Then when his brothers put him in pit and was sold into slavery Potiphar made him a steward. Then when he was put into jail, the jailer made him a steward and then Pharaoh made him a steward. Everywhere Joseph went he was made a steward because he had a lifestyle of stewardship for God and it showed up in everything that he did.

Now I want to go to a text where Jesus intentionally gives us information about stewardship that makes sure our stewardship is not duty but delight. John Piper wrote a great book on this and so did one of my professors Sinclair Ferguson. Do you see stewardship as a duty or a delight? It is a commandment for God is not suggesting this but do you see this commandment as duty, drudgery, or minimize or do you see it as a delight for generosity, engagement to do business for the Master with everything He has allocated to you? This parable helps us to see the duty as delight and delight in the duty. So let's look at the text.

We immediately know as the text starts that it is tied to what happened before this, where Jesus is on a journey that is about to end. That journey began in Luke 9:57 when He set His face to go to Jerusalem. He went through Jericho where there was the miracle of the blind man, the conversion of Zacchaeus, a thief becomes a steward as Jesus continued to teach along the way. Jesus sums up in Jericho that He has come to seek and save the lost. Now we are toward the end of the journey in Luke 19. In my many trips to Israel I found the road that Jesus took from Jericho to Jerusalem and I have often wondered where he stopped on that road to give this parable in Luke 19. We can't understand this story/parable until He gives us the reason and purpose of the story.

Luke 19:11 says [11] *As they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately.* One reason He gives this parable is because He was near Jerusalem and there He will begin a new journey to save us from our sins. The second reason He tells it is because they thought the Kingdom of God was to appear immediately. So He wants them to understand what happened in Jericho which gives a certain framework and two something will happen in Jerusalem that will astound them which is that the King is coming to die on a cross and suffer and that doesn't fit in what they have been told and what they are looking for.

They are not looking for a Messianic King that saves but they are looking for a political and military king and they are looking for it now. His Disciples have not jettisoned that thinking so He stops them and wants them to understand this before they see what happens in Jerusalem. He wants to show them that what they are thinking is not correct. The Kingdom has come but not in its fullness. The King will have to leave and He will have to return. So this parable is to help them understand what is going on and what their responsibility is when the King leaves until He returns. Now let's look at what the story is saying.

Luke 19:12 says [12] *He said therefore, "A nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return.* So the King will leave, then return and when He returns the Kingdom will be in its fullness. Then we find out what the King wants to happen after He

leaves until He returns. This is what He tells His Disciples and His servants. As we look into this story His reference to ten servants is the use of ten being the number of completion. It refers to any and all His Disciples between His leaving and His returning.

Luke 19:13 says *[13] Calling ten of his servants, he gave them ten minas, and said to them, 'Engage in business until I come.'* The King is going to allocate resources to them with this mina. Many people tend to say this parable is the same as the parable of the talents but that it's kind of misconstrues and misplaced but that is wrong. This is a different parable and it has a different purpose than the one of the talents. In a later study we'll look at the parable of the talents but in this study we're just looking at this one. One difference is that in this parable everyone is given the same thing but in the talents they are given differing amounts. By telling them to engage in business He has just turned them into stewards, overseers, managers, investors. So now He calls them to oversight, faithfulness, productivity and management.

Luke 19:14 says *[14] But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to reign over us.'* We see He has adversaries and these that ought to be receiving Him say 'no' to Him so His own reject Him. After He leaves many more will reject Him. There is an active rejection of that King and they basically say they will reign over themselves. So there are two groups of people – those who reject Him and those who are His servants who become stewards for the King. We don't know how long the nobleman was gone. God knows that date but we don't. He returns at an unspecified date later and what happens when He returns?

There will be two accountabilities and judgment. One accountability will be with those who rejected Him and there will be a lethal judgment. Those who know Him will come before Him for accountability, not with a lethal judgment, because the King had already died for them before He left but they do come for a stewardship judgment. In this story we don't get the accountability report of all ten but we do get three of them. Let's continue in the text.

Luke 19:15–19 says *[15] When he returned, having received the kingdom, he ordered these servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him, that he might know **what they had gained** (productivity) by doing business. [16] The first came before him, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.' [17] And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.' [18] And the second came, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made five minas.' [19] And he said to him, 'And you are to be over five cities.'*

Before we look at the third, they were all given one mina which we could basically call one dollar. The first one went from one mina to ten minas and had a thousand percent return (productivity) on what he was given – pretty good. Then he was given back those ten minas and because he was faithful in little he was given ten cities in return as a reward in the new Kingdom. Think about that. He was designated ten cities to rule and reign over with the King. The one who turned one mina into five had a five hundred percent return and he received five cities to rule and reign over in the new Kingdom. Let's look at the third one.

Luke 19:20–27 says *[20] Then another came, saying, 'Lord, here is your mina, which I kept laid away in a handkerchief; [21] for I was afraid of you, because you are a severe man (a man of inflexible standards). You take what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.' [22] He said to him, 'I will condemn you with your own words, you wicked servant! You knew that I was a severe man, taking what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow? [23] Why then did you not put my money in the bank, and at my coming I might have collected it with interest?' [24] And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the mina from him, and give it to the one*

*who has the ten minas.' [25] And they said to him, 'Lord, he has ten minas!' [26] 'I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. [27] But as for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slaughter them before me.'"*

This third one was not a steward but a hoarder. So we find out that he had been in the discipleship group but he was not really one of them, just like Judas Iscariot. Interestingly, he says the King was a man with inflexible standards but who's mina was it in the first place? The King gave him the mina yet he hoarded it as if it was his own and it was as if it was his life. He didn't even act consistently with his excuse that the King was a severe man. According to the parable, if a person is not faithful He will get it to the faithful for if God knows it gets through you, it will get to you. This isn't talking just about money but He allocates much more than that – talents, experience, opportunities, resources, etc. When you are faithful in little, God gives you the opportunity to be faithful in much. There is another part of that judgment that we see in Luke 19:27. This judgment is eternal death in the lake of the fire forever.

Here is a takeaway from this text. The privilege and rewards of a lifestyle of faithful, focused and productive stewardship are astonishingly disproportionate to the results of our stewardship. The man who hoarded what he was given didn't act consistent with his excuse for it was about him and not about the King. Secondly, he didn't know the King. The same King who is holy is astonishingly gracious, in fact lavishly gracious. Let's say I was the emperor of the United States. I want you to know if nominated I will not run. If elected I will not serve but let's suppose we change government and I was the emperor. Let's say the dollar I gave you, you made ten dollars and you showed me. Then I say to you "Wonderful, well done, good and faithful servant. Here I'm giving you Birmingham, Huntsville, Chattanooga, Charlotte, Atlanta, Savannah, Montgomery, Knoxville..." I give you ten cites because you were faithful with one dollar. The reward is disproportionate to the results of the stewardship.

Your God is not only gracious when He came to save you at Calvary before He left but He is also gracious when He returns astonishingly with rewards that are affirming the results of our stewardship and our stewardship had never been there if He hadn't given us the resources, strength and direction to be good stewards to begin with. If stewardship of life is drudgery then you don't know the King.

There are two days that are crucial and that is built into this parable. What would most people tell me if I asked them what those two fixed days are? They would be birth and death. That is the perspective of the unbeliever. The believer's perspective is the day He rose and the day He returns. When He rose I was saved because it was the shout that the cross had won the victory. When He returns not only do I receive grace upon grace, get what I didn't deserve before He left but when He returns I will receive astonishingly beyond what I deserve as a steward with what He has given to me. That's what takes duty and makes it delight. Not only does He give me a mina I don't deserve and one day a reward I don't deserve but He gave me Himself which I didn't deserve, on the cross. I am His and He is mine.

I remember something R. C. Sproul shared one time that awakened something in my mind that had to do with the King on the hill. There was this red clay hill near the Alliance church we went to and the youth group would run to the hill at the end to play King of the Hill. The objective of that game is the one that gets on the top of the hill pushes anyone down who wants to take over the top of the hill. Here we had just left our youth group lessons that had been telling us about a King who went up on a hill and died so that you could rise up on that hill with

Him. There is your King. He is not political but He is your King who died for you that made stewardship not drudgery but joy.

That King is coming back and there is going to be a day of accountability. Your stewardship will be imperfect, uneven and you won't even be profitable because you will have only done with what He gave you to begin with but you can be faithful, focused and productive with that which He has entrusted to you – that marriage, spouse, children, spiritual gift, experiences, the Gospel, the Word of God, the Spirit of God, etc. Think of all these things that this risen Savior now deposits within you. Don't hoard it. Steward it. Use it.

All of us who have been entrusted from the Master will stand before Him with the same humility of these men in the parable. They didn't say 'I took the mena and here is what I brought back.' They said 'I took YOUR mena...' for they never owned anything. It was His all along. 'Your mena has now earned...His mena earned through what they did, ten menas for Him.' It's all about Him and then He lavishly rewards them disproportionately for all eternity and the same will happen to you.

Can you imagine that Day? That will be an absolutely glorious Day! Please think of your stewardship that way. The first day He won the victory and He is coming again to receive the Kingdom. There is going to be a judgment and those who refuse to surrender to Him, who don't know Him, face a judgment of unending death in the torment of hell. Are you there? Have you not surrendered to Jesus who gave Himself to save sinners like us? *[15] The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,* (I Timothy 1:15). He came to heal the sick. If you surrender you can pray 'Jesus I'm a sinner. I'm Yours and praise God Your mine.' I don't want you on that Day on that side of the judgment.

Let's step to the stewardship side. I stand before Him and give an account for the wife, the children and grandchildren He gave me, the spiritual gifts, my calling as a pastor to a marvelous church I did not deserve, the Gospel, the Spirit of God, the Great Commission, the Great commandment, encounters, divine appointments every day He gives to me, experiences to mold me and shape me – did I steward them with faithfulness, focus and by His grace earning through His power that much more to give back to Him? I won't do this with perfection but by His grace.

That first day reminds me of the day when He first gave me my salvation. The day those marines hit Iwo Jima and by the third day when they got on Mount Suribachi the headlines of the Chicago paper the next day read; "The Battle of Iwo Jima is over! Victory!" It was because the flag had been raised on the mountain and they were right for those boys had won that battle on that day, but there was still two and a half months of pill box by pill box, trench by trench, of 22,000 casualties and 21 medals of honor yet to be won.

The King won the victory and He has defeated the enemies. He has saved us from our sins. He has gone away and He will return to receive that Kingdom that is now filling up as His people through stewardship and His power are being used to fill that Kingdom. When He returns we will give our account and rewards are beyond comprehension to the results of our stewardship. We yet have that to encounter from our God.

If stewardship is a drudgery and it has been in my life for I'm not above this. I've had to work through all this in my life and how I need to be a good steward with all that God has entrusted to me but praise God for His grace, power and wisdom that He gives us to do that. I remember my first youth pastorate that only had six young people. It wasn't long before I received a phone call and I had to go to the counsel of the church. They thanked me for being a

youth director but said there was a problem. They said ‘the kids are choosing these small Christian schools and talking about going to missions but we brought you in here to tell them about Jesus so that they don’t get pregnant, into drugs or get drunk and don’t embarrass us but this is going too far that our kids want to go into mission fields.’ They didn’t know about stewardship. Where would God use my child? We are to raise our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, not of a university or a vocation, for the Lord will lead them into that vocation and or university.

We are to be stewards of our children, our gifts, our finances, our physical talents, our spiritual talents and our relationships and responsibilities. We say ‘God, I refuse to wrap it up in a handkerchief or stick it away. I’m not going to be a hoarder. I want to be a faithful, productive, fixed overseer, shepherd and steward for the Lord Jesus. I want not only the delight of duty but the duty itself is a delight in and for the Lord.’ I want to hear what Peter says when he says ‘Lord, we’ve given it all up’ and Jesus says ‘What you have given is nothing to what you will receive, a hundredfold in the life to come.’ That is how I want to live and the way I desire to live.

You just don’t know Him if it’s drudgery so get in the Word, under the Word and in the Spirit to meet Him and test Him. He is faithful and He will make you faithful with joy. When I was in the first grade in Greensboro, North Carolina, my dad was playing in the minor baseball leagues. Every day I walked home my grandmother was always there at my house. She would have my favorite stuffed animal which was a black dog with a red tongue sticking out and she would put me on her lap. I still have that dog on my bed to this day. My grandmother would sing and tell me to sing this song;

*Isn’t He wonderful, wonderful, wonderful*

*Isn’t Jesus my Lord wonderful*

*Eyes have seen, ears have heard*

*It’s recorded in God’s Word*

*Isn’t Jesus my Lord wonderful.*

That is what will change it in your life.

Meet and know Your wonderful Savior. That third man in the parable didn’t know Him. You can and you can take great joy in His lavish love for you. Let’s pray.

Prayer:

Lord, speak to our hearts in these few moments. If you are reading this today and you have not taken that first step to surrender to Him just pray ‘Jesus, I’m a sinner and I know You died for my sins.’ We have people at our church who would love to pray with you and help you on this journey with Him. Please call us at Briarwood at (205) 776-5200. If you are dealing with any issues in your life we’re here to pray with you and for you as well. Make that commitment to Christ. Then Lord, allow those of us who know You to thank You that our stewardship is not only over all of life, in life and for Your glory using what You have allocated to us, not owning it but overseeing it, productively using it and investing it for the Kingdom to glorify the King and be faithful and focused on Him while we do this. Help us to say ‘no’ to any hoarding for we don’t own anything and we’re not going to hoard it. Help us to use it for Him. Father, help us know Him who now has brought the Kingdom and saved us at Calvary who will one day come back to another mountain, the mountain of Olives and will receive us unto Himself. In that day we might hear ‘well done (not perfectly done) good and faithful servant.’ Father, in the joys of the lavish rewards that are beyond proportionate to what we have done, we long for that day

because in that day we'll just gather them up and use them to worship Him. Praise God from whom ALL blessings flow, Amen.

### Power Point

Stewardship in the Kingdom

The Setting

The Story

### Life Takeaway

*The privilege and rewards of a lifestyle of faithful, focused and productive stewardship are astonishingly disproportionate to the results of our stewardship.*

*Duty – Delight*