**Put This Money To Work**

Luke 19:11-27

Key Verse: 13

“So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. ‘Put this money to work,’ he said, ‘until I come back.’”

Intro and prayer:

In the previous passage, Jesus gave his mission statement, *“For the Son of Man came to seek and save the lost.”* Then, while the people were still listening, he went on to tell them a parable. The Apostle Luke points out that Jesus told this parable because he was near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once. The people thought that Jesus was heading to Jerusalem to reveal himself as the political Messiah. He would overthrow Roman occupation and establish an early messianic kingdom. They saw it as sort of a leveled up version of David’s kingdom. But in reality, Jesus was heading to Jerusalem to face the cross. He would establish his messianic rule, not through political means, but through his suffering and death.

Look at verses 12-15: *He said: “A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return. 13 So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. ‘Put this money to work,’ he said, ‘until I come back.’**14 “But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, ‘We don’t want this man to be our king.’ 15 “He was made king, however, and returned home.*

The first part of Jesus’ parable contains the hidden message of the gospel. “A man of noble birth” refers to Jesus who was born into this world as the sinless Son of God. Through his death and resurrection, Jesus went to a “distant country”—he ascended into heaven. There, he had “himself appointed king”, and one day he will “return again” .

Although Jesus was rejected as king, he was made king nevertheless. And, when he returns, this time he will come as Lord of lords and King of kings and will establish God’s eternal reign on the earth.

In the meantime Jesus entrusted his mission to his disciples. Look at verse*13* again, *“…he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. ‘Put this money to work,’ he said, ‘until I come back.’’*

This passage is similar to the Parable of The Talents in Matthew 25. In that passage the servants were given 10, 5 or 1 talent, each according to their ability. But in this passage, the 10 servants were given 10 minas. That means that individually each was given exactly the same amount—one mina.

The important point here is the command, ‘Put this money to work, until I get back. What does it mean to ‘Put this money to work?

Here, “work” means work. Many people consider work a four-letter word. People want to work the minimum and earn the maximum, and then retire as early as possible. In actuality though, work is extremely important for good quality of life. Not only does work have the obvious benefit of providing an income, but work also has many physical and mental health benefits. Work can help build the routine of going to bed early and waking up early. It can increase physical activity. It can produce discipline, drive and responsibility. It can nurture self-esteem. Although work may increases stress, it can also be an important avenue for learning to manage stress. And, these are only from a human perspective.

The Bible teaches that work comes from God. It is part of God’s creation purpose, that God created mankind for mission. In other words, God created mankind to do meaningful work, being productive and fruitful for the glory of God.

Genesis 1:28 reads: *“God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”*

And Genesis 2:15 adds: *“The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.”*

Look at verse 13 again, *So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. ‘Put this money to work,’ he said, ‘until I come back.’*

Work is work, but what does “money” refer to? Here ‘money’ probably refers to the gospel or the salvation we find in the gospel. In the previous passage, the tax collector Zacchaeus repented, and exchanged his earthly wealth for heavenly riches. At that moment, Jesus proclaimed, “Today, salvation has come to this house.” The salvation Zacchaeus received was personal, but it was not only for him. It was also for his entire household. This could imply that when Zacchaeus was changed, his entire household followed suit.

Salvation is the greatest gift we received from God. It is the sum total of God’s work in and through us. As long as we are on this earth, waiting for Jesus to return, we are called to put this salvation to work.

First, this salvation should work in us. Let’s read Philippians 2:12-13: *“Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.”*

Salvation can be seen not only as an event, but also as a process. It involves not only being born again, but also being sanctified as God continues to work in us to mold us into the image of Christ. This process involves a spiritual struggle to submit ourselves to God and to purify our hearts and minds of all evil desires through daily repentance, self-denial, cross-bearing and following Jesus.

One of the best ways to put this salvation to work in us is to read and study the Bible diligently. Look at 1 Peter 2:2: *“Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation.”* Newborn babies generally nurse every 2-3 hours or 8-12 times a day. The most valuable training for young believers involves the opportunity to study the Bible diligently.

Second, salvation should work through us. As God works in us, his intention is also to work through us. Or to put in another way, He saves us not only for ourselves, but also for the purpose of saving others.

Ephesians 2:10: *“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”*

In 1 Corinthians 9:19-22, the Apostle Paul gives an example of the type of spiritual maturity he attained and prescribed to for the purpose of saving others.

*“Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. 20 To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. 21 To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God’s law but am under Christ’s law), so as to win those not having the law. 22 To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some.”*

The Apostle Paul became *all* things to *all* people so that by *all* possible means he might save some! How was Paul able to do this? It was not by supper human efforts, but through God’s salvation work in him, through which he was fully sanctified.

Later in 1 Corinthians 15:10, Paul said, *“But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.”*

Paul said, “I am what I am!” Can we be anything more than what we are? Here, Apostle Paul was able to be real. He was able to be 100% authentic. He says that he worked harder than all of God’s other servants. But actually, it wasn’t him, but the grace of God that was working in and through him.

Each of the servants in today’s passage received the same salvation, and, along with it, sufficient grace to work hard for the glory of God.

So what was the result of the servant’s work? Let’s read verses 16-19: *16 “The first one came and said, ‘Sir, your mina has earned ten more.’ 17 “‘Well done, my good servant!’ his master replied. ‘Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.’ 18 “The second came and said, ‘Sir, your mina has earned five more.’ 19 “His master answered, ‘You take charge of five cities.’*

The first servant took one mina and earned 10 more. The second took one mina and earned 5 more.

Here we can learn, that God never gives anyone any work to do without also giving them the means to do it. For this reason, faith in the most important ingredient for doing the work of God. Jesus even said, in John 6:29, *“The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”*

These first two servants were rewarded according to what they had done. The servant who gained 10 more minas was put in charge of 10 cities, and the one who gained 5 more was put in charge of 5 cities.

This reminds us of Matthew 16:27: *“For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father’s glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done.”* God is fair, but he is also exceedingly generous! When we work hard, God will surely reward us accordingly and even far beyond what our efforts warrant.

What about the third servant? Let’s read verses 20-23. *20 “Then another servant came and said, ‘Sir, here is your mina; I have kept it laid away in a piece of cloth. 21 I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You take out what you did not put in and reap what you did not sow.’22 “His master replied, ‘I will judge you by your own words, you wicked servant! You knew, did you, that I am a hard man, taking out what I did not put in, and reaping what I did not sow? 23 Why then didn’t you put my money on deposit, so that when I came back, I could have collected it with interest?’*

This servant was wicked and lazy. His real problem was that he did not trust his master. His master was a very generous man, but he considered him a hard man. His master was a fair man, but he blamed his master for reaping where he did not sow. This servant made the excuse that he was afraid, but in reality, he just didn’t work hard.

The master judged this servant according to his own words. Look at verses 24-27: *24 “Then he said to those standing by, ‘Take his mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas.’25 “‘Sir,’ they said, ‘he already has ten!’ 26 “He replied, ‘I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what they have will be taken away. 27 But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them—bring them here and kill them in front of me.’”*

God is always fair and exceedingly generous. And, again, He never asks anyone to do anything without also giving them the ability to do it. Based on faith, let’s pray to work hard for the glory of God, as God also works in and through us.

Personally, I need to remember God’s goodness to give me such a great salvation in Jesus Christ. I have been a very wicked. I complained that I was not that smart or able, but in reality this was only an excuse for not working hard.