

## PARABLE OF THE TEN POUNDS

**TEXT: LUKE 19:11-27**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

1. Right before our Lord left Jericho for His final visit (before the cross) to Jerusalem, He spake a parable, and I would like for us to consider this parable tonight.
2. Luke 19:11 says our Lord spake this parable, “because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.”
3. “Because he was nigh to Jerusalem.” Many people thought that our Lord was about to establish His kingdom in Jerusalem. Psalm 48:2 says, “Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.”
4. Our Lord said in Matthew 5:34, 35, “Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.”
5. Most Jews were eagerly anticipating the Messianic kingdom, but they were not expecting the crucifixion (19:11; cf. 18:31-34).
6. And the apostles did not understand that there had to be the cross before the crown. Luke 18:34 says the twelve apostles “understood none of these things.”
7. The parable of the ten pounds was intended to correct the false conceptions held by most of the Jews, and to teach that while our Lord would soon go away, His disciples were to “occupy” till He returns (19:13).

### **I. THE LORD'S TEST**

### **II. THE LORD'S REWARD**

### **III. THE LORD'S PUNISHMENT**

## I. THE LORD'S TEST

1. The "certain nobleman" going into a far country represents Christ returning to heaven (19:12). Soon he would return but his servants were not told when he would return (19:12, 13).
2. The "servants" represent our Lord's disciples. This has puzzled some students of Scripture because one of these servants was rebuked as a "wicked servant" (19:22). However, Judas Iscariot was one of the twelve apostles. Furthermore, our Lord did warn that Satan would sow tares among the wheat (Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43).
3. We see a similar situation in our Lord's parable of the talents, recorded in Matthew 25. The "man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods" (Matt. 25:14) is similar in many ways to the "certain nobleman" in Luke 19.
4. To the servant who went and hid his talent in the earth, the man said, "Thou wicked and slothful servant" (Matthew 25:26).
5. The Bible repeatedly warns that there will be a future day of reckoning.
6. Matthew 25:19 says, "After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them." This means to give an account.
7. Referring to the wicked and slothful servant, the man in the parable of the talents said, "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 25:30).
8. In the parable of the ten pounds, there were ten servants, and each servant was given a pound, with the same commandment, "Occupy till I come" (Luke 19:13).
9. This is the only time we find this word "occupy" in the New Testament.
10. *Strong's Concordance* says the word means, "to carry on a business." The servants were to do business; they were to trade with the money.
11. Back when the King James Bible was translated, "occupy" meant to "trade." *Vincent's Word Studies* says, "The word occupy has lost the sense which it conveyed to the makers of the Authorized Version – that of using or laying out

what is possessed. An occupier formerly meant a trader. Occupy, in the sense of to use, occurs in Judges 16:11.”

12. In Judges 16:11, Samson says to Delilah, “If they bind me fast with new ropes that never were occupied (used), then shall I be weak, and be as another man.”
13. Since “occupy” means to do business, this nobleman was saying to his servants, “Put my money (the ten pounds) to work,” by either investing the money or by purchasing goods and selling them for a profit.
14. God wants us to be good workers and good stewards so we can be better Christians – happier Christians, and more useful Christians.
15. The apostle Paul wrote in Philippians 4:16, 17, “For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.” God wants us to be fruitful Christians. Growing Christians. Strong Christians.
16. This certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and then he returned just as he promised (19:12, 15).
17. Right now we are waiting for our Lord to return. And during this dispensation, the LORD is preparing us. He is growing us, and the LORD is training us, and preparing us for His kingdom (cf. Luke 19:11, 12).
18. W.A. Criswell told a story about a Christian farmer who had six boys. And he had a neighbor with a farm nearby, and this neighbor watched him work those six boys night and day.
19. And the neighboring farmer, watching that those boys working so hard on that farm, finally decided to talk to the father. And one day the neighbor walked over there and said, “You don’t have to work those boys that hard to raise a crop.”
20. And the farmer replied, “Sir, I’m not raising a crop. I’m raising boys.”
21. W.A. Criswell said, “That’s exactly what God is doing with us. He doesn’t need our little gifts, and what little we can bring before Him, which is inconsequential compared to the wealth of Him who made and possesses the whole universe. What He’s doing is, He’s raising us. He’s establishing us. He’s building us.”

22. The idea in this parable of the ten pounds is that the servants were to give back to their master more than what he had given to them (cf. Luke 19:15-19).
23. Therefore, our Lord is telling us, “Use what I have given you; what I have entrusted to you, until I come back.”
24. We are to apply this to the Christian’s responsibility to occupy till Christ returns. “Occupy” means to do business, not occupy a comfortable seat in church and go to sleep!
25. We are to be busy getting the Gospel out. Consider I Peter 4:10, where “gift” and “good stewards” do not refer to money and how we are to use it for the Lord. It can include that, but it is much more than that.
26. The idea is that we have been given the gift of eternal life, and as “good stewards” we are to tell others.
27. The servants’ position involved one of personal responsibility, ample opportunity, and future accountability – the nobleman promised to return (19:12b, 15).
28. And when Christ returns, He will demand an account from His followers (cf. 19:15). Matthew 25:19 says, “After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.” This means when our Lord returns, He is going to settle accounts with His servants.
29. The hymn writer described the anguish of a Christian standing before God empty-handed, with nothing to show.

*“Must I go, and empty-handed,  
Thus my dear Redeemer meet?  
Not one day of service give Him,  
Lay no trophy at His feet?”*

*“Must I go, and empty-handed?”  
Must I meet my Savior so?  
Not one soul with which to greet Him,  
Must I empty-handed go?”*

*Not at death I shrink or falter,  
For my Savior saves me now;*

*But to meet Him empty-handed,  
Thought of that now clouds my brow.*

*Oh, ye saints, arouse, be earnest,  
Up and work while yet 'tis day;  
Ere the night of death o'ertake thee,  
Strive for souls while still you may. – Charles C. Luther*

30. In addition to the servants, our Lord also referred to the “citizens (who) hated him” (19:14). These citizens in this parable represent the Jews who hated Jesus then, and the Jews still hate Him to this day.
31. In Mark 15:12, Pontius Pilate said to the Jews, “What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews?”
32. “And they cried out again, Crucify him” (Mark 15:13).
33. Their message of hatred was, “We will not have this man to reign over us” (Luke 19:14). That is the message of most people today, both Jew and Gentile. Gentiles may say they love Jesus, but the Bible says, “They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate” (Titus 1:16).

## **II. THE LORD’S REWARD (19:15-19)**

1. The first servant said, “Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds” (19:16).
2. One of the basic principles of stewardship is the understanding that everything belongs to God. In Scripture, a steward is a servant in charge of property belonging to his master. For example, we see in Genesis 15:2 that Eliezer was the steward in charge of Abraham's house.
3. Eliezer took care of everything in Abraham’s house, but everything in Abraham’s house belonged to Abraham.
4. First Corinthians 4:2 says, "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."

5. Stewardship covers more than just money. For example, we will all have to give an account to God with what we do with our time as well as our treasure.
6. We are to occupy till our Lord comes back.
7. In Luke 16:2, the “certain rich man” (who represents God) says to his steward, “Give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.”
8. Here in Luke 19:17, we see that the servant was faithful, and therefore he was rewarded when his master returned. This is a picture of the judgment seat of Christ, which will take place after Christ returns.
9. The apostle Paul said, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (II Cor. 5:10).
10. Because the first servant had been faithful in a very little, his master gave him authority over ten cities (19:17). The principle taught is faithfulness in little things brings about greater opportunities and greater blessings.
11. Our Lord said in Luke 16:10, “He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.”
12. “And the second came...” (19:18). Because the second servant had also been faithful, his master gave him authority over five cities (19:19).
13. The second servant wasn’t as zealous as the first servant. He was given the same proportion – five cities for five pounds, but he wasn’t given the same commendation, “Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful...” (cf. 19:17).
14. Once again, we are reminded of the judgment seat of Christ, when different rewards will be given. All Christians will be there, but not all Christians will receive the same commendation, nor the same reward.
15. God wants us to do our best for Him. Worldly people accept mediocracy, but Christians should strive for excellence.

*Every work for Jesus will be blest,  
But He asks from everyone his best.*

*Our talents may be few, these may be small,  
But unto Him is due our best, our all.* (Salathiel C. Kirk)

16. The apostle Paul wrote in Romans 16:12, “Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord.”
17. Some Christians (like this second servant) faithfully labor for the Lord. But there are others (like the first servant), who “labor much” (Romans 16:12).
18. The book of Nehemiah chapter 3 describes the building of the walls in Jerusalem. Nehemiah 3:5 says the Tekoites repaired the wall, “but their nobles put not their necks to the work of their LORD.”
19. In other words, the Tekoites repaired the wall, but the nobles didn’t put forth much effort. Sadly, there are many Christians like that.
20. Why do some churches prosper, and others do not? In many churches, the members “put not their necks to the work of their LORD.”

### **III. THE LORD’S PUNISHMENT**

1. The third servant did not trade with the pound his lord had given him. He kept the pound “laid up in a napkin” (19:20).
2. In other words, this servant did not do a thing with the pound that was given to him. Let me remind you that you do not have to do anything to go to hell.
3. You don’t have to rob a bank or kill someone or lie and cheat. Just do nothing and you will surely go straight to hell.
4. Jesus said in Mark 16:15, 16, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
5. The ones who believe are “saved,” and the ones who do not believe are “damned.” It has been said that neglect was the shortest way to hell.

6. This servant gave a foolish excuse for his disobedience, and even on that basis his master condemned him – “Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?” (Luke 19:22, 23).
7. The nobleman said that if the wicked servant was too lazy to trade with the pound, he could have at least put it into the bank where it would draw interest.
8. There are many lessons here. The servant misrepresented his lord, just as many people misrepresent the character of God (19:21). The servant said his master was “austere” (too strict, harsh, hard, severe, oppressive).
9. Albert Barnes said, “We are not to suppose that God is unjust or austere; but what we are to learn from this is, that as men know that God will be just, and will call them to a strict account in the day of judgment, they ought to be prepared to meet him, and that they cannot then complain if God should condemn them.”
10. When God gives us opportunities and abilities, He also gives us grace. We must seek to do our best and try to use the little which we have. The nobleman rebuked the unfaithful servant for not having done the least which was possible.
11. This parable reminds us that there is never any real excuse for idleness and inactivity and failure to achieve something in the cause of Christ.
12. The nobleman said to them that stood by, “Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds” (19:24, 25). Faithfulness results in a great increase, but unfaithfulness always brings loss.
13. Back in Luke 19:14, we read that the nobleman’s citizens “hated him,” and sent a message after him, saying, “We will not have this man to reign over us.”
14. These citizens are described as his “enemies” in verse 27. Romans 5:10 says that before we were saved, “we were enemies” of God, but now we have been “reconciled to God by the death of his Son.”
15. Have you been reconciled, or are you still God’s enemy?
16. It is foolish to fight God (cf. 19:27).



17. Colossians 1:21 says, “And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.”

18. Enemies of God cannot win. Psalm 9:17 says, “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.”

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. Charles Thomas Studd was born in England in 1860. He was saved in 1878 at the age of 18.
2. The Lord led C.T. Studd to go to China. Then to India, and Africa.
3. C.T. Studd was one of the “Cambridge Seven” who offered themselves to Hudson Taylor for missionary service in the China Inland Mission and in February, 1885, sailed for China.
4. It was while he was in China that C.T. Studd reached the age (25 years old) in which according to his father’s will he was to inherit a large sum of money. Through reading God’s Word and much prayer, C.T. Studd felt led to give his entire fortune to Christ!
5. Three years after arriving in China, C.T. Studd married a young Irish missionary from Ulster named Priscilla Livingstone Stewart. Just before the wedding he presented his bride with the remaining money from his inheritance. She, not to be outdone, said, “Charlie, what did the Lord tell the rich young man to do?”
6. C.T. Studd replied, “Sell all.”
7. “Well then, we will start clear with the Lord at our wedding.” And they proceeded to give the rest of the money away for the Lord’s work.
8. In 1900 the Studd family went to South India where C.T. Studd served as a pastor of a church for six years.
9. Contrary to medical advice, C.T. Studd sailed for Africa in 1910, where he continued to work until his death in 1931.
10. “Only One Life” by C.T. Studd, missionary to China, India, and Africa

Two little lines I heard one day, Traveling along life's busy way;  
Bringing conviction to my heart, And from my mind would not depart;  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last.

Only one life, yes only one, Soon will its fleeting hours be done;  
Then, in 'that day' my Lord to meet, And stand before His Judgment seat;  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last.

Only one life, the still small voice, Gently pleads for a better choice  
Bidding me selfish aims to leave, And to God's holy will to cleave;  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last.

Only one life, a few brief years, Each with its burdens, hopes, and fears;  
Each with its clays I must fulfill, living for self or in His will;  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last.

When this bright world would tempt me sore, When Satan would a victory score;  
When self would seek to have its way, Then help me Lord with joy to say;  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last.

Give me Father, a purpose deep, In joy or sorrow Thy word to keep;  
Faithful and true what e'er the strife, Pleasing Thee in my daily life;  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last.

Oh let my love with fervor burn, And from the world now let me turn;  
Living for Thee, and Thee alone, Bringing Thee pleasure on Thy throne;  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last.

Only one life, yes only one, Now let me say, "Thy will be done";  
And when at last I'll hear the call, I know I'll say 'twas worth it all;  
Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last.