



Luke 19:11-28
The Parable of the Minas

Luke 19:11 Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately.

12 Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return.

13 "So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.'

14 "But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.'

15 "And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

16 "Then came the first, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas.'

17 "And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.'

18 "And the second came, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned five minas.'

19 "Likewise he said to him, 'You also be over five cities.'

20 "Then another came, saying, 'Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief.

21 'For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.'

22 "And he said to him, 'Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow.

23 'Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that 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 him who has ten minas.'

25 ("But they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas.')

26 'For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.

27 'But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.' "

28 When He had said this, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

A lot of people confuse the parable we have just read with the similar parable of the talents in Matthew 25, and while they have several common elements, they are not the same parable and they teach different things.

This parable, rightly understood, should be one of the most sobering parables in the entire New Testament, especially to those within the church. It is one of those parables, like the parable of the

foolish virgins in Matthew 25, that Jesus uses to say **"WAKE UP!"** to his followers. So I hope that this morning your ears will be open to hear his warning and His encouragement and to act on it.

Now what is going on in the context of these verses? As you know, Jesus is going up to Jerusalem, he is getting nearer and nearer to his goal. As a matter of fact, here in Jericho, he is now only 17 miles from the city gates. He has warned his disciples again and again, *why* he is going to Jerusalem. Ultimately, he is going to be delivered into the hands of the Gentiles, to be mocked, scourged, and then crucified. Still though, the message isn't sinking in. That can't be what happens to the Messiah! He has been telling us the Kingdom of God has come near, so that must mean that somehow, the Davidic Kingdom, with all of its past glories, is going to be reinaugurated. The Kingdom of Israel is about to be restored! We can just feel it. No more Romans! No more oppression! No more sinners in charge! Justice and liberty will abound for God's people.

But again, he is trying to tell them, that is *not what is going to happen in Jerusalem*. In fact, He is once again telling them that His time with them is growing short. Soon enough Jesus will be ascending to Heaven, returning in triumph once again to the right hand of God the father. And then there will be a long time of testing, a time of separation, a time when the good news of the gospel will be preached to all nations. All this must take place before Christ can return as Judge.

So he gives them an allegory they could understand. At that time, Palestine was part of the Roman Empire, and it was Caesar who appointed the Kings and Rulers within the Empire. For instance, Herod the Great had gone to Rome to plead his worthiness to be Ruler and had been appointed King of Palestine by the Roman Senate and installed in that position over his more legitimate rivals by the power of the Roman Legions. In turn he divided his kingdom on his death amongst his sons, hoping that Herod Archelaus would succeed him. Archelaus plead with Augustus to be made King but he was such a terrible ruler that his subjects sent a delegation to Rome saying in essence "we don't want this man to be our king." So Augustus only made him Ethnarch of Samaria, Judaea and Idumea, saying that he would have to prove himself worthy if he was going to be king. He failed to do this and was removed from power and sent into exile in 6 AD.

So everyone listening to Jesus would have understood the idea of having to travel to a far country to receive a kingdom. In fact had his disciples immediately understood, they would have understood that this was precisely what was prophesied in Psalm 110 by David:

NKJ Psalm 110:1 A Psalm of David. The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."

2 The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies!

So who are the players in the parable as Jesus unfolds it?

- 1) The nobleman, is Jesus, the Prince of Peace, the Son of God.
- 2) The Far Country is Heaven, to which Jesus is about to return.
- 3) The Ten Servants are Mankind, they are divided into 2 groups

- 4) The first group, is the larger part of mankind. These are the worldlings, the people outside the church, who hate Jesus and His Rule. These are people who simply say "WE WILL NOT HAVE THIS MAN JESUS TO REIGN OVER US!"

You see that Spirit of Open rebellion against the King and his Son personified in another Psalm, Psalm 2:

NKJ Psalm 2:1 Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing?

2 The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying,

3 "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us."

4 He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The LORD shall hold them in derision.

- 5) The second group is smaller these are the 3 who are willing to be known as his servants, these are the members of the visible church. .
- 6) **The Sixth Element are the Minas. A minas in reality was a unit of money equal to about a hundred days wages for a laborer. Now what are the Minas in the parable?** – and note each of them gets the same amount, each of them gets one. So its not like in the parable of the Talents where each has a different amount distributed to him from the outset. We should think of this Minas not as particular spiritual gifts, but the gifts of grace God makes freely available to all, but which the larger part of the world wants no part of. They are things like his word, his promises, his church, his offices, prayer, the sacraments, the fellowship of the saints, the Sabbath, and so on. *The things which all Christians have available to them.*

Christ commands his servants to take these resources he gives to them, and to use them in his service. He expects an increase in his investment. He plants the seed in the ground, and expects a harvest when he returns. How do we do this? By using those resources to accomplish the great commission! First, so that they would grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, but also, in making disciples!

- 7) His going away was the Ascension, his return will be the Final Judgment. When He returns he calls His servants to Him, and He judges them according to what they have done with their minas, what they have done with the resources that they all had.
- 8) The first servant represents those who used His gifts diligently and wisely, they did all they could with them, and produced a ten-fold increase. With these Servants, Jesus will be well pleased, and he tells them so. Not only that he graciously gives them great rewards. There is obviously a huge difference between 10 Minas and 10 Cities.
- 9) The Second Servant represents those who have not been as diligent as the first group, and yet have still registered an increase. They still obtain a great reward, but you can imagine that it will be tinged with a little bit of sorrow that they did not also obtain the praise given to the first group.
- 10) The third servant represents those who called themselves disciples of Christ, but who utterly neglected the gifts made available to them. They did not register any increase at all. In fact, they seek to excuse themselves by saying "Look, here's your stuff, I didn't lose anything – of course not,

they didn't *use* anything either – *its like when you loan a friend a book, he keeps it for several years, and then returns it with the spine obviously unbroken.*

To make matters worse, the third servant complains that Jesus is severe and unjust ruler, expecting an unreasonable profit. He says, you expect to reap where you didn't actually sow. In other words, ***"Its not fair, you expected to profit from the labor of others!"***

Imagine if you will the following scenario, your company sets you up in a foreign city, they give you a contact list, an expense account, a company car, and clear directions as to what you are supposed to be doing out there. When your boss visits a year later though, he finds out you have done none of the things he expected you to be doing and that for the last 365 days you did nothing on his list of directions. Before he can even complain, you hand him back the contact list saying you met no one, the credit card saying you charged nothing, the car keys saying you didn't drive an inch and that he should be satisfied with that and that if he wanted a profit, he should have come out here and done the work himself - SO THERE!

Let me ask you three questions: Would you expect to earn a promotion or a pat on the head? Would you expect to keep your position? Would you expect to keep the stuff entrusted to you? NO! ***What could you expect?*** You would be fired in a heartbeat, and your resources would be given to someone with a proven track record of obeying the company's directions, right?

Well that is what happens to the third servant in the parable. He clearly was no true servant of the master. This man was a Christian in name only. So in the end, he will be no better off than those who spent their lives in open rebellion against Jesus.

Now let me give you some applications of this parable:

This parable isn't teaching that we are saved by good works. We are saved by Faith Alone in the Lord Jesus Christ. "if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." (Romans 10:9)

But what does Jesus teach us about the value of works? He says they are an excellent measure of being able to tell the difference between a true Christian and a false one. Anyone can profess to be a Christian, anyone can say they believe in Jesus Christ. But you know that you can only truly say that if your heart has been changed, regenerated by the work of the Holy Spirit. Now you can't tell if someone has a new heart by looking at them, so what do you look for, you look for fruit... How can you tell if a tree really is an apple tree? At harvest time it has apples! ***Therefore by their fruits you will know them.***

Kids – If I were to say to you, I was your friend and that I really liked you, but I was always mean to you, and whenever I had a chance I broke your toys, and I made fun of you, or beat you up, would you believe I was your friend? No! It wouldn't matter that I said I was your friend, the things I did and said to you, my works proved I was your enemy.

Well that's like the world, the people who say to Jesus "We don't want you to be our king!" and spend their time being mean to him and his followers.

But what if I said, I was your friend and that I really liked you, and I didn't beat you up, or make fun of you, but I never listened to what you said, I ignored you, and I didn't want to spend time with you or go to your house, or play with your toys. Would you believe I was your friend? No! Because that's not the things a friend does either!

Well Kids, there are lot of people in the world who say they are friends of Jesus, who say they are Christians, but they never listen to Him, they ignore Him, and they don't really want to spend time with Him. Do you think they really are His friends? No. Because that's not how you act towards a friend is it? That's certainly not the way we should act towards Jesus.

Brothers and Sisters, you are here, I know you are not utter worldlings, enemies of Christ living in utter rebellion, and that is good, very Good.

But according to this parable that still leaves 3 catagories for you to be in:

1) Those who are true servants of Christ, who have changed hearts, and who are dilligent in the use of the means of grace

Well DONE O good and faithful servant, to you I would say do not grow weary in well-doing.

2) Those who are true servants of Christ, who have changed hearts, but frankly who are not nearly as dilligent as you could be.

Do not despair, you have no reason to do so.

3) Those who have a profession

Those who will be left knocking on the door at the end of time

Rev. 6:9 When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.

10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"

11 Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.

12 I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood.

13 And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind.

14 Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.

15 And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains,

16 and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!

17 "For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"