

# Well Done!

Matthew 25:14-30

**BI: Joyful waiting and diligent working. This is how faithful slaves anticipate and prepare for their Master's return.**

Read Matt. 25:14-30

This morning is what has become known as Vision Sunday. Once a year the elders ask me to stand before you and present what we have come to know as our biblically informed, fallible, dependent plan for future ministry (i.e. our Vision for ministry). Every year we ask the Lord to help us honestly evaluate the life and ministries of Calvary Bible Church with a heart that says, "Search us, O God. Put the searchlight of your word upon this church and show us where we are weak, or disobedient, or ill-informed." Show us how we can serve you more faithfully and effectively in the next few years compared to the past few years.

The reason I chose Matthew 25 as the text for this morning is because I think it gives us a biblical bases for the kind of thinking and planning that I want to talk to you about relative to the future of Calvary's ministry plan. So let's begin by looking at the text.

The first think I want you to notice is that there are two parables placed back-to-back in chapter 25. The larger context starting in chap 24 is the return of Christ. And the question I think Jesus is answering for us is, how should we live in this world while we are waiting for Christ's return? The first parable is the Parable of the Virgins (25:1-13). And I think the message of that parable is that the Lord wants us to prepare for his return by waiting expectantly. The key phrase is (13) "be on the alert." We may have to wait for a long time so we should be prepared for that, and wait expectantly, joyfully, contemplatively (i.e. we should consider, and talk about, and glory in the promise of His return).

But there is another way we should anticipate his coming. On the one hand we should be joyfully waiting. On the other hand, we should be diligently working until He comes. This is what the Parable of the Talents us all about. Now, let's makes some observations from the text.

## **I. The Master entrusted his possessions to "His own slaves."**

1. Slaves in ancient times were often household managers as appears to be the case here. These were the Master's personal attendants. He knew them. He chose them as His special servants to manage his estate and care for all that belonged to Him. In this case, the master has three trusted slaves.
2. To these three slaves the master gives a certain number of talents. A "talent" was sum of money. To one slave he gave five talents. The second he gave two, and to the last He gave one.

3. Notice that he gave a certain amount to each slave (15) “according to his ability.” So now the story is taking shape. The estate owner is Christ, the Slaves are his people (that’s you and me), and the talents are the resources portioned out according to our ability.
4. Now let’s see what happens. Read 16-18.

## **II. The Master expected His slaves to invest his resources:**

1. Notice that the first slave took his five talents (16) and “traded with them.” The wording here indicates that the slave did business with his talents over a long period of time. And I think its safe to say that the Slave with the 2 talents did the same thing.
2. Now its important to observe that trading (or engaging in business and investments) requires risk. There was a chance that even a faithful slave might lose part of his Master’s investment even if he was a careful investor. That’s just part of business. It involves risk.
3. The third slave apparently knew the risks as well as the other two men but the thought of losing his Master’s money gripped him with fear. We know that because the man’s excuse for not taking the necessary risks of investment was (25) “I was afraid.”

## **III. The Master had planned a day of reckoning:**

1. Read v. 19.
2. The meaning here is clear, isn’t it? One day we will all have to stand before our Master and give an accounting for what we did with the resources He entrusted to our care. And He is going to want to see a return on His investments.
3. Not this is very motivational. The truth that one day we will have to give an accounting of what we did with God’s resources should inspire us to get to work, subdue our fears, take risks, and bear fruit for God.
4. But it’s not only the future accountability that motivates us. No. God is an abundantly gracious Father. He loves us and desires to reward us for our faithfulness to Him while we wait for His appearing. And that’s what we see in 20-23...

## **IV. The day of reckoning will be a day of reward:**

1. **Read 20-23**
2. Now, I don’t know about you, but I long to hear my Master say to me “Well done, good and faithful slave.” “Well done.” The elders of this church long to hear the Master say to this little band of under-shepherds, “Well done!”
3. This is NO small thing to us. We understand that God requires that we not only wait joyfully for His return but that we also work diligently until He returns; And not just diligently, but boldly. He doesn’t want us merely to sit around in our “Holy Huddle”

singing *Kum Ba Ya* until he comes. Rather, He wants us to make wise investments with His resources, taking appropriate risks to ensure the greatest return. And all of it must be done by the power of His grace, a deep love for Christ, and faithfulness to His word.

4. Now, with that said I want to talk to you about what that may look like in the life of Calvary Bible Church over the next few years.

#### APPLICATION:

##### 1. Remembering the Past:

- A. God's past grace empowers us to trust in His promises of future grace. O' how gracious God has been to us in the past.
- B. It was just a few short years ago that the elders concluded that we have to do something to accommodate the growth of the church. We considered a lot of different scenarios to do that over a very long period of time. In the end, however, we concluded that the Lord would be most please if we did two things: 1) Add a building that would increase our usable ministry space, and 2) send a solid group of people away to plant a new church in a different city.
- C. New Building:
  - a. By God's grace the new building is almost complete.
  - b. I say "almost" complete because there is one more phase of construction that is going to start in Late October that will transform our old kitchen and the north end of the old fellowship hall into the additional classrooms that we need, and also give us a brand new library right outside this door where the baby nursery is now.
- D. Church Plant:
  - a. I am please to announce this morning that the plan for the Church Plant in Mansfield is right on track. In fact, that future church now has a name. It will be called Living Hope Bible Church (1 Pet. 1:3 "Born again to a living hope")
  - b. Launch Date June 14, 2015
  - c. Elders – Brent, Les, and Current elders.
  - d. Beloved, I realize there are certain risks associated with this plan. And I would suggest that that is one of the reasons we are doing it! God want's us to take risks for His glory; Not blind, poorly planned, senseless risks but risks that are consistent with the command, promises, principles, and precepts of His Word.

## 2. Planning for the Future:

- A. We have some wonderful immediate plans that you already know about.
  - a. Women's Retreat (Tammy Van Nest) on the weekend of Oct. 10-11.
  - b. Answers In Genesis is coming to do a conference on the sufficiency and reliability of God's word on Oct. 19-20.
- B. But let me tell you where my heart is when I think of the future.
  - a. I love the fact that we are planting a church in Mansfield. But my primary concern from here on is not the church plant. My goal this year has been to unseat myself from the captain's chair on that effort and let Brent assume that role instead. I'm happy to say that that has now happened.
  - b. My concern now is not the church plant. My concern is the health and wellbeing of Calvary Bible Church when Living Hope Bible church leaves. That's not going to be an easy time. We loves those families and they loves us. We have been serving together in ministry for a long time. And while this move is really exciting for them, it has the potential of being a "downer" for us. So what can we do about that?
  - c. My focus is now on answering that question. How can we plan for that transition in such a way that not only preserves but strengthens the unity of Calvary Bible Church. We don't merely want to maintain the status quo, but look for ways to strengthen the community and the fellowship that we already have.
  - d. That's going to take some creative thinking and perhaps a little risk taking. But we need to do it.
    - i. I would love to see us have a family retreat where we can get away together and just fellowship and enjoy being together.
    - ii. We need to get into one another's homes where we can encourage one another in personal and practical ways and where we can grow in Christ in the context of intimate community.
    - iii. We need your help in thinking through these things.
    - iv. On a practical level, one of the fundamental needs we have is to learn one another's names. And to help with that we are launching Calvary's first-ever digital directory. In fact, if you are on the church's email list you should have a message in your inbox right now with instructions on how to load this on your devices. This is a secure service and you can tell us what information you want listed on the app. Photos will be taken just outside this morning if you want to update yours for the directory

- Discipleship:

- a. Great commission (Matt. 28:19-20)
- b. I think we are doing better at discipleship than we ever have before as a church (Counseling, Discipleship, etc)
- c. A growing priority in the future will be Leadership Training.
  - i. For the past two years we have had what I like to call our Leadership Training Institute (primarily to prepare for the church plant).
  - ii. In the future, we want to use that vehicle to train other leaders (Deacons, elders, ministry leaders, etc).
- d. Interns:
  - i. Summer Interns (John M. Calvin K.)
  - ii. James Dunfee
- e. Trail Life:
- f. Taking the gospel to the World:
  - i. Mission trips:
    - 1. Uganda, SGA,
    - 2. Japan, Argentina?

### 3. Trusting the Lord for His Provision:

- a) Joe Oliver has always reminded the elders over the years that “God’s work done in God’s way will never lack God’s provision.”
- b) We have seen that so many times over the years, and that is certainly the case now.
- c) A few weeks ago while my wife were out for Breakfast...
  - a. \$850,000.00 (how will we use this)
    - \$100,000 to church plant over 4 years
    - No offering, but we will make a list of needs that you can contribute to.
    - Other ministry need (SOS Ministries, SGA, Pregnancy Help Center)
    - 10% of total - \$85,000
    - Will not use this fund for Operating Expenses.

There are other plans we are working on.

Motive: In the end we simply want to hear the Master say to us, "Well Done."