

REDISCOVER JESUS, PART 71:
“THE KING’S EXPECTED RETURN ON INVESTMENT”
LUKE 19:11-27
Ps. Eric Yee

Personal Introduction

Hi everyone. If you don't know me, my name is Eric and I'm a pastor at HMCC of Jakarta, and it's my privilege to preach the Word of God to us today.

Sermon Series Introduction

We're currently in Part 71 of our sermon series called "Rediscover Jesus," where we're going through the Gospel of Luke together.

So let's get right into today's sermon: "The King's Expected Return on Investment."

Introduction

I recently discovered a new Indonesian term that I found fascinating; it's the term "magabut."

It stands for "makan gaji buta," which literally means "eat blind salary." It's an idiom that means "to receive a salary without doing any work."

It's the kind of person who has a job to do, but instead of using the time and resources invested in him to do that job, he spends his time browsing social media, playing games on his phone, and just chatting with other people.

That's "magabut."

But let's say you're the boss of the company that continues to pour time and resources into this "magabut" person, and he has nothing to show for it. How do you think you would respond?

<pause>

Now in today's passage, Jesus will tell a parable (or story), where we'll come across someone that we might describe as "magabut."

He has a job to do, and he's entrusted with the time and resources to do it, but instead of faithfully applying himself to do that job, he does absolutely nothing.

And when the king who entrusted him with the job, time, and resources *returns*, what do you think will happen to that person?

That's what we'll be looking at more in today's passage.

The One Thing

When King Jesus returns, he will expect a return.

Scripture Introduction

Turn your Bibles to Luke 19:11-27.

Just want to give a bit of context before jumping into today's passage.

Last week, we saw Zacchaeus, a very rich *chief* tax collector in Jericho and the *last individual* that Jesus interacted with before entering into Jerusalem, where he *knew* he would be soon arrested and crucified.

Jesus went over Zacchaeus's house, and it ended with Zacchaeus *evidencing* repentance and faith through leaving his life of extortion and defrauding others, and Jesus confidently declaring, "Today salvation has come to this house" and "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:9-10).

And that's where we are in today's passage, as we look at the *last parable* that Jesus will tell in Luke's Gospel account.

Scripture Reading

Let's read Luke 19:11-27.

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.'"

This is God's Word.

Now this "parable of the ten minas," on the surface, sounds *very similar* to another parable known as "the parable of the talents" in Matthew's Gospel account (Matt. 25:14-30).

The two parables are *similar* in structure and wording, but just like any seasoned teacher would do, Jesus would modify his parables to fit different situations and emphasize slightly different truths.

Jesus tells the two parables at two *different* times in his ministry—the parable of the ten minas *before* his triumphal entry and the parable of the talents *after* his triumphal entry.

Also, in the parable of talents:

- there is no mention of a king or a kingdom;
- no mention of his enemies;
- there are differing number of servants;

- a talent, which is worth 20 years' wages for a laborer, is a significantly different amount than a mina, which is only 3 months' wages;
- there were differing amounts given to each servant;
- there are no ten cities or five cities mentioned as rewards;
- and it is *very clear* that the wicked servant is cast "into the outer darkness," where "there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth," which is a clear picture of hell.

So as we go through this parable of the ten minas, *though* there are similarities with the parable of the talents, we should note that the two parables are *distinct* from one another.

Overview

We'll look at this passage in three parts.

- I. King Jesus has expectations for his servants (vv. 11-14)
- II. King Jesus has rewards for the faithful (vv. 15-19)
- III. King Jesus has punishment for the unfaithful (vv. 20-27)

I. King Jesus has expectations for his servants (vv. 11-14)

Look at verse 11.

[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.]

There was a certain context for Jesus telling this parable.

In Jesus' last two exchanges with the blind beggar and the Zacchaeus, Jesus has been identified as "Son of David" and "Son of Man," which were both titles for the long-expected messianic King—or the promised King of the kingdom of God.

And Jesus' *entire* ministry has been centered on this theme of "the kingdom of God."

- He said he was sent for the purpose of *preaching* the kingdom of God (Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:11).
- He taught his disciples *about* the kingdom of God and then sent them *out* to *proclaim* the kingdom of God (Luke 8:10; 9:2, 60).
- He also told people to *seek* the kingdom of God (Luke 12:31), that the kingdom of God has come *near* (Luke 10:9, 11), and to *pray* "your kingdom *come*" (Luke 11:2),
- He talked about how the kingdom of God *belongs* to the *poor* (Luke 6:20) and those who are like *children* (Luke 18:16).
- He talked about people being *in* the kingdom and those being *cast out* (Luke 13:28).
- He talked about people coming from all over the world to *recline* at table in the kingdom of God (Luke 13:29; 14:15).
- He talked about how it is *impossible* by our own strength to *enter* into the kingdom of God (Luke 18:17, 24, 25), but also how it is God's pleasure to *give* them the kingdom (Luke 12:32), and that the kingdom of God is to be *received* (Luke 18:17).
- He talked about how we are to do things *for the sake of* the kingdom of God (Luke 18:29).

And he didn't just talk about the kingdom of God, but he evidenced what the Old Testament prophets said would accompany the coming of the kingdom of God: "the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them" (Luke 7:22; cf. 4:18-19).

So you can just feel the excitement in the air as Jesus approached Jerusalem, which we'll see more next week as we look at his triumphal entry and the response of the crowds there.

But it's because "they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately." The Jews expected Jesus to be the *conquering* King who would overthrow their Roman oppressors and re-establish theocratic Israel in all its glory as in the time of King David and King Solomon. *That* was the "good news of the kingdom of God" (Luke 4:43) that *they* expected.

The Jews expected that the kingdom of God would come *all at once*, when the King would execute *final* judgment and make all things *right*, and that *that* would mean “good news” for all of them as God’s people.

But that’s *not* how it would be. And Jesus told this parable to correct and prepare them for what was to come.

The kingdom of God would not come *all at once* but in two parts—in Jesus’ *first* and *second* coming. In his *first* coming, he would come as the *suffering* King to stand in the place of his people, so that their sins could be forgiven; and in his *second* coming, he would then come as the *conquering* King to execute final judgment and make all things right, but it would only mean “good news” for those who faithfully awaited his return.

Look at verses 12-14

[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.’]

Here, we’re introduced to all the characters in the parable. There is the *nobleman-king*, there are his ten *servants*, and there are his *citizens*.

The nobleman goes into a far country to receive a kingdom, but he would later return. The fact that it is a *far* country gives the impression that it will be some time before he returns.

But before he leaves, he calls ten of his servants, entrusting one mina to each of his servants and commanded them to engage in business until he returns.

But the citizens of the nobleman’s area protest and reject him as their king.

<pause>

Now the *nobleman-king* refers to *Jesus*, his *servants* refer to his *disciples*, and his *citizens* that *rejected* him refer to *everyone else*.

In the parable, the nobleman *starts* in a place, *goes* to a far country, and then after a period of time, he *returns* to the same place.

In the same way, in his *first* coming, Jesus *starts* his ministry on *earth*, and after his death and resurrection, he *ascended* into *heaven* (the “far country”) to sit down at the right hand of God (Heb. 10:12-13; Acts 2:34-36)—or to “receive for himself a kingdom.” He currently *reigns* from heaven over the entire cosmos (Eph. 1:20-21; 1 Pet. 3:22; Heb. 1:3- 4, 13), and he will one day “return” to *earth* in his second coming.

But *before* Jesus ascended to heaven, he called his disciples together and entrusted them with the one and the same gospel message (1 Thess. 2:4; 1 Tim. 1:11; 6:20; 2 Tim. 2:2).

So in that sense, each disciple receives the same exact “investment capital” (so to speak). We’ve all been given the same gospel of Jesus Christ, and we’ve all been given the same command to “Engage in business until I come.” Therefore, we must “invest the investment Christ has made in us.” We are to “multiply our spiritual capital” by investing the gospel and increase its yield in and through our lives.¹

In other words, King Jesus has expectations for his servants.

¹ R. Kent Hughes, *Luke*, rev. ed., PTW (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013).

In this time between Jesus' first and second coming, we as his disciples are to be *submitted* to him as King, to invest the *gospel* he entrusted us with in things that will yield spiritual gain, and to *trust* that he *will* surely return.

But in the period between Jesus' first and second coming, even as King Jesus *reigns* from heaven over the entire *cosmos* (Eph. 1:20-21; 1 Pet. 3:22; Heb. 1:3- 4, 13), there will also be many who actively *protest* and *reject* him as their King.

<pause>

So how about us?

If you consider yourself a servant of Christ, how are you putting the gospel to work? What return are you making on your King's investment? What profit will you have to show when Jesus comes again?²

Now, maybe you're thinking, "Well, what does investing the gospel *look* like?"

In terms of your own relationship with your King, if you recognize how amazing is this gift your King has entrusted to you, it might look like investing time to know him more intimate through his Word; through prayers of adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and petition; and through gathering regularly as a meaningful member of his church; through intentionally using all those "ordinary means of grace" as ways to grow and mature and become more Christ-like.

In terms of your relationships with others, it's not just having a close buddy to travel with or having a group of friends to grow old with, but investing the gospel might look like initiating friendships with those who are different than you, apologizing to those you have hurt, forgiving and reconciling with those who have sinned against you, intentionally helping others to grow and follow Jesus, and sharing the gospel to persuade others to put their trust in Jesus.

In terms of investing the gospel in your family, it's not just getting food on the table, sending your kids to good schools, or making sure that they're developing well physically and socially, but having what is more eternal in mind. That might look like praying for your family members; asking more questions to show genuine interest; sharing encouragements; spending undistracted time together to just enjoy one another; leading by example in saying, "sorry that I hurt you; will you forgive me?"; and regularly singing worship songs, reading the Bible, and praying together (also known as "family worship").

In terms of investing the gospel in your work, it might look like working with diligence and integrity, neither idling at work or idolizing work, but seeing work as a means of serving the common good, as a way to manifest the glory of our King through creative excellence, and as an influence on culture that glimpses the full restoration to come in the gospel. Very practically, how much do you complain about work? If you want to be almost instantaneously different and more winsome at your workplace, commit to stop complaining and commit to speak well of your work and the people you work with.

In terms of investing the gospel among the marginalized in our city and the unreached in our world, it might look like serving on our Benevolence team, volunteering at an existing missional initiative, advocating for issues of social justice, praying for ministries and missionaries, and giving towards faithful missions work.

As you hear these different examples of what it might look like to invest the gospel in different aspects of your life, the point is not to get overwhelmed by what we're not doing or to get stuck in "analysis paralysis," but the point is you can start investing the gospel right away in a variety of different ways.

It's so easy to get swept away in all the distractions and busyness of life that we don't pause to see what we're investing in and how our investments are doing.

I think we would all benefit from doing this from time to time. Ask yourself, "How am I investing the gospel in various aspects of my life? And what return am I making on my King's investment?"

² Philip Graham Ryken, *Luke*, REC (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2009).

But if you're listening to this, and in your heart, you have little desire to invest the gospel in our lives, then you need to ask yourself a more fundamental question: Are you truly submitted to Jesus as King?

If the way that you live your life doesn't look much different from those who say, "We do not want this man to reign over us," then you don't have much assurance that you're a follower of Christ.

If your *life* rejects Jesus as King, that's basically the same as your *lips* rejecting him as King.

But if you genuinely *desire* to invest the gospel that has been entrusted to you but you're just struggling to do so, thank God you are not left to yourself. Thank God that the gospel *message* our King has *entrusted* to us comes with a gospel *community* to *encourage* us.

In a world that rejects Jesus as King, thank God that he has placed us in local churches as *embassies* (or *outposts*) of the kingdom of God, where we are constantly reminded that "our citizenship is in heaven" (Phil. 3:20).

In a culture that is constantly trying to entice us with distractions and other counterfeit gods, thank God that we are regularly reoriented towards our true King and the culture of the kingdom of God. When we gather together as a church. we sing our national anthem in our songs of worship, we teach our constitution in the preaching of God's Word, we issue passports to new citizens of God's kingdom through baptism, and we enjoy a foretaste of the future national feast in the Lord's Supper.³

It is by our King's good design that he has placed us in local embassies of his kingdom to be constantly reminded of who our King is, the gospel he has entrusted to us, the expectation he has for us to invest that gospel in every aspect of our lives, and the very fact that he will surely return to hold us accountable and make all things right.

<pause>

So first, King Jesus has expectations for his servants—to invest the gospel and increase its yield in and through our lives; and second...

II. King Jesus has rewards for the faithful (vv. 15-19)

Look at verse 15.

[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.]

Here, the nobleman returns *as king*, and the final accounting begins right away with his ten servants. He "orders" that they be called to him, and they must each stand before him alone and give an account for how they stewarded and invested the mina that was entrusted to them.

And notice, the last clause: "that he might know what they had gained by doing business." He *expected* a gain from them. He expected a *return* on what he invested in *them*.

Look at verses 16-19.

[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.']

³ See Matthew Merker, *Corporate Worship* (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2021), 35-38. See also Jonathan Leeman, *Church Membership* (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2012), 27-30.

The first servant calls the nobleman-king “Lord,” and says, “your mina has made ten minas more.” That’s a 1000% gain!

But notice the servant’s humility; he doesn’t say, “*I* have made ten minas more,” but he takes no credit for it. It’s as if the *mina* that he was given by the *king* did all the work.

And the king then *commends* him, “Well done, *good* servant!” And as *reward*, he gives him “*authority over ten cities*” *because* he has been faithful in “a very little.”

Notice a few things here.

First, we see the outrageously disproportionate reward that the king gives to his servant.

A yield of ten minas was 1000% gain, but if you think about it, it’s still only 30 months’ wages for a laborer, which amounts to about 2.5 years. It’s a lot in some sense, but ten *minas* is *nothing* when compares to the reward of having *authority over ten cities* in the kingdom.

Just compare 2.5 years of wages for a laborer vs. authority over Jakarta, Surabaya, Bandung, Medan, Palembang, Semarang, Makassar, Lampung, Pekanbaru, and Padang.

Even if we pick more obscure cities, it doesn’t matter. Everyone knows that one *mina* is not anywhere close to being on par with one *city*.

The *generosity* of the *king* is outrageously disproportionate to the *yield* of the *servant*.

Second, when we see the immense *generosity* of the king, we realize that this was never really about the mina. The king owns the whole kingdom. What is one or even ten minas for him?

Rather, this was all some sort of *test*, you could say. It was never *really* about the *mina*, but it was a test of *loyalty* and *faithfulness*.

In terms of loyalty, would the servant still be loyal in his submission to him as king *even when* he was away for a long period of time? Would he trust that the king would one day return?

In terms of faithfulness, would he faithfully invest the one mina he was given for the sake of the king, or would he squander it on himself or nothing at all?

And for those who showed themselves to be *loyal* and *faithful*, he was ready to pour out such generous rewards upon them.

<pause>

The second servant is then called to give an account. He addresses the king in the same way (“Lord”) and with the same humility (“your mina has made five minas”), not taking any credit for the 500% gain that he made on the king’s investment.

And in presenting the parable, Jesus cuts to the chase with the outrageously disproportionate reward for the second servant (“And you are to be over five cities”).

<pause>

So what does this all mean for us?

First, King Jesus *owns* everything, and we are *merely* stewards of what he has entrusted to us. And even more than the king in the parable, our King is sovereign, so that means that *everything* in our lives ultimately comes from his hand, which doesn’t just mean *money*, but also includes our body, time, skills, health, and every situation.

So when you think of stewardship, you shouldn't just think in terms of *resources* but literally *everything* you have. But I want to particularly call our attention to our *sufferings*.

How are you *stewarding* the suffering that God has placed in your life? What might it look like to invest the *gospel* in your suffering?

There are some who throw out the gospel when they suffer, and there are some who hold onto the gospel more tightly when they suffer. There is a way to *squander* our suffering in bitterness and resentment, and there is a way to *steward* our suffering for the glory of God.

The fact that our Sovereign King owns everything and orchestrates everything is most fundamental principle to understand what it means to be a faithful steward of what he entrusts to us.

Second, King Jesus will one day return in his second coming, and everyone must give an account for how they each stewarded and invested their lives for his gain.

God's Word says in Second Corinthians 5 that "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil" (2 Cor. 5:10).

Even though the local church is meant to help us be faithful to the King in this life, we must all stand before the judgement seat of Christ as individuals as we enter into eternity.

Third, what you do with your life and what God has entrusted to you is merely a test of loyalty and faithfulness for what is to come.

This life is not all there is. In fact, what you have in this life is "very little" in comparison to what is to come.

In terms of *duration*, it is "very little" because this life is *temporary* and the life to come is *eternal*.

In terms of *degree*, it is "very little" because the *pleasures* or *pain* you experience in this life will be experienced to the extreme in either *heaven* or *hell*, respectively, in the life to come.

We'll talk more about the *latter* in the third point, but I want us to spend a bit of time now thinking more about the *former*—about the outrageously disproportionate *reward* that King Jesus has for the loyal and faithful in *heaven*.

Notice, the reward that the king gives is *authority* over cities. It's *rulership*.

Scripture says that all those who are redeemed in Christ will *reign* with him in the new heavens and new earth (Rev. 3:21; 22:5).

This might sound a bit odd, depending on what your conception of heaven is. But when King Jesus returns in his second coming, he will come to establish the new heavens and new earth, which will not be in some spiritual, intangible way, as if we're just floating spirits who lack any consciousness or as if all we'll be doing is singing 24/7, but we'll have new physical, glorified bodies.

Just like God's original good creation, the new creation will be a continuation of all the things that we love and enjoy in this physical life without the effects of sin.

That means, when Jesus comes to fully establish the kingdom of God on earth in his second coming, there will be meaningful and enjoyable *responsibilities*, which is foundational for us to have *authority* or *rulership*.

Perhaps some of us don't feel like we *want* responsibility in heaven because it's difficult for us to picture responsibility *without* the effects of sin that make it so difficult in this life, but responsibility is basic to *meaning* and *purpose*.

In heaven, none of us will feel worthless or insignificant, but our lives will be filled with meaningful and purposeful responsibilities.

Perhaps not all of us will rule over whole cities, just like not all of us are governors over cities now, but we will undoubtedly have various levels of *responsibility* in God's kingdom, where, as those conformed to the image of Christ, we will continue to carry out our meaningful responsibilities in the creative joy, in the good character, for the purpose of, and for the glory of our Savior King.

Still, as we think about the rewards of ruling with Christ in the new heavens and new earth, we ought not to forget that the greatest reward is *Christ* himself.

We've been singing the song, "The Sands of Time Are Sinking," the last couple weeks as a church [in Jakarta]. And the final line puts everything in perspective:

The bride eyes not her garments
But her dear Bridegroom's face
I will not gaze at glory
But on my King of grace

Not at the crown He giveth
But on His pierced hand
The Lamb is all the glory
In Immanuel's land

King Jesus has rewards for the faithful that are outrageously disproportionate to any of our "very little" faithfulness in this life, but the greatest of them all are not authority or responsibilities but himself.

If you want to learn more about this, I'd recommend the book *Heaven* by Randy Alcorn, specifically his section on "Ruling in the New Earth."⁴

<pause>

So first, King Jesus has expectations for his servants; second, King Jesus has rewards for the faithful—outrageously disproportionate rewards in the new heavens and new earth; and third...

III. King Jesus has punishment for the unfaithful (vv. 20-27)

Look at verses 20-21.

[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.']

Here, "another" servant came before the king to give an account for what was entrusted to him. And this is the *climax* of the entire parable. The most time and space are spent on this particular servant because, embedded in the life of this servant and the response of the king, there is a strong warning to all the listeners. In fact, the other seven servants are not mentioned again, as the spotlight descends on this particular so-called "servant."

Like the other two servants, he addresses the king as "Lord," but whereas the other two servants said, "your mina has made ten or five minas more," he stops at "your mina"—"here is your mina."

Whereas the other two servants don't even mention the word "I," not taking any credit for the great yield that they had gained, interestingly this servant who gained *nothing* is the only one to take credit for what he did in some sense: "I kept [your mina] laid away in a handkerchief."

⁴ Randy Alcorn, *Heaven* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 2004), 295-335, Kindle.

In effect, this was blatant disobedience of what the king had commanded him to do before he left. He gave each of his servants a mina and then said *explicitly*, “Engage in business until I come.” But this servant doesn’t engage in anything. He disobeys.

But then, he tries to *justify* his disobedience by essentially blaming the *king*: “I didn’t do anything ‘for [or because] 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.”

He basically says, “It’s *your* fault that I didn’t do anything. It’s *your* fault that I disobeyed.”

The servant’s *supposed* “fear” of the king is based on a *slandering* misconception of him as a “severe” man, one who takes more than he gives, one who is unwilling to put in the work but just wants to collect the gain from someone else’s hard work.

Wow! Can you imagine being the king hearing this servant say these things to you? Can you imagine being one of the first two servants hearing what was being said about the king who just gave them authority over ten and five *cities*?

It’s blatantly *false* that he takes more than he gives. He *generously* gives an outrageously disproportionate amount to those who are faithful to him. And how *hypocritical* for this servant to accuse the king for not being willing to work! He has done absolutely *nothing* with what was invested into him.

<pause>

Now, this is even more of a *slandering* charge when we understand that the king refers to *Jesus*.

How can it be said that he takes more than he gives?

As those who have rebelled and disobeyed against our Creator, *we* deserve eternal punishment in hell for our sins. But in the greatest act of sacrificial love, *Jesus gave* his life as a *substitute* on the cross, so that all who repent of their sins and believe in him may not perish but have eternal life.

And not only that, but God’s Word says, “He who did not spare his own Son but *gave* him up for us all, how will he not also with him *graciously give* us *all things*?” (Rom. 8:32).

Jesus gives more than what he *takes*.

And how can it be said that *Jesus* is unwilling to put in the work but just wants to collect on others’ hard work?

What was the cost of our salvation? *His* hellish suffering for our disobedience and *his* perfect obedience to be accounted to us by faith.

Salvation is by grace alone, but it is not a cheap grace. It was at the cost of the precious blood of the Son of God.

Jesus works harder than we work.

In fact, he works hard to *take* the hell that we deserve, *so that* he can *give* the heaven that we do not deserve.

When we understand the gospel, what this servant says about the King of kings is one of the most *slandering* things anyone could ever say about *Jesus*.

And yet, how about us?

Are you obedient to what our King commands you to do until he comes? If you find yourself living in disobedience, what excuses do you come up with to try to justify your disobedience?

Like Adam in the Garden and this servant in the parable, do you dare put the blame on your suffering, Savior King for your own disobedience?

If that's any of us, we should take seriously what the king in the parable says next.

Look at verses 22-23.

[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?]

In contrast with the faithful servant that he called "good" earlier (v. 17), the king "condemns" this unfaithful servant, calling him "wicked."

But notice how the king condemns him "with [his] own words." He *shows* the servant that he doesn't even live up to his own false view of the king.

For the sake of argument, the king *assumes* the premise of the servant—that he is a "severe" man that his servant supposedly "fears." Even if that were the case, the servant's actions *still* don't match with his stated premise.

Under his premise, the servant should have *known* that doing absolutely nothing was disobedience and he should have expected a harsh punishment from such a "severe" man. At the very least, if he truly "feared" the king, he could have put the minimal effort to entrust the one mina to someone else ("the bank") to earn a minimal return ("interest") for the king.

Therefore, given the servant's inconsistency even with his own stated premise, the king exposes the servant's excuse as just that—an unjustifiable excuse.

In essence, he had failed the king's test of loyalty and faithfulness.

The servant did not remain loyal in his submission to him as king even when he was away for a long period of time. He did not trust that the king would one day return and hold him accountable.

The servant did not faithfully invest the one mina he was given for the sake of the king, but he did absolutely nothing at all with what was entrusted to him.

He was disobedient. He was disloyal. He was unfaithful.

So what happened next?

Look at verses 24-26.

[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.]

The king tells "those who stood by" to take the one mina away from the "wicked" servant and to give it to his "good" servant who already had *ten* minas—and *ten cities*!

But this was shocking to them because it seems unfair to take away the one mina the "wicked" servant has, leaving him with absolutely nothing, in order to give to the one who already has so much.

But it's not about who has or doesn't have; it's about who has proven themselves to be loyal and faithful, and who has not. It only makes good stewardship sense to give more to the one who will do more with what has been given to him.

This is a general stewardship principle that we all understand.

Do we invest more in the person who has proven loyal and faithful or the one who has proven disloyal and unfaithful? When we think as an investor, the answer is obvious.

<pause>

So how about us?

How are we actively trying to invest the gospel in different areas of our lives?

This cannot be done passively. Putting the gospel in a handkerchief is not an investment. It's not enough to say that your heart and mind have been converted but not the rest of your life. Conversion of the affections and beliefs must inevitably lead to conversion of lifestyle (Martin Luther). When it comes to investing the gospel, it is always active—we're intentional about applying the gospel to the everyday aspects of our lives.

Now when Jesus looks at what you've done with what he's entrusted to you, would he see you as a highway or a dead-end for his investment (Mark Dever)? A highway is a road that flows through towns and cities, but a dead-end is a road that has no exit; it's completely closed off.

Don't be a dead-end for God's blessings in your life, but be a highway that continually pours out the blessings of the gospel to all those around you.

And learn from the "wicked" servant. Don't allow fear, whether warranted or not, to paralyze you from obeying your King.

If you know that Jesus is the one who died to forgive all your sins, then you have every reason to keep trying and trusting, even if you make mistakes along the way. Just start investing the gospel now in some area of your life that you've been neglecting.

<pause>

Now let's look at verse 27.

[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 king's citizens, who actively protested and rejected him as their king earlier in verse 14, are now brought before him and slaughtered.

This pictures the final judgment to come when Jesus returns as the conquering King, which ties back to the beginning.

The people expected Jesus to come as the *conquering* King in his *first* coming all at once immediately, but in his patience and kindness, he does not do that, because he knows that would not be the good news that they all assumed for themselves.

When Jesus comes as the *conquering* King in his *second* coming, he will execute final and just judgment on all people. Every person will appear before the judgment seat of Christ and give an account for their lives. And they will either be found righteous through faith in Christ's substitutionary work on the cross on their behalf, or they will be found wicked by their persistent unrepentance and rejection of him as King.

And one cannot be a true citizen in the kingdom of God while rejecting the King of that kingdom. So in the final judgment, there will be a solemn separation that takes place, in which the wicked will be justly assigned to endless punishment in hell and the righteous to endless joy in the new heavens and new earth.

That day is coming, but we are not there yet. *Now* is the favorable time—the day of *salvation*. As you hear the good news of Jesus Christ today, then I urge you to respond by repenting of your sins and believing in

Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. Jesus coming as the *conquering* King is only good news for those who have truly trusted him as King and who long for his return.

<pause>

Now a final question in this parable is what exactly happened to the “wicked” servant?

At least, on the surface, it seems that he is separate from the enemies of the king.

But just think about everything we know about this servant.

- He is called “wicked,”
- he disobeys the king throughout his life,
- he issues a slanderous charge against the king,
- he lives inconsistently to what he says,
- the king “condemns” him,
- he is left with literally nothing,
- and a similar character is thrown into hell in a similar account in the parable of the talents (Matt. 25:30).

Given everything we know about him, it is very unlikely that this “wicked” servant is saved.

Rather, he seems no different than the “enemies” of the king. Whereas the enemies *actively* reject the nobleman as king, this servant *passively* rejects him as king. Though he doesn’t explicitly say with his *lips*, “I do not want this man to reign over me,” that’s exactly what he proclaims with his *life*. His disobedience, disloyalty, and unfaithfulness proved him to be no true servant at all.

There is no neutrality in our relation to the King. You cannot ride the fence. Jesus is either your King, or he is not. It makes no difference whether we actively or passively reject him as King; rejection of the only Savior means acceptance of the just punishment that we deserve for our sins against a holy God.

Though the parable doesn’t explicitly tell us what happened to the “wicked” servant, we can know for sure that we should not feel safe living a life that resembles him at all.

Conclusion

So in light of King Jesus’ expectations for his servants, his rewards for the faithful, and his punishment for the unfaithful, how will you choose to live? How will you invest what the King has entrusted to you?

Perhaps some of us feel this tremendous burden of expectation, but if we are in Christ, we may be assured that his acceptance of us is not based on our work but on his finished work on our behalf. He took our burden and was crushed for them, so that his yoke would be easy and his burden light (Matt. 11:30).

Our King does not expect a sinless, perfect life from us; he is the only person who has ever lived that life, and by his grace, it has been credited to all who trust him as their Lord and Savior.

Our King is not a severe man; he’s quite the opposite. He is the gracious God that provides salvation and outrageously disproportionate rewards to the undeserving.

But still, our King is just. His patience and kindness are for our repentance and salvation, but that time is not forever. He will one day return, and we must all give an account for our lives.

So as God’s people, let’s encourage one another to invest the gospel in all aspects of our lives. And let’s do everything we can to help one another stay loyal and faithful to our Savior King until he returns.

The One Thing

When King Jesus returns, he will expect a return.

Let's pray.