

“Whatever It Takes...to Hear Well Done” // Luke 19:11–27 // *Whatever It Takes* #3¹

Video

God doesn't need our money; he wants our hearts. Learning to rely on him and being a faithful steward of what he's given you all for his glory—that's what these few weeks have been all about.

Introduction

Luke 19 if you have your Bibles...

The year was 1939, and farmers in Oklahoma faced an excruciating choice--and that was whether to use their last remaining wheat seed to feed their families for a few months while they sold off their farms and moved back East--or to plant those seeds and hope for rain.

Here was their dilemma: In the 1920s, many of them had left their low-paying factory jobs in the Northeast for a chance of a fortune in the great American Midwest. Things had gone well for a few years, but in 1931 Oklahoma went through the worst drought in recorded history. To make matters worse, years of sloppy farming techniques had destroyed the prairie grasses that preserved ground moisture, which resulted in these massive dust storms... Whole fortunes disappeared in billowing, dull gray plumes of dust.

By the fall of 1939, many farmers had just enough grain to feed themselves and their families for a few months—they could eat it and move back East; or they could plant it and wait for rain. If rain came, they would harvest a hundredfold, but if not, they would be left with nothing. Many planted in hope that rain would come, and thankfully, in the fall of 1939, it did.

Harvesting always involves risk—because when you sow something you release control over it, and if the harvest doesn't come, you lose it. Over the past few weeks we've talked about risking your future on the Kingdom of God, and this all comes to a head in this parable Jesus tells in **Luke 19**:

11 ...(Jesus) proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. Luke tells you exactly *why* Jesus tells this parable: some of his disciples supposed that when Jesus got to Jerusalem he would establish his kingdom and commence his reign. But--Jesus knows that things await him there that they aren't aware of--namely, that he's going to be rejected and crucified, after which he'll be resurrected and ascend into heaven for a number of years while his servants extend his gospel to the ends of the earth. So, Jesus tells them a parable instructing them in what he wants them to do during that period.

¹ Sources consulted: Don Carson, “The Parable of The Bag of Gold,” a sermon published by The Gospel Coalition on YouTube on November 30, 2019; Tim Mackie, “Gold, Darkness, & Dwarves,” a sermon published on YouTube by Bible Nerds & Tim Mackie Fans August 28, 2022; Tony Evans, “The Responsibility of Kingdom Stewardship,” a sermon published by Tony Evans on YouTube on February 16, 2020.

12 He said therefore, “A nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return. (This nobleman, of course, represents Jesus.) 13 Calling ten of his servants (this represents us, his church), he gave them ten minas (A mina is a unit of money—TBH, I never have understood why translators leave words like this untranslated—none of us know what it means. It’s like the translators are moving along through the text and they get to this word and they figure they’re not getting paid enough so they just transliterate it and leave it for us to figure out: a mina was about 3 months wages—so, in our terms, think—based off the average annual salary in RDU of around \$60k/yr, that’s what, \$15K?²), 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.’ (Jesus left us, his disciples, in a hostile world where they hate the rule of our Master).

15 When he returned, having received the kingdom (when Jesus comes back one day), 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.’

- **The first thing to notice here is how gracious this master is.** These are servants—in fact, the word he uses here technically means ‘slave,’ which was of course the lowest job you could have in that society. Slaves had no right and no real possessions of their own. You say, “Well, is Jesus condoning slavery?” No—no more than he’s condoning thievery in the parable he tells about dishonest manager right before this one. He’s just using a societal reality as an illustration. These are slaves, and here you have a Master giving slaves rule over cities as a reward for a few months of faithful stewardship. That’s not a reward any Master in those days would ever have given to a slave. It would be like driving a truck for Amazon and one day you meet Jeff Bezos and he says, “I notice that you’ve had 3 months of on-time deliveries. Your end of year bonus is to oversee all our warehouses in Hawaii and take possession of my estate there.” This Master is crazy generous.
- **The second thing to notice is this Master is also crazy rich.** 10 minas in our terms would be about \$150,000, and he calls that ‘faithfulness in little.’ When you are in a place where you call 150K insignificant, you are pretty wealthy. (Matthew’s Gospel makes this even more stark, btw—in Matthew’s telling Jesus uses “talents” instead of minas, and a talent was 2 years salary—making the doubling of 10 talents amount to more than 2 million dollars—and again the Master calls that “faithfulness in the little.” When you call a couple million dollars chump change, you’re crazy rich! (btw, you say, “Why did Matthew and Luke record the story differently? Did one of them get the details wrong? No, Jesus was a traveling preacher, which means for sure he told this story multiple times, and he probably changed the money details from time to time to fit the context and Luke and Matthew just recorded different versions of it).
- **If I could just stop here and say: God makes such incredible promises to those who follow him.** Eternity with him is going to be wonderful—Contrary to what many of us grew up thinking, heaven is not a place of laziness and leisure where we all sit around on clouds wearing diapers, strumming harps and shooting each other with nerf bows and arrows; in heaven we work, and some of that work will be reigning and ruling—and our work will be fulfilling, satisfying, and enjoyable. It’s like **C.S. Lewis says**, entering eternity is not the end of our adventure, but the beginning of it—but, here’s the thing—those promises are only for those who are faithful with what God has given them HERE. You have to be bold enough to take the risk and put it out there—to plant that seed! (Some of you know my mom went home to be with the Lord earlier this year. As I studied this this week, it was almost like I could hear her saying—because she talked to me about this so often—, “Come on, son. You got this. Don’t leave anything on the table. I can see it from my side over here

² ESV Study Bible note, Luke 19:11

and it's totally worth it." We've got a great cloud of witnesses telling us, "Invest! Sow that seed! It's worth it!" I hope you can hear their voices this morning.

18 And the second came, saying, 'Lord, your (1) mina has made five minas.' 19 And he said to him, 'You are to be over five cities.' (Notice, this guy only nets half the return as the previous guy, but the commendation he receives is the same!)

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.' (Now, this is an *odd* response, to say the least. This guy has done *nothing* with his Master's money—he put it into a hanky and stuffed it into his underwear drawer; and when called to account about it, he said, "Well, see, you're kind of a jerk—and that's why I didn't do anything with your money." I mean, imagine if you did that with your boss—he gives you an assignment and goes away on a 3 month business trip, and when he comes back you say, "I did nothing while you were gone because you're a jerk." If he's a jerk, that's all the more reason to be diligent. Plus, we've already seen that this Master is crazy generous. He was understanding with the guy who only made half the return and he gave out governorships as a bonus. He seems like a great guy to work for.)

22 (And so, the nobleman) 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?' (You could at least have put it in the bank. I mean, the harder work is to go out and find an investment—use the money to start a business. But if you're not going to do that, you could at least have put it into a mutual fund to draw some interest. You did nothing.

- I think what's most **ARRESTING** to me in that story is that Jesus used the word *ponere* ("wicked") to describe this last servant.
- I say, "**Wicked? What wicked thing had he done?**" He didn't embezzle the money, or blow it on prostitutes or gambling or drugs. In fact, he returned 100% of what he'd been given; not one penny less. And yet, Jesus calls him wicked--not for something that he did, but because of something he failed to do.
- Write this down: **In the Kingdom of God, there's more than one way to be wicked.**
 - There is the **standard way of being wicked**: Breaking the 10 commandments—lying, cheating, being an adulterer. You can be wicked that way.
 - But **there's a second way** to be wicked and that is **by FAILING to invest your life** for the Kingdom of God. You might keep all the commandments; live a life of virtue and exemplary Christian conduct; know all the verses, vote in all the right ways; know every word to every worship song ever written, and still be considered by Jesus, on judgment day, to be *WICKED*.
 - **Not because of sins you committed**, but because of a **life-purpose** you *omitted*.
 - Look around: Is it possible that some of the most well-put together people in church--who knew the most about the Bible and are good, moral people--will hear Jesus say on that last day, "You wicked servant!" Friend, it's not only possible, it's prophesied.

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, '(But) 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. (Those who steward grace well get even more of it! Those who waste grace lose it all.) 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.'" Which is, of course, a reference to the

final judgment. By the way, I do want to say--you see here that there is a severity to this Master. Jesus is crazy generous and kind to those who trust themselves to him; but those who refuse him will find **Jesus to be a terrible Enemy** on that last day. It's like **C.S. Lewis** also said, "*God threatens terrible things for those who refuse to be insanely happy in him.*" You choose how you'll meet Jesus--you either bow, or you *BOW*.

OK—as we've said--Jesus is telling a story prophesying to the church what the future will be like for us and what he expects of us in it: 3 questions I want to consider: **1. What is it exactly that we've been given? 2. What does God expect of each of us personally? 3. What keeps so many from investing for the Master?**

1. What is it exactly that we've been given?

- **What do these "minas" represent exactly?** Write this down: In short, **minas or talents = whatever enablements the Master has given us to know him or make him known.**
- (Unfortunately, most people who know this story know it by Matthew's version, where Jesus uses the word "talents"--I say "unfortunately" because a lot of people grow up thinking it means only actual "talents." Growing up we often thought of this like little party tricks or hobbies we should use for Jesus. "I'm a juggler for Jesus." "I do happy hands and crafts for Jesus." (Or, if you're like our Downtown Durham Campus Pastor, Rich Bowman, you have the talent of [interpretive worship dance](#) (pic) which a) is not a joke and b) may or may not be put on display during our Christmas services this year and (c.) you can access the full video of him prancing about the stage for Jesus if you pull my my transcript this week and click on the link and experience the greatest 4 minutes of your life). But talent here doesn't mean "talent," like we use the word "talent," "talent" is the translator's lazy transliteration of "talanton," which, as we've seen, meant a unit of gold worth about 2 years salary.) And so, in context, again: **minas or talents = whatever enablements the Master has given us to know him or make him known.** Interestingly, in Matthew's account, this parable is an indictment on the Jewish nation for squandering their favored status as God's chosen people--God gave them the blessing of knowing him and the responsibility to make him known to the nations, and they had wasted that. So, they lost their status as the people of God. Here in Luke's account, the focus is a little more on what we do with the actual money we have.
- So, bottom line: you can think of the minas as whatever blessings God has given you to know him and make him known. It's the kind of home you grew up in; the kind of church you had exposure to; the prosperous country we live in and all the freedoms we enjoy; these are all blessings that we bear responsibility to multiply.
- **Regarding our individual resources, we typically talk about that in terms of the 3 T's (TABLE): Time (watch), treasure (money wad) and talents (trophy)**
 - **Time:** the focus of your life. What are you doing with your days, your career? Your retirement? If I asked you what was most important to you in your life, you'd probably say "Jesus." But what does your calendar say you prioritize?
 - **Treasures:** What do you spend your money on? What does your checkbook say your priorities are? I know your mouth would say that Jesus is most important, but what does your checkbook say?
 - **Talents:** how are you using your skills, your career, for the Kingdom of God? Do you know your spiritual gift and are you using it? You have one, btw, if you are a believer. Do you know what it is and are you using it?

One day you and I will give an account to the Master for how we used all these things--our knowledge of the gospel--and our time, treasure and talents to help others know him.

2. What does God expect of each of us personally?

- **In short: For us to take what he's given you and to 'double' it.** This parable teaches us that we're not responsible for how much we receive—that's the decision of the Master—we're responsible to invest what he's given to us according to the abilities he's given us.
- **The Master gave the same commendation to the one who earned back 5 as he did the one who earned back 10--each did according to his ability.** Matthew's version makes this even clearer—in his version, the Master actually gives different amounts to each of the servants.
- **You see, our Master knows we start at different places.**
 - Perhaps you, like me, were born into the home of a godly mom and dad. You were given the incredible privilege of growing up in a good church, like I did, where you heard the Bible taught consistently. You were around good examples of people loved you and lived out the faith. That's a very different starting point than the little boy who never knew his father and whose mother struggled with a cocaine addiction. **Mom** used to always repeat to me the words of Jesus: *"J.D., to whom much is given, much is required. With great power comes great responsibility."* And I remember looking back at her and saying, "Mom.....am I....SPIDER MAN?" No--but you've been given a lot, and a lot is required of you.
 - **There might be pastors out there who reach thousands who are still poorer stewards** of what they've received than the man just struggling to stay sober as he shares the gospel with his children. He came from a terrible background; suffered from fetal alcohol syndrome. He may never be as successful in the eyes of the world as that big mega pastor, but he started with so much less. Maybe it took a Herculean effort on his part just to stay sober and bring his kids to Jesus. **Can't you see his Master's smile on the last day, as he says,** "Oh Master, I'm not the world's best evangelist, and I had all those lingering weaknesses, but you gave me life and salvation, and because of my efforts, one more person knows you today. I took what you gave me and I doubled it. I've improved your assets."

I know of a lady who was discipled by one of our members--this lady had a really difficult life. I'll spare you the details, but her childhood was awful, and then she suffered abuse and criminal mistreatment in her marriage. Both of her children struggled with addiction issues.

Then one day, shortly after receiving a diagnosis of an advanced form of cancer, she received the worst news a parent could hear: her son had died of an overdose. Months before this, her son had come to know Jesus, he had been clean and sober for almost half of a year, AND he had been the one who led her to Christ. He was doing so well, but then, he visited a friend's house, who coerced him to do drugs again and in one moment of weakness he overdosed and died.

But this mom, instead of hating the dealer who gave her son the drugs, started reaching out to him. Only a few weeks after the funeral, she invited him over to her home for a Bible study. And here's the thing—I know you're expecting me to say a bunch of people got saved—but the study wasn't really successful—at least as we would count success. Only a handful of people came, and it fizzled out after a few weeks. No one "got saved." But the amount of faith, love and grace that it took for this woman to share the gospel with this 1 man may be 100x the investment it would have taken for Billy Graham to fill up a stadium.³

Can't you see her Master's smile on the last day as he says to her, "You took what I gave you and you turned it into blessing. And a group of people who were very far from me got to see my grace

³ Certain non-essential details of this true story have been altered for the sake of anonymity.

lived out in front of them. You took what I gave you and doubled it. Well done, good and faithful servant.”

- **We judge our spiritual resume by "success," Jesus judges by stewardship.**

- So, don't sit on that talent, no matter how small you think it is or how insignificant you think you are. **Because, on the other hand, failure to invest what you have been given has serious consequences.** The Master calls this lazy servant WICKED. Again, in the Kingdom of God, **there is more than one way to be wicked.** You can be wicked through sins of commission--breaking the Commandments—or you can be wicked by sins of omission--failing to invest what God gave you for his kingdom.
 - Have you been a good steward of what God gave you for his kingdom? Are you ready, right now, to stand before God and give account of how you've stewarded the TTT he's given you?
- Friend, understand this: With grace comes responsibility.
 - **Paul in Romans uses the word "debtor."**⁴ I'm **"under obligation."** Because God gave me the grace of hearing the gospel—because he gave me all these privileges I didn't earn—God didn't choose me to hear the gospel because I was a better person than anyone else, it was all a gift of grace—because of that, I owe something to those who haven't heard--and if I don't double the investment of this grace, I'm robbing my Master. Imagine you worked for "Compassion" in the Dominican Republic and the CEO contacts you and says, "Good news, we just received a huge, million-dollar donation—I'm transferring it to your account down there so you can distribute it to needy kids--but you just let it sit there. You'd be robbing the donor of his investment and robbing the kids of the grace that was supposed to come to them. Even worse would be if you used that money on yourself--used that million to upgrade your house or increase your lifestyle. That's how God thinks about those who don't invest what he's given them into the Kingdom.
- **Y'all**, this is serious stuff—these servants receive the harshest condemnation. **Maybe you are that kind of person who believes all the right things**, and you live a good, moral life, and you come to church—but if you have failed to leverage your life for the Kingdom, have you actually started to follow Jesus?
 - It's like when **one of Charles Spurgeon's students asked him**, "Pastor Spurgeon, how can the lost be saved if they never hear about Jesus?" Spurgeon responded, "*The better question is, 'How can we actually be saved if we fail to go and tell them?'*"

3. What keeps so many from investing for the Master?

- What kept the one servant in this parable from investing? He tells us in vs. 21: ...for I was afraid of you, because you are a severe man." In vs. 22 Jesus said that by this man's words he had condemned himself. He didn't trust his Master. Even though this story shows this Master is so generous and so patient and so wealthy. And that becomes all the more potent when you consider that the Master telling this story-- Jesus-- tells it *on his way to Jerusalem*, where he's going to die for the sins of his rebellious servants. **Has there ever been a Master more gracious than Jesus, a Master more worthy of the entrustment of your life?**
- Let me be clear: to really follow Jesus involves risk. You have to take your hands of control off of your life and yield control to him; and you have to stop seeing your resources—your time, talent and treasures—primarily as assets by which to build your Kingdom and instead see them as entrustments given to you to build his. **To really do that, you have to think that Jesus is worthy of the entrustment of your life.**
 - **There was a phrase my dad** repeated over and over when I was growing up—I use it often here: "Only one life to live, will soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last." Those words were penned by a man named CT Studd. CT Studd was **England's most well-known professional athlete at the turn of**

⁴ Romans 1:14

the 20th century. He played cricket—which may not sound that impressive now, but back in those days it was one of the most popular sports in the world. **He was the Patrick Mahomes or the Lionel Messi** of cricket. But at the height of his career, he walked away from all of it to become a missionary to India and then later China, where he died in relative poverty. Imagine if one of those guys did that today—Lebron said, “I’m taking my talents and going to South... Sudan to live as a missionary.” When people asked why he would do that, he said, “Only one life to live, will soon be past; only what’s done for Christ will last.” The other thing he always said: **“If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for him.”** **C.T. Studd** IOW, my Master is worth the offering of my life. (BTW--name, Studd?)

Summit, when I think about what this parable means for our mission in the Triangle, in 2022, here are my conclusions:

(A.) All we need to accomplish our mission is already in our hands. These servants didn’t have to ask the Master for resources, he’d already given them all they needed. What if everything necessary for this church to reach this community in this year was already in our hands?

(B.) Each of us will be judged on how we use what was entrusted to us. Here at Summit, we often use the word “steward” when it comes to our resources. A steward is not the owner of something; a steward merely manages it on behalf of the owner. If I take my money to a financial investor and give it to him, that’s not his money to use however he wants. That’s my money that he manages for me—he’s the steward—and that means the most important question he can ask is, **“What does J.D. want done with this money?”**

And that’s **(C.) The most important question any of us can ever ask: WHY did God give me what he gave me?** That house--not yours. That car--not yours. Those talents--not yours. That bank account--not yours. (This was a big theme in our DEVOTIONAL) -- Many of us have fallen into the trap of thinking like owners--and because we think like that, we are resistant, even resentful, when God compels us to give. We’re like, “Who are you, God, to demand some of MY money?” **And God says, “Excuse me?”**

- **Parents, it’s kind of like when you go into the gas station to pay for gas** and, out of the goodness of your heart, you buy your kids a bag of cookies, or snacks--they weren’t even asking for it. And when you hand it to them you ask for one and they say *“No, these are mine.”* And you’re like, “The. Audacity--Kid, do you need me to remind you paid for that? And, while we’re at it, who bought the clothes you’re wearing, the car you’re riding in—and provided anything else of value in your life?”
- **I remember hearing Will Smith in an interview--pre-slap Will...** he was talking about his kids--and the interviewer said, **“Will, when did your kids learn that they were rich?”** And Will interrupted him and said, “Let me just stop you right there, champ. I’m rich, my kids are not. I let them USE some of my money, but it’s not theirs.” It’s the same thing with us and God. God owns all that we have. Even if you feel like you earned all the money you have by yourself, the opportunities and talents and health you used to make that money came from him. It’s all his. It’s not that only 10% is his and the other 90% is all ours—all of it is his!
- **And so--the most important question you will ask about your life is, “God, what was your purpose in giving them to me?”**

He's given us the minas of our time, treasure and talents that we need to get our job done.

So, have you asked him that all important question--what is your purpose for what you gave me? Because whatever it is, he wants you to double it for the Kingdom.

- He has given you salvation. Double it: make a disciple.
- He's made you a small group leader. Double it. Plant a new one. **Illus. Ryan V small group**
- He's given you Bible knowledge. Double it. Teach what you know. You may not be the best teacher--maybe you got a 1 mina teaching gift. That's ok. Double it. Mentor someone. Teach your kids.
- He's given you money: *Double it.* Invest it in what God is doing here.
- Think about your careers—how are you using it for his kingdom? We often tell you college students and young pros that what it means to follow Jesus is to do what you do well to the glory of God AND to do it somewhere strategic for the mission of God.
 - **Listen, the most unreached part of the world lives in what missiologists call the 10/40 Window.** Very difficult for missionaries to get into. But you can get there through business.
 - (You say, "Well, why would I do that when there is so much need here?" *Simple—because that's what our Master told us to do.* Make disciples of all the nations, he says. If you were an EMT who after an earthquake came into a building full of hurting people, you would never leave THAT group of hurting people to drive across town to help a different group... unless that's what your supervisor told you to do. Our Master, Jesus, has said that this gospel must be preached among all nations—go therefore and make disciples of all nations. So we don't go overseas because we're done here, we go because our Master told us to... **Maybe you should consider going.** If so, start a convo with your campus mobilizer today. You say, "Who is my campus mobilizer?" Talk to your Campus Pastor and he'll tell you.)
 - BTW, for you **college students, one very practical thing** you can do on this is to consider joining our "City Project" for the summer. That's an incredible 8 week program where you live in housing that we provide while you do theological training and mission trips for the summer. You may not know what God has called you to in life yet, but this is a way of exploring your spiritual gifts and learning the skills of discipleship you'll need wherever you go.
 - For our retirees: use these years to invest in the Kingdom! An older friend of mine calls this season of life his "preferment" (instead of his "retirement") because now he can do whatever he prefers to do. Your preferment. Some of you should consider giving a few years to go and serve on one of our teams. Double those free years of your retirement by investing them in the Kingdom.
- For many of you, God has given you a home. Double it by showing hospitality—open it up. Perhaps you have a 10 minas home. Use that well, friends. You'll have to answer for every square foot.
- He's given all of us time--86,400 seconds every day he puts into your account. This one is so important. Your time is not your own; every second of it is on loan. We must work, play, love, and rest, as our Master has commanded. (BTW, in saying that, I don't mean we engage every second in unending, wearying work—after all, Jesus commands us to rest. I just mean we recognize every second belongs to him, so we work, play, and rest as we think he would want us to.)⁵ How much of your time do you directly invest in his kingdom--volunteering or serving?

VAMP

⁵ Help with these came from Don Carson, "The Parable of the Bag of Gold."

God has given each of you minas of time, treasure and talents. (HANKY). Don't cover them with a handkerchief! Let this handkerchief represent all the other things we might use our time, treasure and talents for.

- **Don't bury your time, treasure and talents in worldly pursuit**--pursuing a life of leisure--golf, or boating, or beach houses or getting your nails done or video games or Tik Tok.
- **Sometimes somebody will say to me**--a lot of times it's a **parent of a college student** who feels called to go w/ one our church plants overseas--**I don't want my son or daughter wasting their lives as a missionary**. We invested all that money in college... they had the talent to get in... But is it a waste? Not if his parable is true.
- **Here's what is a waste**--This is a little feature story from a financial magazine: "Bob and Penny took early retirement from their jobs in the Northeast five years ago when he was 59 and she was 51. Now they live in South Florida, where they cruise on their 30-foot trawler, play softball, and collect shells."
- You say, "Well that sounds amazing. I'd love to be able to do that one day." Let me quote John Piper, thought: *"(Bob and Penny achieved the American Dream)--The American Dream: come to the end of your life—your one and only life—and let the last great work before you give an account to your Creator be, 'I collected shells. See my shells.' That is a tragedy. And yet people today are spending billions of dollars to persuade you to embrace that tragic dream. Today I'm here to plead with you: don't buy it. Don't waste your life."*
- **It's popular now** for people to live life by a bucket list--a bucket list is a list of things you want to do before you kick the bucket. **But think about that in light of this parable**. The Bible says that our Master's Kingdom—the one he has gone to receive—is a "renewed" heaven and earth--which means that it will contain all that we loved about the earth down here, just without the curse of sin. **And that means whatever we missed out on on earth down here we'll make up for in abundance up there.** **Y'all, I may never make it to the earthly Iceland**—I've heard it's beautiful—but **that's just the cursed one**. If I never get there, that's ok--one day I'll experience the Heavenly one. I may never own my own private jet--but that's ok, in heaven I won't need one. I'm pretty sure we'll be able to fly up there. I may never get to climb Mt Everest here, but if not, that's ok, this Mt. Everest is just the cursed one. I can't wait to see the Heavenly one.
- There's only one thing that I CAN'T do in heaven that I CAN do right now, and that is invest these minas in bringing people to Jesus. So that's the only thing that should go on my bucket list. They all need a chance to hear. So I want to take these minas and double them for my Master in heaven.

BOW FOR PRAYER: What is the Spirit of God saying you should open your hands from so you can invest?

- Some of your treasures? One in particular?
- Time?
- What about your talents and skills? Have you ever laid down your career on the altar and say, "God, wherever, whenever, whatever"? Something I've thought about recently--Veronica and I have been talking about it: **What if you are a 5 minas person but you're only investing 2?** It's not that you are not fruitful--you are-- but what if you're only planting a part of what God has given you? One day I'll answer to God not just for what I harvested but also what I failed to plant--I'm not comparing my accomplishments to anybody else; I'm comparing them to what he gave *to me*. Have I doubled all of them?
- **Are you ready to answer to him?**