

# Resources and Responsibilities

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Check, check. There we go. Matthew 25 is where we are. Just saying I appreciate the choir and! the blessing they were through music just a moment ago. We're going to continue on in our series! Stories of the Kingdom. While you're turning to Matthew 25, as we prepare to look at this parable from Jesus, simply a story used to illustrate a greater point about the Kingdom of God, I want to ask you this question.

How many of y'all resonate a little bit with this slide on the screen right now? I don't know how well you can see the bottom part, but money, time, and energy never arrive together.

When you're a child, you've got all the time and energy and you have no money, right? No resources. When you're an adult, ideally you have more money than when you were a kid, let's hope. You've got some amount of energy, but you've got very little time. And then in old age, of course this is a, just a graph I think based on percentages and polls and probabilities.

In theory, you have more money. You have all the time you need, but you've got no energy, right? And of course, there's variations for all of us as we move through those life stages, but keep that in the back of your mind as we prepare to look.

Matthew chapter 25, verse 14. This series, well we just skipped a bunch there, there we go. This series has been going on for several weeks and we're nearing the end of it, but it is stories of the kingdom, the parables of Jesus. And today we're going to be talking about this topic, resources and responsibilities. Resources and responsibilities. We love having resources. Sometimes we struggle with the responsibilities that come along with them, don't we? But let's look in Matthew 25 and verse 14. Before we get into the text, Matthew 25, verse 14 through 30. I want to go back to that idea about resources. We talked about it just a moment ago in that funny slide. Time, energy, and money. Would you think of that as your team?

[ 2 : 2 4 ] Time, energy, and money. This is the team that you walk through life with every day. Your time, your energy, and your money. These are the resources that God has entrusted to you.

There are a lot of other resources that fall under those categories, but every day we choose how we're going to spend, how we're going to invest our time, our energy, and our money. So keep that in the back of your mind as we read through the parable of the three servants that Jesus gives us in Matthew 25.

He's going to give them talents. He's going to give them bags of silver. Let's think of our gifts from God as our time, energy, and money.

Verse 14, again, the kingdom of heaven can be illustrated by the story of a man going on a long trip. So just as a reminder, Jesus is teaching us about the kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven, totally different than the kingdom of this world, totally different than the mindset that we have grown up with and struggle with in our own mind every day. So Jesus says the kingdom of heaven is different. And it can be illustrated by the story of this man going on a long trip.

So he calls together his servants and entrusted them with his money while he was gone. Do you realize what's happening here? These are his most trusted servants.

[ 3 : 58 ] What do you do with your money? You put it somewhere you can trust, right? Ideally. Sometimes you give it to your teenage kid when they're asking you for it, and then you live to regret those decisions. But you trust, ideally, you trust your money into someone who's going to use it wisely, responsibly, with your resources. So he calls together his most trusted servants.

These guys outrank all the other servants. They work for him, but they're at the top of the heap. And he says, I'm going to allow you to manage my money while I'm gone. Oftentimes in those days, the servants who do that well would get a cut from their earnings. They would get a boost, a bonus, if they managed their master's resources well. So verse 15, he gave five bags of silver to one. This guy was probably top of the pecking order here, right? Second one, two bags of silver, silver, and the one bag of silver to the last, dividing it in proportion to their abilities.

He then left on his trip. Did you hear that? He divided it in proportion to their abilities. He knows these guys. He knows what they're capable of. He knows what they can and can't do. He knows what they're good at. First of all, they already rise to the surface when compared to all the other servants that he would have. And he would probably have many back in those days. But the top guy, he knew he would be able to take those five bags of silver and invest them well. Second guy, he knew he could handle two. The third guy, he gave one. Let's read on. Verse 16, the servant who received the five bags of silver began to invest the money and earned five more. Wow. Doubled his investment. Doubled his investment. Well, this would indicate that the master was gone for a long period of time. In order to be able to take that money and invest it and double it in the marketplace, that would indicate a long trip. Well, down a little bit further, we read that the master was gone a long time. So not only did he leave these guys his most valuable resources, he also left it in their hands for a long period of time, saying, I'm going to give you all the time you need to turn this investment into something positive.

The first guy did it. Turned five bags into 10. Verse 17, the servant with two bags of silver also went to work and earned two more. How would they do this? Well, they would take it to the marketplace and there were money exchanges happening. This is actually something later that Jesus in the New Testament goes into the temple and sees the money changers charging exorbitant interest fees when they're changing out their money. So you would take a physical resource and you would exchange it for that amount in gold or silver, whatever the economy of the most precious economy was at the time.

So normally you would be charging interest rate when you do that. I'm getting into economics and all that, but just bear with me here. And the more, what should we say? Anybody ever remember the Merchant of Venice? Anybody ever read the Merchant of Venice? Shylock? Yeah, I knew Lori would.

[ 7 : 53 ] Should be all over that. Pound of flesh. There were unscrupulous money changers, money lenders, those that would charge unfair fees, those that could not be trusted in business dealings. And that's what Jesus hated when he went in the temple. He saw people in the place where he's supposed to be worshiped and lifted up. He saw them taking advantage of others and all that. And he threw it out, flipped the tables over. But this had been going on for a long time. So in this culture, these guys would go and they would put their silver into the hands of the money lenders and they would trust that an interest would be gained and then they would gain more for their master's possession. The stock market is somewhat similar, right? So this concept is not new and these guys are trusted to take what he gave them and earn interest on it. So the first two turned five into five more equals 10. The next one turned two into two more equals four. Verse 18, the servant who received the one bag of silver dug a hole in the ground and hid the master's money. Do you know why he would dig a hole in the ground? Seems like an odd thing to do. Back then, if you would go out of town for a long time, you would not leave your money in a bank.

There were no banks. You would not leave the money with someone who was untrustworthy to go and make money like he was doing with his other two servants. Instead, what you would do is go dig a hole and bury your money or your most valuable possessions. You would dig a hole. Only you knew where it was and you would bury it and trust that it would be there when you return. We talked about this concept several weeks ago when the guy went and was working in the field and stumbled upon the treasure hidden in the field and he got enough money to buy the land because he found a treasure that was worth having, right? So it's happening again here. But the servant is acting on behalf of his master. But he's doing something that is different than what his master asked him to do. He's saying,

I'm not going to go work for my master and turn his money into more. I'm just going to do what I think he should have done and go dig a hole in his ground and bury the money. Why would he do that?

Let's read on. Verse 19. After a long time, the master returned from his trip and called them to give an account of how they used his money.

You ever been called in to give an account of what you did? My dad used to leave me a list of things to do sometimes when he would leave the house and I would be expected to get that list done. He got that from his dad and his dad, if you knew him, was he was a real cowboy. He was a businessman. He raised horses and broke horses. He started bakeries.

[ 11 : 33 ] He did all kinds of things. He was always highly industrious, highly successful in whatever he put his mind to do. And he had high expectations for his son. So he'd say, listen, if I tell you to do this, you get it done. My dad was the same way with me. If I give you a list to do around the house or around the yard or whatever, then you get it done. When I come back, I will check in with you and see what you got done. Anybody grow up that way? Yeah. I figured I wasn't alone. So the day of reckoning comes, the master comes back and he calls them in to give an account of how they used the money he gave them.

Not their money, his money. It was never under any impression that he was giving this to them for them to use for themselves. It was always, you work for me. This is your job. You go out and make money with my money. The servant to whom he had entrusted the five bags of silver came forward with five more and said, master, you gave me five bags of silver to invest and I've earned five more.

That's a good day. That's a good day right there. When the master comes in to give and says, give it, give me an account of what you did. And the master was full of praise in verse 21. Well done, my good and faithful servant. You've been faithful in handling this small amount. So now I will give you many more responsibilities. Five bags of silver. Not such a small amount. Do you realize how much that was?

One bag of silver was approximately 20 years of income for an average day laborer. Somebody who was not wealthy, was not rich, not moving in the upper class circles, just out working an everyday job. It would take him about 20 years to earn this bag of silver. This guy got five.

And the master says, you've been faithful with this small amount. The master was apparently extraordinarily wealthy. He says, you've been faithful with this small amount. Now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together. Verse 22, the servant who had received the two bags of silver, came forward and said, master, you gave me two bags of silver to invest and I have earned two more. The master said, well done, my good and faithful servant. You've been faithful in handling this small amount. And now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together. Verse 24, then the servant with one bag of silver came and said, y'all ready?

[ 14 : 22 ] I've been waiting to find out. Why did he do this? We're about to find out. Master, I knew you were a harsh man. Harvesting crops you didn't plant, gathering crops you didn't cultivate. Let's just pause right there for a minute. Does anybody have an idea why the master would harvest crops he didn't plant and gather crops he didn't cultivate? Because he had workers. He's the boss. I don't know where he came from.

I don't know how he grew up. Was he old money or new money? Did he grow up this way or did he pull himself up by his bootstraps and make money for him? Did he have his day when he was out gathering and cultivating and cultivating and planting and harvesting? Did he have his day when he was doing it? And then he worked himself up into this new status of wealth? I don't know. But he was the boss.

He had workers. Thank you, Cajun. He is going to make a preacher someday, y'all, if God wants that. But listen, this guy couldn't get over the power dynamics. He couldn't get over the social dynamics. He couldn't get over the inequality. Remember last Sunday we talked about income inequality, the wage gap and all that?

And those workers for that landowner were so upset that they had worked all day from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

and they got paid the same amount as those who'd only worked one hour. Because God's kingdom moves according to a different set of rules. God's set of rules. So this guy apparently couldn't handle it. Why do you want us to go out and do all the work while you just sit back and reap the benefits?

[ 16 : 34 ] Because he's the boss. Because he's in charge. Because it's his world and you're living in it. Do you start to see the parallels between these guys, their master, and us, and our heavenly father?

So let's jump back in verse 25. He says, I knew you're a harsh man. You gathered the crops. You harvested everything. But you didn't plant it. You didn't cultivate it. And I was afraid I would lose your money so I hid it in the earth. You know what's unspoken here? What's unspoken here is, I was afraid of your reaction when I lost your money. If I went to the exchange marketplace and I didn't not only not make interest on it, but I lost the money because there is a risk there with investment, right? With financial investment, whether it's the stock market or this ancient marketplace, whatever you're going to try to go invest your money and double it, make more money, there's always a risk that you're going to lose what you invested. And this servant calls him a harsh man. He says, I'm not about to go out there and take that risk knowing that you're this big ogre sitting on your throne. Nasty, mean guy telling us to go out and do all the work while you sit back there and rake in the benefits. This is a completely different perspective of the master than the first two servants had. You know what the ironic thing is? This was one of the guy's best servants.

He valued him. He was one of the three who made the cut. Now he was third in line, but the master looked across all his servants and said, that guy could do much with my money.

He has what it takes. I'm going to give him a whole bag of silver to go out and invest for me. And this is what happened. He got his character revealed. You ever gotten your character revealed?

You ever been in a moment where you were squeezed, where life put the squeeze on you and it revealed who you truly are? Your responses revealed the truth inside you.

[ 19 : 08 ] So what happens? He said, here's your money back. The money you gave me, I did nothing with it. I buried it in the ground and let it sit there this whole time. And I'm sure the master's thinking, well, I could have done that. I gave it to you to work. I gave it to you to put it to work, to make it work for me. You didn't do your job. Verse 26. But the master replied, you wicked and lazy servant. You notice how he just jumped straight to lazy?

The guy had all these excuses. You're a harsh man. I was afraid of losing the money. And the master says, no, you lazy. You didn't want to go out and put it to work.

He says, you wicked and lazy servant. If you knew I harvested crops, I didn't plant, gathered crops. I didn't cultivate. Why didn't you deposit my money in the bank? Why didn't you go and put it to work? Why didn't you take it to the marketplace? At least I could have gotten some interest on it. He says, why don't you go and put it at the very bottom level place of interest and say, here, I'm not going to do any work. You guys put this to work. I'm not going to lend any of my expertise on this area. You guys just put this bag of silver to work and maybe it'll gain a little interest over this long period of time. But he didn't do the very basic. Think of like putting it in your savings account at your bank if you have one. You're not going out and working mutual funds and trying to get with a tax attorney and, you know, get people who can really make this money grow for you.

You simply just stick it in your savings account and hope that that low rate of interest will make a little bit of return. He didn't even do the very basic minimal option that he had to work any amount of interest on this guy's money. And that's the point his master's making. So he orders in verse 28, take the money from this servant. He lost his chance. He lost his opportunity.

Give that to the one with 10 bags of silver. When I read this passage as a kid, I always thought that was unfair. Why are you going to give it to the guy with 10? He's already got 10.

[ 21 : 45 ] Because it's the master's money. Because this guy has the most earning potential. You know, the Bible says, to whom much is given, much is required.

But when you take what God has given you and you work it, and through his power and through his strength, you see a great return on the investment God made in you, what does God do? He gives you more.

He gives you more. He continues to pile on. Why? Because you're worth the investment. Lives are at stake here. For this master, money was at stake. The earning potential was greatest with the guy with 10 bags of silver. So he gets an 11th. To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given. And they will have an abundance. The Bible always puts it better than I could. Verse 29. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away.

Did y'all hear that? For those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away. Now throw this useless servant out into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Wow. What a tough way to end the story. But that is what happens when we refuse to do the very basic of what God has asked us to do. So question number one from Matthew 25, question number one. Where did you get your time, energy, and money? Where did you get your team?

T-E-A-M, time, energy, and money. Where did you get it? Where did you get these resources from? Anybody want to give us an answer? God. It's not too hard, right? Now some of you might be sitting there and pushing back saying, yeah, I mean, God gave me my life, but I went out and earned my money.

[ 24 : 02 ] I went out and worked for it. I worked hard for it. You're thinking back through all the hours that you put in to get where you are today, to get your truck, to get your boat, to get your house, wherever you are, whatever possessions you have, you're thinking, I worked for that.

But listen, it can be taken away just like that. Just like that. Let's see what the Word of God has to say. Romans chapter 11, verse 36. Romans 11, 36. While you're going there, I want to tell you a joke I heard about that kind of highlights the point of how quickly things that you work for can disappear. There's this comedian that I heard, and he was saying, how funny would it be if I just went up to you in a grocery store when you're on your way to the cashier to check out and go home with your groceries, and you've got a whole grocery basket full of goods, and I just went by and grabbed it from you and took it and checked out.

And you looked at me and said, hey, you can't do that. That's mine. And the guy says, no, it's not. You haven't bought it. What are you going to say to me? I gathered that. You can't take that from me.

Well, go gather it again. And I will never be a comedian because my delivery was nowhere near as good as his was. But listen, the point made me laugh. Like, yeah, I guess it doesn't really belong to you, right? You've just been going through the aisles collecting what belongs to someone else because you haven't paid for it yet. The interesting thing is we go through life collecting all this stuff that doesn't belong to us. Jesus actually paid for it. Now, he wants to share much of what belongs to him with us, but it doesn't belong to us. Those bags of silver didn't belong to those servants. They were supposed to use them for the benefit of the master. And when the master is benefited, guess who else gets a blessing? We do. Then he blesses his good and faithful servants.

So let's keep that in the back of our heads. Romans chapter 11, down in verse 36. Everything comes from the Lord. Whatever Bible translation you're looking at, whether it's the King James or the New International Version or the English Standard, whatever, New King James, whatever you happen to be looking at, there's nothing wrong at all with how that reads this. I just like how the contemporary English version happens to phrase this. Everything comes from the Lord.

[ 26 : 59 ] All things were made because of him, and watch this, will return to him. He can have somebody go up to you in the grocery store and take your cart of groceries away.

And what can you really say about it? Hey, that's mine. No, it's not. It's not yours. And this person is going to put it to far better use for my kingdom. You just want to use it for yourself. Now that's convicting to me, and I hope it's convicting to many of you. How much of what God has shared with us, what he's given us, what he's allowed us to have possession of, how much of that do we use strictly on ourselves and never even think of using it for his kingdom, for his purpose?

But all things were made because of him, and guess what? It's all going to return back to him. Your time on this earth will come to an end, and it'll all go back to God.

It's always been his from the beginning. 1 Corinthians 4 and verse 7, a New Living Translation. What do you have that God hasn't given you? What a question. Is there anything you have that God hasn't given you? No. And if everything you have is from God, then why boast as though it were not a gift? Ephesians 2, 8, and 9 says, by grace you were saved through faith. This is not from yourselves. It is God's gift. Everything we have, from the salvation that he offered us to the very breath we breathe, the ground on which we walk, it all comes from God, but we go out and buy a plot of it, and we say, this is mine. I earned this. I worked hard for this. You can't touch this.

This is my retirement. This is my vehicle. This is my energy. This is my strength. It's my time. Okay? This is me time right now. Leave me alone. And you know what we do with that attitude is we close off the very one who gave it to us. What we're doing, it's almost like we're going and burying our head in the sand, burying our bag of silver in the ground, saying, don't touch me.

[ 29 : 40 ] God, you gave this to me. You've been gone a long time. I haven't invested it at all. I've been holding on to it myself. And we boast about what we have. Look at this bag of silver I've got.

See this thing? We don't tell anybody it was a gift from the master. We don't tell anybody it was God's gift to us. Look at what I have. So we must understand, where did we get our time, energy, and money? We got them from God. Would you go to 1 Chronicles 29? We're going to be there for just a moment. 1 Chronicles 29. We're going to highlight verse 9, but we'll read up to it.

1 Chronicles 29. You can go to 2 Chronicles and turn back one page. It's the last chapter of 1 Chronicles. Then King David turned to the entire assembly and said, My son Solomon, whom God has clearly chosen as the next king of Israel, is still young and inexperienced.

The work ahead of him is enormous. The temple he's going to build is not for mere mortals. It is for God himself. Using every resource at my command, I have gathered as much as I could for building the temple of my God. Now, there is enough gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, as well as great quantities of onyx, other precious stones, costly jewels, all kinds of fine stone and marble. I've collected everything I can collect, King David says, to build God's temple. Now, verse 3. Because of my devotion to the temple of my God, I am giving all of my own private treasures of gold and silver to help in the construction. King David was all in to build God's temple. He knew his son Solomon was going to take over, but Solomon wasn't ready for this task yet. So he said, I've gathered everything I can from the kingdom, from all of my kingly resources. I've gone all in with my personal possessions, all my personal stores of gold and silver. I've given all that. This is an addition to the building materials I've already collected for his holy temple. And I'm donating more than 112 tons of gold, 262 tons of refined silver for the walls, overlaying the walls of the building. All this that God had actually decreed and designed, this is how I want my temple to be. And so King David says, I've gone all in to get this done. Now, verse 5. For the other gold and silver work to be done by the craftsmen, now then, who will follow my example and give offerings to the Lord today? Where do we get this idea of passing the offering plate in church? Well, it's been around a long time. They were doing it back then, all right? Giving free will offerings to the Lord, not, oh man, I got to give this to God or he's going to get me. That is the mindset of that third servant, right? You don't know God if that's what you think.

But free will, willingly giving it to God, saying, God, I want to give everything I have back to you. Some of it, you're going to want me to spend over here. Some of it, you're going to want me to spend over here. Some of it, you're going to want me to invest back into your church so your name can go out, your name can be praised. So he says, who's going to follow my example?

[ 33 : 19 ] Then the family leaders, the leaders of the tribes of Israel, the generals, the captains of the army, the king's administrative officers, all gave willingly. The leaders stepped up and said, you know what?

I'll do it. Y'all, can we just take a pivot for a second? If you're a leader in the church and you're not giving regularly back to God, I'm not over here trying to hit you with the guilt bat.

I'm just saying that it has always been God's design for his leaders to step up and say, you know what? Yes, I'm going to support what he's doing. I'm going to take some of what he's given me and give it directly back to his work. That's how it's always been, whether it's in Ezra or Nehemiah or first Chronicles here throughout the new Testament, everyone willingly giving back of what God has given them to say, I want his work to continue. So I'm going to practically invest with my money, with my resources, everything I have, my time, energy, and money, I'm going to give it back to God. Now the list goes on of what they gave, gold, gold coins, silver, bronze, iron, precious stones, all of this. And the people, verse nine, watch this, the people rejoiced over the offerings for they had given freely and wholeheartedly to the Lord. They weren't standing there saying, well,

God's a harsh God. And if I don't do this, he's not going to be pleased. And he's probably going to give my family leprosy. That's not what they were doing. They were rejoicing over the fact that their bank account now was lower than it was before, so to speak. In ancient times, their wealth, personal wealth had just diminished. The king's wealth had gone from all this to practically nothing. He emptied out his stock store rooms, his stock houses of gold and silver, gave it all to God. And then they all got together and rejoiced. They threw a party. So this is great, man. We just gave everything we have to God.

Now we can build his temple. How excited were they? And how different is that from our mindset when we feel compelled or like, we have to do this? We have to do this or God's going to get us.

[ 36 : 01 ] That's not the mindset. So they rejoiced over the offerings. Now, then what happened? Verse 10, then David praised the Lord in the presence of the whole assembly. And that's what happens.

When we give, then we can praise. If you're praising but not giving your time, energy, and money, your praise is hollow. Your praise is insincere. Because you might sing the songs of praise, how great thou art, how great thou art, but you're not great enough for me to give anything to.

You're not great enough for me to invest in. You're not great enough for me to see your work go on and see your name be praised among the nations. I won't have any part of that, but yes, God, you're great. Do you see how, what's the word? Hypocritical, that is?

We're much more like the third servant so often. And then down in verse 14 of 1 Chronicles 29, everything we have has come from you. Do you see that? He sings this great song of praise.

He prays this beautiful prayer to God. And he says, Oh God, we thank you. We praise your glorious name. Who am I? Who are my people that we could give anything to you? Verse 13. And then everything we have has come from you. And we give you only what you first gave us. Man, King David, centuries before Jesus ever came, understood what it was all about. God, everything we have has come from you.

[ 37 : 58 ] So we give back to you only what you first gave us. I was doing some preparation for this sermon and I was listening to another preacher preach about this topic. And he told this story that was better than anything that I've got in my personal life. And so I've got to share his story because it was awesome.

He said they were having a youth activity or something and this wealthy guy had jumped in to try to help out. He was now helping out with the youth group. And this guy owned this big nice boat. And so they're out on a lake and they've got a bunch of junior high girls and some workers and all this in this boat.

So this wealthy guy is in there and he's got this beautiful new yacht or whatever it was, probably smaller than that. It was a big, beautiful boat. And he sees the guy, the youth pastor drives alongside, I think in a smaller boat or something. They're out on the lake. And he looks over and he sees the guy just kind of standing there scratching his head. He says, hey, what's going on? Everything okay? He said, yeah, I'm just trying to figure out why God wanted ink all over his seats.

Apparently the junior high girls had had the idea to take permanent markers and write and draw all over the nice, beautiful leather seats on this guy's new boat. But the guy didn't throw a fit. He didn't even really get upset. And his response, the youth pastor said, just cut him to the core. I'm just trying to figure out why God wanted ink on his leather seats. God, why'd you allow this to happen? It's your boat. You're allowing me to have it for a while, but it's your boat. You've got some plan for this. Just trying to figure out why you wanted this. Okay, we move on. Y'all, that would not be my reaction, okay? I'm sorry. If I brought a new car, not really boat guy, but if I brought a new car, you know, beautiful leather seats at all this. And one of the boys, Austin or Bo, they're both sick this morning.



Y'all pray for them. But one of them started drawing on that thing. Man, I would not say, God, why'd you want your boys to draw on your seats? I'd be like, boys, what are you thinking?

[ 40 : 19 ] You lost your mind. But there is a principle there that that guy had figured out. Why was he wealthy? And we don't know everything, but we might have a little clue because to whom much is given, God turns around and often gives more. If you give, if you treat what he gave you according to how he wants you to treat it. If you take what God gives you and do what he wants you to do, what does he do? He gives you more. Now that doesn't mean that every rich person out there, it fits that bill because that's certainly not true. And the Bible even says it's harder for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven than it is to get through the eye of the needle.

And whether that's talking about a gate in ancient Jerusalem, or it's actually talking about the tiny little hole in the needle, either way, it'd be very small and hard to get a camel through there. So regardless, wealth doesn't mean you're close to God. But listen, oftentimes God continues to bless those. Well, he always continues to bless those who have taken what he gave them and gave it back to him freely and willingly.

So that's our first question. Where'd you get your time, money, and energy? Our last question is very simple and very obvious. What are you doing with it? What are you doing with God's time, energy, and money? That's what we're going to close with. Look over in Matthew chapter 6. It's our final passage for the day. We were in Matthew 25. Now let's go to the front of the book, Matthew 6.

Verse 19. While you're turning, I'm going to go ahead and read. Jesus is talking about this topic. He says, don't store up treasures here on earth. Why? Because moths eat them, rust destroy them, thieves break in and steal it. Instead, store your treasure, verse 20, in heaven where moth and rust can't destroy it, thieves can't steal it. Verse 21, wherever your treasure is, there will be the desires of your heart. Your eyes like a lamp. It provides light for your body. When your eye is healthy, the whole body is filled with light. When your eye is unhealthy, your whole body is filled with darkness.

If the light you think you have is actually darkness, how deep that darkness is. No one can serve two masters. You're going to hate one and love the other, or you'll be devoted to one and despise the other. You can't serve God and be enslaved to money. That's why I tell you not to worry about everyday life. If you've got enough to drink or food, clothes to wear, isn't life more than food and the body is more than clothing? Look at the birds. They don't plant, they don't harvest or store food in barns. Your heavenly father feeds them. Aren't you far more valuable to your father than the birds are?

[ 43 : 19 ] Verse 27, can all your worries add a single moment to your life? No. For all our worries, it doesn't really solve anything. It doesn't extend our life. It doesn't give us more time. Verse 28, why worry about your clothing? Look at the lilies of the field, the flowers in the field. Look how they grow. They don't work. They don't make their clothing. But Solomon, King Solomon, in all his glory and beauty was not dressed as beautifully as they are. And if God cares so wonderfully for the wildflowers that are here today and thrown in the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith? That last question cuts to the heart of the matter. Why did the third servant not go out and invest on behalf of the job that he had to do? Why didn't he do it? Because he had very little faith in the master. Why do we not do the work that God has called us to do? Why do we not take our resources and invest them back into God's kingdom? Because we have so little faith in God.

So let me ask you this question. Who's your team playing for? Who are your time, energy, and money playing for? How are you working it? How are you investing it?

How are you spending it? There's a problem here. Two problems. Number one, we don't do what God asks of us because we don't really believe he's all that good.

If we did, then we would trust him implicitly. We would hold everything we have in open hands and not tight fists. Say, God, thank you for all you've given me. Now, what do you want with your boat?

What do you want with the leather seats on it? What do you want with the bag of silver? What do you want with my time, energy, and money? I'm holding it loosely. You guide me into how to spend it, how to invest it. But we don't really believe he's that good. So we don't trust what he's going to guide us to do. We said this last week, and it comes all the way back in again.

[ 45 : 52 ] We don't do what he asks because he has our souls, but not our hearts. We'll trust him to take us to heaven. We'll trust him to forgive us our sins, but we don't trust him beyond that. He doesn't have our hearts, and that's what he wants. James 4 says, you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it. And even when you ask, you don't get it because your motives are all wrong. You only want what will give you pleasure. That's where we land with most of our resources, isn't it? It's we want what gives us pleasure, not what gives God's kingdom progress, not what moves God's kingdom forward.

We want what moves us forward. William Carey was a great missionary in England. He was called, from England. He headed to India. He spent his life in India, translated the Bible into the entire Bible into six different dialects and many, many more portions of the Bible into other native languages.

Guy was a scholar, had a heart for people like few others in the history of ministry and missions in the world. So William Carey truly went out and poured his life back into God's kingdom.

And he said a couple of quotes I want to share with you before we leave. Expect great things from God. Attempt great things for God. This was the attitude of the first two servants.

I am going to go attempt great things for my master. I'm going to take these bags of silver, and I'm going to double them. And then I'm going to expect great things from him.

[ 47 : 39 ] Their attempt was blessed and their expectation was met. How many times can you look back at your life and say, I attempted this for God. He blessed it.

And my expectation of him was not only met, but overwhelmed. Malachi 3 says, You give to God, God will open the windows of heaven. He will pour out a blessing on you.

Can't promise you what that blessing is going to look like. We're not all going to be multi-millionaires tomorrow. But God will pour out blessings on you. Maybe it'll be in your health. Maybe it'll be in your children. Maybe you'll be in the depth of your relationship with him. Maybe it'll be in the things that matter in this life. I can promise you it will be in the areas that matter the most.

That's where God pours out his blessings. You want to see those great things? You got to attempt great things. The second quote from William Carey, it's more in line with the third servant.

It gives us a little clue and it cuts to our heart. He attempted great risks during his time in England.

[ 48 : 59 ] Put his life on the line more times than we have time to relay today. Can't tell you all the stories, but you go home and do some reading on William Carey. It'll blow your mind the things he went through, the dangers he went through, the opposition he went through. He said, I'm not afraid of failure.

I'm afraid of succeeding at things that don't matter. I'm not afraid of failure. I'm afraid of succeeding at things that don't matter. So what's our takeaway today? It's that. Don't waste your life on things that don't matter. Would you bow your heads with me right now? If you're not a child of God this morning, if you don't know him as your savior, that means you've never taken the time to bow your head, repent of your sins, turn to Jesus, say, God, I believe you died on the cross. I believe you rose from the dead. I believe you love me, want to cleanse me of my sin, want to forgive me and make me your child. If you haven't done that, would you slip your hand up right now? I'd love to talk to you. I'm going to assume that most in the room, if not all, have at some point become a child of God. So I want to talk to you right now.

Would you ask yourself this question in the quietness of this moment? We're all going to leave in a minute. We're going to go get lunch. We're going to go our separate ways. But before we clear the room, would you ask yourself this question? How much of my life have I been chasing things that don't matter? Maybe you can say succeeding at things that don't matter.

Say, I don't know what you're talking about. I've been spending my time trying to provide for my family. Therein lies your problem. Because the master can provide for your family so much better than you can. I've been spending my time trying to find peace of mind. The master can provide peace of mind so much better than you can. If you take your time, your energy, your money, and you give it back to the master. He'll give it back to you so much more. So much more meaningfully.

We're not all going to be rich on this earth. But we can be rich in what matters. We can be rich in joy, in peace, happiness, and contentment. We find that in the person of Jesus. Open the scriptures.

[ 51 : 52 ] If you've got a Bible that has the words of Jesus in red, read those words. Go through and read what Jesus said. Read what he did. You'll see that happiness. You'll see that contentment. You'll see that peace. You'll see that compassion. You'll see that real heart for God and his people.

For those that are without him. That's what matters. Don't waste your life on other things.

God, I pray right now that you would touch our bodies. We've got people who are tired in here. We've got people who are hurting in here. We've got people watching online that are in such poor health they can't even make it in.

You are the healer. We pray that you would choose to heal. Whatever you choose to do, we'll trust you. We won't abandon you. We won't turn from you. We'll still choose to follow.

God, in this room, we've got people who are hurting inside. I'm not going to ask them to raise their hands. I'm not going to ask them to share what's going on. But we've got people who are struggling.

[ 53 : 04 ] God, I think most of it comes from our inability to trust, our inability to have faith.

I pray that you would reveal yourself to us. Reveal your true nature. Say, no, I'm good. I love you. I want to bless you. I want to bless you. And I've given you all this so you can do something with your life that matters. You're not asking us to go take bags of silver and invest them and turn around a profit. You're asking us to take our time, energy, and money and give it back to you. What does that mean? It means do the work that you called your children to do. It means be kind to others. It means share your wealth with others. It means share your time. It means set aside some of our own appetites, some of our pursuits, some of our desires, some of the things we're used to doing, our habits, some breaking, some habits, God. None of this comes naturally. But by your Holy Spirit, you can turn us into that first servant, that second servant, and see untold blessings poured out individually and together as a church. And Lord, we know it will spread beyond throughout this whole community. This community will be changed. It will feel the impact of the people of First Baptist Church saying we want to share our resources like God has taught us to. Whatever you're trying to do in hearts right now, open us up. Let our answer be yes. In Jesus' name, amen. Would you stand to your feet?