

The King and His Reward, Part 2

Luke 19:15-19

We're back in Luke 19 this morning and so I would like to invite you to open your bibles to Luke 19 and the parable that we've been looking at that starts in verse 11 of Luke 19. Luke, 19:11 to 27. "As they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they suppose that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. He said therefore, 'A nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return. Calling ten of his servants, he gave them ten minas, and said to them, 'Engage in business until I come.'

"But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to reign over us.' When he returned, having received the kingdom, he ordered those servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by doing business. The first came before him, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.' And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant! Because you

have been faithful in very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.'

"And the second came, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made five minas.' And he said to him, 'And you are to be over five cities.' Then another came, saying, 'Lord, here is your mina, which I kept laid away in a handkerchief; for I was afraid of you because you are a severe man. You take what you did not deposit, and you reap what you did not sow.' 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? Why then did you not put my money in the bank, and at my coming I might have collected it with interest?'

"And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the mina from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas.' And they said him, 'Lord, he has ten minas.' '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. But as for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slaughter them before me.'"

So, the king returns. He hears the report of the faithful servants, and let's see his response. This is point number

three, the response of the, the king when he returns: The king's reward. The increase, which was, as we said, astoundingly dramatic, really seems to be nothing in comparison with the astounding nature of the king's reward. "The first came before him, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.' 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.'"

Is that not astounding? "The second came, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made five minas.' He said to him, 'And you are to be over five cities.'"

A mina for a city. But notice, first of all, what the king commends is what these faithful servants long to hear more than anything else. First the king commends their character. He commends their character, which for any faithful servant, that is really the only reward that matters. The returning king says to them, well done. Good job, well done.

This exclamation **εὖγε**. It, it expresses a commendation for exceptional service. Well done. Excellent, fantastic. What does this show in the king? He's not some cold, calculating sovereign who's just like numbers guy. This guy's passionately invested in his servants' well-being. He wants to see them excel, and he loves to see them excel. And so when they do well, he recognizes

it in them and he commends them. Excellent. Fantastic. It's an expression of joy. It's pleasure in him. It's satisfaction from the Lord. Is that not what you want to hear? Well done.

This is what the master had hoped to prove in these men. It's what he intended to expose in their character when he went away to receive the kingdom, and he is absolutely thrilled with their report. Again, not about material gain here that he cares about. What he commends is something no money can buy, to prove and to expose and to find out for himself the good character in these servants. They have passed the test and he rejoices to point it out in public.

I always like to say this and say this to people all the time. Praise in public, rebuke in private. Rebuke people in private. Don't do that publicly. But you praise in public whenever possible. Private praise is okay too. Praise in public, rebuke in private. That's what he's doing here. He's praising them publicly. Calls them good servant.

We see the king rewarding their faithfulness, rewarding their faithfulness. He gives the reward to good and faithful servants. He gives the very reward that good and faithful servants really love. And what is that reward? Is it a big paycheck? A, no. Is it titles? No. Is it fame and fortune? No.

What does it give them? The honor of more responsibility. Try motivating your young students that way. Hey, if you get this homework assignment done, you know what I'm going to give you? More homework. Isn't that going to be awesome?

That's what any faithful servant loves. It's the honor of a greater responsibility. The first servant says, he says in verse 17, "Because you've been faithful in very little, you shall have authority over ten cities." Ten cities. Likewise, to the second he says, verse 19, "And you are to be over five cities." The grammar there is emphatic in, in making the promise as ironclad as the promise of his own return. In both verses the honor of authority over cities is something that he has commanded, so it's in the imperative tense. Present imperative. Means the decision has already been made here, already been made, and all that remains then is to execute upon this decision that he's made.

For each servant to take up his newly assigned post and then get himself to work; evidently by practicing faithfulness through continual obedience while their Lord's away and that's at a time when it would be very easy to slack off. By focusing on their faithfulness, they didn't know it, but they were making for themselves a future investment by increasing their own

capacity for future service. They are extending their usefulness that they'll have to the Lord. Does that sound good to you?

Sounds good to me.

The king knew before he left this principle, one who is faithful in very little, also faithful in much and now that he's returned, he finds in these servants, the faithfulness that he has hoped to find. The test is effective. The test has proved their character, and all that is left now is to assign them a fitting reward, which is the honor of more responsibility, a greater responsibility.

Again, it's a similar scene of reward in Matthew 25 verses 21 to 23, the parable of the talents coming up actually in the next week from where the Lord sits here in this vantage point. "Well done, good and faithful servant. You've been faithful over little. I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master." What's the joy of the master? The joy of doing his Fathers' will. What's the joy of the servant? To do the Kings' will, which is to do the fathers' will. What's our joy? Responsibility to be involved in the work.

So, this is just a story with no parallel to reality? No. Not even close. He's using the parable here to illustrate the reality of his kingdom when he returns to reward his faithful

servants and to be marveled at, as 2 Thessalonians 1:10 says, "among all who have believed." He's given a parable. But it's not a riddle. It's a story that says Jesus really will award his servants with this civic responsibility, with kingdom responsibility. He tells his beloved apostles, it's coming up in a couple chapters, Luke 22:28-30, "You were those who have stayed with me in my trials," in this country of citizens who hate me, you've stuck with me, you've been there. Man, I love you.

They've been faithful. "I assigned to you, as my father has assigned to me," what?, "a kingdom, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." That's the promise he makes to the twelve. For their investment of their mina sitting on a throne, that promise is not only for the apostles because Christ regards faithfulness is paramount for all of his servants. He rewards faithfulness in all of his servants, Paul told Timothy, 2 Timothy 2:12, "If we endure, we will also reign with him." "We will reign with him."

Matthew's Gospel, Matthew 19:28-29, Jesus takes the promise to the twelve and extends it outward to other believers as well. "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will

sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel and everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life."

We Christians as believers in the church age, though we won't sit on the twelve thrones assigned to the Lord's twelve apostles, it's their throne, not ours. We will occupy the place of judgment in Christ's future kingdom on earth, Paul tells the Corinthians, 1 Corinthians 6:2-3, when the king returns, we will be rewarded with important duties and responsibilities such as this. "Do you not know?" He says it to them as if. Duh, "Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?"

I don't know how it's going to look. It's hard for me to picture that in my mind's eye. And then this, he says to the saints in Corinth, "Do you not know that we are to judge angels?" Remarkable, isn't it? What profound motivation that all of this provides for us to keep pursuing faithfulness and investing our minas, doing good, to be good faithful stewards of the salvation that God has granted to us, of the roles that Christ has assigned to us, of the spiritual gifts that the

Spirit has given to each one of us, of the time that we have every single day.

So, the king has commended the character of his servants. He's rewarded their faithfulness. He's assigned to each one even more responsibility. Which brings us to a third point. Number three, the king follows a pattern of reward, a pattern of reward and it's patterned on the reward that was given to him. Does it strike you as over the top magnanimous that the king rewards the first servant with this disproportionate generosity? I mean, do the math. If one mina is equal to about three months' wages, ten minas thirty months wages, or about two and a half years' worth of work. I think I've got that math right.

If someone told you that you could right now put in two and a half years of good hard work, and in return you'd get to rule over an entire city, maybe you'd say, what city? Where is it? But setting that aside. Two and a half years of work in exchange, your entire city. Go to any restaurant, go to any show, any sporting event. You pull out the I rule this city card. Everything is paid for. You receive tax revenue, service, all that as you govern over this entire city and being someone of good and faithful character, you want to rule the city with goodness and faithfulness to bless it, to benefit it.

Does that strike you as a pretty good deal? Two and a half years of work; city, here it is. Listen, that's only a tenth of what the king gave to the first servant, a tenth because you've been faithful and very little. I.e., invest one mina and gain ten minas. You shall have authority over ten cities, so one mina gained equals one city. Same proportion of reward for the second servant, verse 19, having put the one mina of work, the mina made five more minas. Therefore, you'd be over five cities. Same math though, isn't it? One mina equals one city. One mina gained, one city.

One commentator rightly said this, "reward is astonishingly disproportionate to disciples' effort. A mina would scarcely purchase a barn and yet for each mina gained a city is given." End Quote. Shows us once again the mina was never about the money. It was about testing the character to find, prove, and reveal faithfulness. To find capable rulers, trustworthy friends, whom he can put over his cities. Now let me come back to the point here, that the king follows a pattern of reward in giving this magnanimous and generous award.

It's patterned on an award that's been given to him in the reception of a kingdom. As we've said, the nobleman-become-king represents Jesus Christ during his first advent as a nobleman, a

man of noble birth and noble character. He too had received minas from his father. We can give a lot of examples we could point to, because all of us have a lot of examples of minas in our life, something we all have in kind. But we'll keep it really simple and really brief here.

The Father gave twelve minas to Christ and what were those twelve minas? Each one representing a man, gave him twelve men. And Jesus prayed in John 17:12, "While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them. Not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture may be fulfilled." Like that one is what you determined, father. But I have kept the minas that you gave me. I've kept these men. Keeping those entrusted to him and in many other things, Jesus Christ has been faithful, as it says in Hebrews 3:6, "faithful over all God's house."

So, what is the reward for the finite time of his testing for taking care of twelve minas, twelve men? Well, the father has given to him a universal kingdom. The father has given to him a universal kingdom, and Jesus will tell his apostles. As I said, coming up in Luke 22:29, "my father assigned to me a kingdom." He rejoices here in the father's generosity, in the honor of a reward of greater responsibility. He had a certain

responsibility while he walked this earth. And now, having received a kingdom, is there any end to his responsibility, his oversight?

When the king returns, he rejoices to share the honor and reward of responsibility with us. He is pleased to bring us close. He is pleased in rejoicing to invite us in to join him, to share in with him the joy of serving the father under his authority and oversight, ruling and reigning with him during the millennial kingdom and then beyond, even beyond in the eternal state. Folks, we need to see this. We need to really believe this, so that we live and order our lives rightly today.

So, we live our lives right now in view of future realities which are certain, no longer enslaved to the mandates of this present life. There's a very real continuity that exists between this life and the next. A true continuity and connection between what we do now and how we live now and what we will be doing then. How we live now affects the level of honor and reward that our Lord Jesus Christ will assign to us in his kingdom.

So listen, if the only difference between you and your unbelieving friends and family and neighbors is the fact that you attend church or is the fact that you attend this church, I just want to warn you, in love, you're in danger of winding up

like the next servant that we're going to study in verses 20 and following.

Beloved Christian, stop living for the day, stop living for the week or the month. Stop living for what's happening in your next family vacation or your work schedule or whatever it is. I mean, all the things in life, your work, the different things you do, even your rest, your, your vacation, the time you spend with your, all those things are important. I'm not minimizing that. I'm just saying don't maximize that. Don't make that the thing, living this life in light of the next.

Knowing that there's a real and certain continuity that exists between right now and then. Our Lord tracks our progress. He's going to summon us into his presence on that day, for reward or for recompense. Whatever he sees is going to be exposed. It's not necessary or even possible, really, for us to know now, or to track for ourselves how we're doing with the minas that he's giving. So much of what our mina is doing in the gain that is accruing to, by his grace, to our benefit, the Lord keeps track of that. It's, it's invisible to, it's not known.

But for all faithful servants, according to 1 Corinthians 4:5, when the Lord comes, he "will bring to light the things that are now hidden in darkness," like all the ways that our

mina has gained, "and he will disclose the motives and intentions of the heart," whether good or bad, "and then each one will receive his commendation from the Lord," a fitting reward. Listen, our Lord isn't asking of us any kind of service to God that he hasn't done himself. He's calling us to partner with him in doing the father's will.

He went first and he calls us to follow. That's the mark of good leadership, isn't it? That you do and then you invite people to follow and join you in where you've already been. Truthfully, really, ultimately, we can't do the things that he's done. He's the king. We are just mere servants serving in his pleasure. Obviously, he's done the greater work, the greatest work that can be done. Ours is childlike and utterly ineffectual by comparison.

He's the nobleman. He's the one who bears the great weight and significant responsibility. He's the king. He's the one who resources his kingdom out of his own personal wealth and provides for his people. He's the savior. He's the one who protects his people, fights all their battles. It's our king who, having ascended on high Ephesians 4:8, has "led a host of captives, and he's given gifts to men."

He's the one who fought the greatest battle, won the greatest war, and gained the greatest victory. He has now conquered sin and death. He's vanquished the devil, and he now showers us with a mina and wants to shower us then with a reward. If we'll serve him now faithfully loyally, as dependable, reliable servants. So, my Christian friend, what about you? Will you resolve to be faithful in serving your noble king? I hope so. That's been our prayer as elders. It's been my abiding prayer through this whole section.

If you're here as someone who's not yet a believer. I welcome you to our church. I'm so glad you're here. But listen, I just want to invite you. I've been there too. I've been an unbeliever once, and God converted me. He did a work of grace in my heart and changed me. And I pray that he does the same for you because if you're honest with yourself and in the quiet of your heart in those alone moments, you know that whatever has been done in your life, whatever you've invested, accomplished, achieved, it really amounts to a whole lot of nothing.

You ask yourself sometimes am I just like a rat on a wheel? Just spinning, spinning, spinning. Everything I earn and everything I build someone comes along after me and takes it away. I just want to ask you, my nonbelieving friend, to repent

and put your faith in Christ. Live no more in futility day after day after day after day, same old thing. Like the beasts of the earth who are always rooting around, looking for their next meal, scratching the next itch, finding the next pleasure. That's all our life amounts to outside of this gospel, outside of this story.

So would you put your faith in Christ, the one who died, to forgive you of all your sin and cleanse your conscience of all evil and dead works? Be covered in his righteousness and come and follow him as Savior and Lord? That's what the rest of us have done, and we as Christians, we long to live as good and faithful servants before him, because everything that we do, he keeps track of. He's noted, and nothing on him is lost. Everything accrues to benefit an eternal reward. Will you bow with me?

Our Father, we want to thank you once again for sending the Lord Jesus Christ and Lord Jesus, we thank you for teaching this parable. We thank you for what you have allowed us by the Holy Spirit to discern here, and to understand and to see and to rejoice in. And we long, like any good servant, any faithful servant would long for his master's return, that's, man that is what we long for, is to see you come back. We want to see an end



to all the, the mockery and the scorn and the hatred of the citizens of your world.

We want to see you return and set the earth to rights. We long to see your face, and for us, it really is not about whatever the level of the reward or the honor that you give us. That's up to you. That's your sovereign choice, and we know that we'll be satisfied with whatever you give. What we long to see most is your face. Where we long to be is in your presence forever. We long to be doing your will, to be rejoicing along with you to do your father's will. We want to render a good account of this life.

We just ask that you would be working in the hearts of every single member of this church. And let us with, with one heart, with one mind, strive side by side for the sake of the gospel to be in true partnership and fellowship with one another, yes, but really with you and with the father who is in heaven, we pray for his glory. Lord Jesus, in your name, by the power of the Holy Spirit, amen.