

Matthew 25:14-23
10 for 10 – Week 2; September 15 & 16, 2019

If God had given to us one simple, concise, clear directive about how we are to use all the gifts that he entrusts to us, it would be awesome, right? We would want to know: *What does God say? What does God want us to do? How does God want us to do this?* But he doesn't. In fact, the Bible has about 2,300 passages in which God speaks about how we are to manage the things that he has entrusted to us. What are we supposed to do with over 2,300 passages? If you were to look at all of those passages, there is ONE thing that is clear when he speaks about money and possessions. He tells us that *everything* we have is not ours. They are his.

Therefore, if everything that we have is God's and not ours, then the question has to be: *What does God expect us to do with them?* That only makes sense, right? After all, we live in a world of expectations. We have expectations for people around us. You start a new job. It is helpful to know what the expectations of your new boss are. When you stand before God's altar and say those words, *I do*, to your new husband or wife, what does he or she expect from you? If we can begin to understand what the expectations are, then we can try to meet those expectations. What does God want from us?

First of all, God wants us to know what he has done for us. That's clear. Every word that is found in the Bible points us to Jesus. God gave us his best, as we talked about last week. God held nothing back. He gave his one and only Son to die for people who don't want to put Him first in their lives. He has forgiven your sins. He has erased your guilt. He tells us that through Jesus we have a place in heaven assured to us. He wants to say to each of us those words in our text: **"Come and share your master's happiness!"**

With all that being said, the question still remains: *What does God want from us?* To help us answer that question, Jesus tells a story in our text. Jesus is getting close to the end of his ministry on earth. In the verses before our text, he tells his followers to be ready for his return. He tells them: **"Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour."** In the verses that follow our text, he speaks about what will happen when he does return on the Last Day. On that day, He will separate the goats and the sheep – the unbelievers and believers. But right in between those two sections, he tells this story about the bags of gold. Why? Jesus knew that this waiting for his return would not be easy. But when he would return, he also wanted his believers to not be afraid. He loved them and wanted them to share in the master's happiness.

Jesus begins. **"It will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them."** The man leaving on a journey is Jesus. We are the servants. What does God want from us? He wants us to know that we are the servants. As the servants, did you catch what he has done for the servants? He **"entrusted his wealth to them."** He wants us to know that our life is not our own. God wants us to know that we own nothing. Our house is God's. Our phone is God's. Our car is God's. Our kids are God's. Our abilities are God's. Our financial assets are God's. If we can be the least bit kind and helpful to others, that gift came to us from God. If we can be compassionate when people are hurting, that gift came to us from God. He entrusts to us everything that is part of our lives.

He wants us to know just how much he has given us. He says that he has given us **"bags of gold."** This man entrusted a lot to all three of these servants. If we were to translate these bags of gold into today's dollars, each bag would be worth about 1 million dollars. That's important to know. Jesus wants us to know how much this master has and how much he gives. He wants us to marvel at what he **"entrusts"** to us. He's given each of us a lot. What does he want us to do with what he entrusts to us? He wants us to be good and faithful servants. What does he promise to do with those who are good and faithful? He says to the first two servants: **"Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!"** He wants to bless us with more than we could possibly ever imagine. Just look at what he did with just 3 servants. He entrusts to them 8 million dollars. If he could do, he has so much more to give. Jesus wants us to know the master. He wants us to know how much he loves us. Two of these servants knew the master. They knew how much he loved them. They knew how much he had entrusted to them. So, they faithfully used what was entrusted to them to give glory and be a blessing for the master.

The third servant thought he knew the master. The master comes back and the 3rd servant said to him: **“Master, I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.”** He doesn’t even seem to bother doing anything with what had been entrusted to him. He thought this master was a hard man. He was afraid. So, what does he do? He doesn’t even try. He digs a whole in the back yard and buries the million dollars. He just didn’t want to see that what really matters is not the amount of stuff that he has entrusted to us. What really matters knows the master. This master gave so much to the servants. This master wanted to share his happiness with them. He wanted to share with him more than he could possibly imagine. Yet, this servant doesn’t even seem to care.

We live in a world that says that everything that we have is meant to bring happiness to me. What does my job do for me? What does my family do for me? What does my wealth do for me? We live in a world that tries to convince us that it is all about me and what benefits me. God says: *No! It is about ME. Look how much I have entrusted to you. Look how much I love you!* He wants us to see that what really matters knows the master.

What does God want from us? He wants our hearts. He wants us to love him and serve him as much as he has loved us. Therefore, my dear friends, let’s give him what he wants. Let’s let the master share his happiness with us. Amen.