



Building Wholehearted Disciples of Jesus

**The Wholeheart Disciple
Starting Points 2**

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Series: Outlier University

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Kingdom Wealth and Stewardship

Last week, in our first message on “Starting Points” we looked at Mark 2 where Jesus is calling his disciples. We looked specifically at the calling of Levi and drew out 3 important principles of being a wholeheart disciple:

1. Jesus always initiates His love toward us.
2. Jesus calls us to follow Him.
3. Jesus calls us to a purpose, a job to do.

Jesus forewarned his disciples that he would leave them and that the ongoing ministry, the works and ways of the kingdom of God, would rest on them.

- Rather than encouraging a “wait and watch” attitude, Jesus encouraged a “watch and work” mentality.

As in many of his most important truths, Jesus told a parable. In this case he used money. He used the Roman form of exchange at the time, talents to explain the kingdom truth of stewardship and investment of our lives.

- First, He told the story of ten virgins, five wise and five unwise waiting and watching for the Groom to come to the Wedding Feast. The main point of this parable was to keep our lamps lit—to stay ready because we know not the hour of his coming.
- In the second parable, Jesus emphasizes that watchfulness does not mean idleness: Watch and Work is the theme. A faithful discharge of one’s responsibilities through his/her talents is the point of the parable.
 - Wise use of Time, Energy, and Money.
 - Resources.

- Giftings.
 - As we inaugurate Outlier University, I want to challenge you to get trained and equipped for greater use in the Kingdom of God.
- Let me begin with the end. Let me open with Jesus' conclusive purpose for the parable.

29 For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. (Matthew 25:29)

Abundance, periseuo, in this passage means:

- To superabound, have excess, greatly surpass, excel.
- The word shows the generosity of God's grace, forgiveness and power.
- Being faithful with one's talents, gifts and finances, investing in the kingdom, sets the stage for God's exponential increase.

In other words, Jesus is saying, "The rich get richer and the poorer get poorer." It's up to you!

- Jesus is going to explain the way of wealth in the kingdom of God.
- It is all based on investments or how and with whom you invest.
- No investment, no return.
- It is the ultimate Spiritual 401k, in the Stock Market of Heaven—not invested in earthly bonds, but Kingdom Stocks, God's Stocks. True Equities of the kingdom of God where the market is always going up.
- Courage, boldness, and faith is always rewarded.

- Laziness, fear, and timidity is condemned—even to the point of having what they have been given taken away and given to the courageous and bold.

Matthew 25:14

¹⁴“For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them.

- The parable is of a wealthy landowner who is leaving for awhile. In olden times, wealthy businessmen would often leave and be gone for a long time because travel was slow and business required face-to-face deal making. So everyone listening would have understood that this man would leave and need to keep his farm, his business and his enterprise going.
- The parable is about kingdom wealth—how you get it, how you develop it, how you keep it and how you can lose it.

Two key things we notice:

- 1. He called his “own servants.”** When you choose to follow Christ, to become His disciple, He becomes your Lord and you become His servant. Your life ceases to be just about you, but now is under the command and leadership of Another—Jesus Christ. We are His servants.
- 2. He delivered “his goods to them.”** Not our goods but His goods. The second thing we notice is that His goods have been given to us. It is a gift. John Calvin wrote these goods represented our skills, power, abilities and opportunity.

Matthew 25:15

¹⁵And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey.

- A talent was an ancient unit of weight and value in Greece, Rome, and the Middle East. In the Old Testament, a talent was

a unit of measurement for weighing precious metals, usually gold and silver. In the New Testament, a talent was a value of money or coin.

- The Hebrew term for "talent" was *kikkār*, meaning a round gold or silver disk or disk-shaped loaf.
In the Greek language the word comes from *tálanon*, a large monetary measurement equal to 6,000 drachmas or denarii, the Greek and Roman silver coins.
- The talent was the heaviest or largest biblical unit of measurement for weight, equal to about 75 pounds or 35 kilograms.
- So, if this talent represented gold or silver, this is an astronomical amount! A 75 lb sack of silver would be 4 years of wages.
- In today's unit of measure this would be close to \$250k dollars for 1 talent.
 - 5 talents would be \$1.25 million
 - 2 talents would be \$500k
 - 1 talent, \$250k
- Here is what we notice:
 - Between the leaving of Christ and the coming of Christ, we have been given phenomenal resources to manage for Him.
 - Some have more than others, but all of us have been given a generous supply of gifts, talents, skills and opportunity.
 - It is a gift given to us. Jesus gives us our natural talents and spiritual gifts.

- The question and actually the point of the story is not how much you have been given, but what you do with what you have been given.

Matthew 25:16-18

16 Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. 17 And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. 18 But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money.

- Three servants are given three amounts of money: \$1.25 million...\$500k...and \$250k.
- Jesus now tells us what each one did with their money.
- The servants with 5 and 2 talents double their money.
- You have been given a sack of coins, a kingdom bank account.
 - You were born with talents and gifts from God—you had nothing to do with it. It was all a gift from God.
 - But how we invest that talent is up to us. It is interesting that our parable never says that the Owner charged them to do something, only that He gave them this 75 lbs of gold or silver and it was expected of them.
 - Since Jesus is using money to make his point, I will follow, using similar terms that we use today:
- **Asset**—something, some investment, that is putting money in your pocket.
- **Liability**—something that is taking money out of your pocket.
- **Cash Flow**—how much money you have immediate access to, that you can readily use.

Jesus is obviously not just talking about money, but using money metaphorically for how we invest our natural talents, spiritual gifts and acquired skills.

What is a Kingdom Asset and how do you invest it to get more?

- Those things you do with your life that God will reward.
- Those works in our life that are an investment that brings a return from God.
 - Investing in building up your character through the renewing of the heart and mind—PB&J.
 - Character is always rewarded. God gives back more than you ever invest. When you tell the truth and choose not to lie or embellish the truth, you get another coin.
 - Giving over your talents, abilities, skills and resources to the Lord.
 - When you serve others; when you tutor, when you go out with Springs Initiative, you get another coin.
 - When you work with our kids downstairs, you get another coin.
 - When you give sacrificially of your finances, you get another coin.
 - You get coins every time you read the Bible.
 - You get coins every time you worship.
 - When you hear a solid biblical sermon, you get a coin.
 - You have this bag of gold and silver given to you by Jesus.

Jesus said, ***“For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more. (Luke 12:48)***

What are Kingdom Liabilities?

- These are those things that set us back, that take spiritual capitol out of your heart.
- Looking at pornography takes assets out of our spiritual pocket.
- Stealing, cheating and lying sets us back.
- Lust, gossip and talking behind someone’s back.
- This is drawing our money out of God’s kingdom bank account.
- 3 Big B’s that steal your Kingdom Assets and become Kingdom Liabilities. Breaking Kingdom Laws always Breaks you!
 - 1) **Bitterness** or unforgiveness;
 - 2) **Back Stabbing** or gossip;
 - 3) **Betrayal** or selfish gain at someone else’s expense.

Now this is really important...cash flow? What is kingdom Capitol?

- This is what you can draw on day-to-day.
- This your spiritual equity built up by your spiritual assets.
- This is change in your pocket, dollars in your wallet, this is your spiritual checking account.
- This is all about your daily investments with people:
 - Spiritual capitol, spiritual cash flow is the daily stuff of listening, caring, loving, empathy.

- You are investing with your wife and kids when you listen.
- Remember the first point—we are servants of the King.

4 Practical Ways, Laws of the Kingdom on how you Build Spiritual Equity in Leadership in the Home: marriage and parenting, at work:

1. Love people through your **Words**—telling them you believe in them.
2. Love people through **Focused attention**.
3. Love people through **Listening to their heart**.
4. Love people through **Service**—giving yourself.

Matthew 25:19-23

¹⁹After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’ ²¹His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’ ²² He also who had received two talents came and said, ‘Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.’ ²³His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

- God rewards those who multiply what they have been given—talents, skills, gifting, finances.
- Your talent is not yours anyway! It’s His. He wants a return.
- It is not the amount of the initial investment that mattered but what the servant did with what he was given.
- God blesses faithfulness and as a result blesses us with even more.

This is the point of the parable: The Rich get Richer

- Here's the formula found in verse 21
 - Be Faithful with what he had been given.
 - Be Faithful over a few things.
 - God will exponentially bless you! Given even more from God—rulership over more.
 - And...JOY! Enter into His joy!! You get joy!! Jesus gets joy!!

Matthew 25:24-30

²⁴“Then he who had received one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. ²⁵And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.’ ²⁶“ But his lord answered and said to him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. ²⁷ So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. ²⁸ Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. ²⁹ For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. ³⁰ And cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

- Wow! That seems so extreme!
- The rich get richer; the investor gets investments; the risk taker gets results.

The rich get richer and the poor get poorer

- This is “Kingdom of God Free Market Capitalism.” You can live in ever increasing wealth based on how you invest!
- With opportunity comes responsibility.

- In verse 24, the one talent guy said: **“Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed.**
 - I knew you to be a “hard man”—*skalaros*—schlerosis comes from this. Hardening of something, resistance to change, unable to adapt, is its meaning.
 - A total misunderstanding of His Owner, of God, of Jesus.
 - But it is interesting that Jesus does not play along, feel compassion or even sadness for the guy.
 - He just calls him “wicked and lazy.”
 - The real problem is not your excuses but that you are lazy!!
 - You wasted what I gave you! You are just spiritually lazy.
- We are building a spiritual resume—a spiritual portfolio. This is the law of Kingdom advancement, kingdom promotion.
- For those who will have the courage, take the risk, get up and do something for the kingdom of God, you will be richly rewarded—in this life and in the next, with superabundance.

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Ephesians 2:10

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

- “workmanship,” *poema*, you are a poem of God, created by God for good works.
- God wired you to do works that are good!

**Jesus is saying, “The rich get richer and the poorer get poorer.”
It's up to you!**

Do it Afraid!

Rise Up and Risk Again:

- After failure, after defeat, after brokenness, it's what we do after the fall that matters.
- It is the process of what happens later that teaches us the most about our lives.
- There can be no innovation, creativity or learning without failure.
- But falling is painful and it breeds the “couldves and wouldves” which mean judgement and shame. Heartbreak knocks the wind out of your sails.
- But you have got to get up and learn from your mistakes. Quit blaming others and get going. Get up, rise up afraid.
- This is wholehearted living—doing life afraid, loving without guarantees of outcome but knowing that you will be rewarded by God.

- This is what it means to be a wholehearted disciple!