

Daily Update - November 18th

Let's continue to spend time reflecting on God's word in prayerful quiet today, remembering God's faithfulness to us in his word and in his Spirit.

We can rejoice in God's protection, reminding ourselves that David calls us to trust him in the ancient words of Psalm 150

Praise the Lord.

**Praise God in his sanctuary;
praise him in his mighty heavens.
Praise him for his acts of power;
praise him for his surpassing greatness.
Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet,
praise him with the harp and lyre,
praise him with timbrel and dancing,
praise him with the strings and pipe,
praise him with the clash of cymbals,
praise him with resounding cymbals.**

Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.

Praise the Lord.

Luke 19:11-28

This is one of Jesus' more difficult teachings. On its own it seems to make the same clear point of the similar parable of the Talents in Matt 25:14ff, but it is more complex, so some navigation is helpful.

First, this story follows the events in Jericho where Zacchaeus's coming to faith demonstrated both good and bad stewardship.

Second, Jericho is 17 miles from Jerusalem and so Jesus' long journey is drawing to an end.

Third, recently the Jewish people had protested to Caesar Augustus about the succession of Archelaus, son of Herod the Great as nobleman of Judea. Jesus would be rejected too.

Fourth, Jesus had told the disciples the noblemanship is within them, Luke 17:21; but if they expect it to come soon, they are mistaken. The long journey and distant country, emphasise the delay they should expect.

As we read this, we see how Jesus combines these elements to prepare his disciples for his departure and return and the nature of the noblemanship of God. The story itself really focuses on the third servant's response to the nobleman's command to make his money work in his absence. The first two servants are commended and we hear nothing of the other seven. By the third, Jesus' point is made. Make good use what I have given you, no matter how long I take.

The third servant makes two mistakes that are particular challenges for us.

First - not considering what the nobleman's money could do - the first two servants attribute success to his money, "*Sir, your mina has earned ten more,*" but this servant fails to understand whose money this is. One of our challenges at the moment is financial. We have had no bookings and our giving is understandably reduced but the biggest key to overcoming this challenge is to understand what we have been given and by whom and for what. It takes a kingdom perspective, rather than a worldly one, which looks beyond the resources we can measure, to use what we have been given appropriately.

Second - although he acknowledges the nobleman is a severe man and reaps where he has not sown, the servant does nothing about it! He remains passive, too fearful even to do the very thing he has been commanded. Remember, Jesus told this parable to his disciples, and looking at the language, he anticipates they will have a long wait before his return. The warning is about remaining faithful in the nobleman's long absence. What have we been called to? Following Jesus, who calls us, servants, his brothers and sisters and his friends. How are we keeping that relationship, which can feel very 'long distance' at the moment. Are we taking time to pray, being still, paying attention to what he might be saying to us?

These words from Micah, may help us keep these thoughts in mind.

But as for me, I watch in hope for the LORD, I wait for God my Savior; my God will hear me.
Micah 7:7.

Yielding prayer

We can look forward to our eventual reuniting with the Lord Jesus Christ with these words of praise from the Revelation..

*"You are worthy, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they were created
and have their being."*

Father help me to live this day to the full, being true to you in every way.

Jesus help me to give myself away to others, being kind to everyone I meet

Spirit, help me to seek the lost, proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.

Amen.