

## 37. Settling individual account

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In business world, there are two very important areas in each company. The first one is 'accounting receivable' and the other is 'accounting payable.' In my stupid mind, I say, "Take all the money coming in. But don't dish out." That might be nice in short term, eventually, the company has to pay what it owes to others. If it doesn't, it is going to lose creditability and ends up filing a bankruptcy.

At the end of the fiscal year, they must settle individual account to keep accounting right. Like that, each Christian and every human being needs to settle our account with God Almighty when the time comes.

As we finish Jesus' Olivet Discourse in this chapter, we can find three important things: Non-transferrable Personal Salvation in verses 1–13, faithful and Unfaithful Servants in verses 14–30, and Practical Servanthood in verses 31–46.

### A. NON-TRANSFERRABLE PERSONAL SALVATION

*Matt 25:1-13 "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.' Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.*

As I mentioned it before, the Word of God is inspired by the Holy Spirit and there is no error. However, the chapter divisions were done by men. In most cases, they are good. But sometimes, they are bad. This is a case in point. Chapter 25:1-13 should have been included in chapter 24. Because Jesus still talks about the rapture.

Last week we studied about the rapture rather closely. If you need to hear it again or have questions, you might want to get a CD from the bookstore.

In this portion of the scripture, Jesus continues His parable of the urgency of rapture.

In Jesus' day, although the day of a wedding was known in a community, the exact hour was unknown. The bridegroom could show up at his bride's house any time during the day or night. He could come in the morning, at noon, even at midnight. When the groom arrives at the bride's home, he takes the bride with a procession of ten bridesmaids back to his home where the wedding ceremony and feast are waiting.

The five foolish virgins appeared to be prepared for the bridegroom, because they had their lamps. However without oil, the virgins were not ready for the bridegroom.

In this case, Jesus is the bridegroom and He is coming back to take His church which is His bride to heaven.

Throughout the Scriptures, oil is a consistent emblem of the Holy Spirit. Unless a person has the Holy Spirit in his heart, he cannot claim that he will go to heaven. So how does a person get to have the Holy Spirit in his heart? Simply, receiving Jesus Christ into his heart. Nothing else.

*2 Cor 1:21-22 Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.*

If the rapture happens right now, I fear that some of you will be left behind. You will be still sitting here while the rest of us go up to heaven with Jesus. Yes, you've been hanging out with the wedding party, but there is no oil in your lamp. Being religious and being a good person doesn't mean anything according to the Bible. Are you ready to face that consequences of being left behind because of your choice not to accept Jesus as your Savior and Lord? I sincerely hope not.

I asked you to underline verse 8 & 9. Salvation cannot be transferred from one person to another. It is not something like reverse osmosis system that you hang around a born-again believer or church long enough, then you get to gain the entry to heaven. No, it is done only by individual choice.

## **B. FAITHFUL AND UNFAITHFUL SERVANTS**

*Matt 25:14-18 "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. And 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. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money.*

Each servant in this parable was given money according to his ability. For your information, a talent was worth about twenty years' wages. So if you make \$30,000 a year, the first guy received three million dollars, the second guy got 1.2 million dollars and the last one \$600,000. I say, that is a lot of responsibility to handle. But God knows our capabilities.

It is valid to see these talents as resources in our lives - such as time, money, abilities, and authority. Everything we have in our lives belong to Him. We have been assigned our ministries according to the abilities and gifts God has given us. It is our privilege and honor to serve the Lord and multiply His goods.

You may say, "I am poor, I don't have a good health, I am not talented, and I am dying. What did God give to me?" He gave you a life. Everyone on this earth owes his and her life to God. One day, He is going to settle individual account. At that time, there won't be a slick attorney who can find a loop hole in God's judgement. Because that slick attorney must settle his own account with God for his own life. He would be too busy to think about his situation to help you.

Whether it is small or a lot, we are accountable to God for everything we do, we have and we say. If we used them only for our own benefits, we'll be so sorry that we didn't use anything for our Lord Jesus.

However, even if you have used everything for your own only, it is never too late to start your life counted for the Kingdom of God.

*Matt 25:19-23 After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. So 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.' His 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.' 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.' His 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.'*

The three servants fell into two categories: faithful and unfaithful. The faithful servants took their talents and put them to work for their Lord. The unfaithful servant hid his talent in the earth. Instead of using his opportunities, he buried them! He did not purposely do evil. But by doing nothing, he was committing sin and robbing his Lord of service and increase.

The two men who put their money to work each received the same commendation. They started as servants, but their Lord promoted them to rulers.

What did the master look for? Goodness and faithfulness in His servants. The master looked first for these things, not the "bottom line."

*Matt 25:24-30 Then he who had received the 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. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.' 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. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

The third servant was unfaithful and therefore he was not rewarded. Because this man was lazy as his master declared, he never tried to succeed.

We all have been given at least one talent. "Not me," you say. "I have no talents and no abilities. I can't do anything." Can you change a diaper? Sign up to help in the nursery. Can you listen? Visit people at the nursing home. Can you fix plumbing or do electrical work or repair car? You can go down to Mexico with our mission team for a day trip. Can you push a cart or carry a table? Help the people who set up and tear down each Sunday. You can do so much. The problem is, the majority of Christians has a tendency to bury it. Here, Jesus is telling us that we will give an account for that which has been entrusted to us. If you are one who doesn't think you have been given much, you are one who needs to be especially careful that you don't bury that which you do have.

Instead of coming up with reasons why you cannot serve God in His kingdom, I am asking you to ask yourself if there is any way you can serve Him.

2 Corinthians 5:8-11 We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.

1 Corinthians 3:12-13 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.

Our readiness for Jesus' return is determined by our stewardship of the resources that He has given us. Some think that "readiness" for Jesus' return is a rather mystical thing. It really isn't. It is a matter of being about our business for the Lord. In light of this parable, we must ask ourselves: what have we done with our knowledge? Our time? Our money? Our abilities?

The sins of omission which mean the sins of doing nothing may ultimately be more dangerous than the sins of commission. However, the real reason for this parable of Jesus is not about servanthood only, but it is about more for being ready to meet our Savior Jesus at any given time.

### C. PRACTICAL SERVANTHOOD

Matt 25:31-46 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.' Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.' Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?' Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

This is about the judgement of individual people from all the nations.

Both those who are found guilty - the goats, on the left hand - and those who are declared innocent - the sheep, on the right hand - are surprised, wondering when they helped or neglected Jesus.

The answer is simple: they helped or neglected Jesus when they helped or neglected the least of His brethren. Because the righteous were not aware that they were helping Jesus when they helped the least of His brethren, it shows that their motives were pure. It was a simple response of love from the heart.

One thing in common we must notice in all three parables is that the ones who were cast into the outer darkness were the five foolish virgins who dressed like the others and carried the lamps and waited for the groom to come. We find the unfaithful servant who received a talent from his master to do his work. And we find a group of goats which used to be mingled with sheep and get separated by the master.

Jesus was telling us that these are the people who thought they were the followers of Christ, they smelled like Christians, they acted like Christians, and they were looked like Christians, yet they did not have personal relationship with the Savior. People around them may not know, but God knows.

#### **D. APPLICATIONS**

**1) We need to examine our hearts for the moment of the rapture. Either you will go with Jesus or you will be left behind.**

If you are not absolutely sure that you're ready to fly when the rapture happens, get your ticket fast. As long as they are available, they are free, because Jesus paid for it with His life. But don't dare put it off. About the time you finally make up your mind, the whole thing could have happened. What good is a flight ticket if the your flight already left and gone?

**2) Let's make ourselves available to Him instead of sorry excuses of why we cannot.**

God knows what kind of capability we have, because He created us. Our presence in the Kingdom of God is done by the promise of God through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The quality of the work for the Kingdom of God is depend on individual.