

Matthew 25:14-30 (NIV)

¹⁴ “Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. ¹⁵ To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag,^[a] each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. ¹⁶ The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. ¹⁷ So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. ¹⁸ But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.

¹⁹ “After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. ²⁰ The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.’

²¹ “His master replied, ‘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!’

²² “The man with two bags of gold also came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.’

²³ “His master replied, ‘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!’

²⁴ “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. ²⁵ So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’

²⁶ “His master replied, ‘You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? ²⁷ Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.

²⁸ “So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. 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. ³⁰ And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

Sermon for November 19, 2023: www.collegechurch.org/college-church-online

CELEBRATION: This week is Thanksgiving. What are you thankful for? Make time to give thanks to God and share with others what you are thankful for this season.

I am thankful for Emma Carrigan, Byron Sumrall, Daisy Brolling, Beck Beers, Ann-Marie Thomas, Zach Hall, Zoey Indalecio and Philip Mikesel who testified of their love for the Lord and were baptized into the Christian faith Sunday. Begin your time together celebrating their baptism and remembering your own. Take time to pray for each of them in your small group or your prayer time this week. *If you have not been baptized, consider* talking with one of CCUA's pastors about it.

KNOW ... *God and his Word.*

- The parable of the bags of gold continues to reveal more to us about the kingdom of heaven. Name what each of the following represents in the story: the man going on a journey, the servants, the bags of gold.
- The parable describes three servants who were entrusted with three different amounts of their master's wealth. How much was each one given and what did they do with it? Dig into your imagination a little — what might have prompted each one's actions to their responsibility?
- When the master returned, the servants were called in to give an account for what happened in the master's absence. Talk about each servant's response. What do these responses reveal about their heart, their thinking about and relationship to the master?
- The adjectives "*good and faithful*" and "*wicked, lazy*" are used by the master to describe the servants. Why were two servants considered "good and faithful" and the other "wicked, lazy?" What did each receive as a result of their labor?
- What stood out to you in this passage or from Pastor Mark's sermon? Discuss any additional insights, thoughts or questions you may have.

ACT ... *responding to & applying what we know.*

- When you go away for a long weekend or vacation, who do you ask to feed and check on your pets? What if you were called away for a longer time such as a work trip or mission assignment, what would need to be done to care for things here at home? Who would you trust to care for those things? Why?
- Imagine that a friend handed you an envelope and walked away. Inside was money — nothing else, just money. What thoughts go through your mind about the situation and the cold, hard cash in the envelope?

Consider what to do with this gift. Are you a hoarder, a spender or a wise investor? When your friend returns, asking what you've done with the money, what will you say?

- According to this parable, in God's kingdom, faithfulness in waiting is valued and expected by our Lord. So as Pastor Mark asked us Sunday morning, "Are you ready for the Lord to return? ... Would you be ready for our Lord to return ... in ten years?"

What are we doing while we wait? Are you and I waiting faithfully? Discuss what wise investments are being made from what's been given to us. Name other ways of investing in God's kingdom that might yield more fruit. Pray together, asking the Lord to reveal any additional ways we should be investing in others and his kingdom while we wait.

BE ... *living in light of what we've heard, becoming more like Christ.*

Make time this week to GIVE THANKS. Be sure to include the promise of his return as well as the things he has entrusted you with and to do in his kingdom.

BE FAITHFUL ... no matter how long it takes for our Lord to arrive.

KEEP living as a good and faithful servant, becoming more like Jesus as you wait!

Grace and peace,
Pastor Angela

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