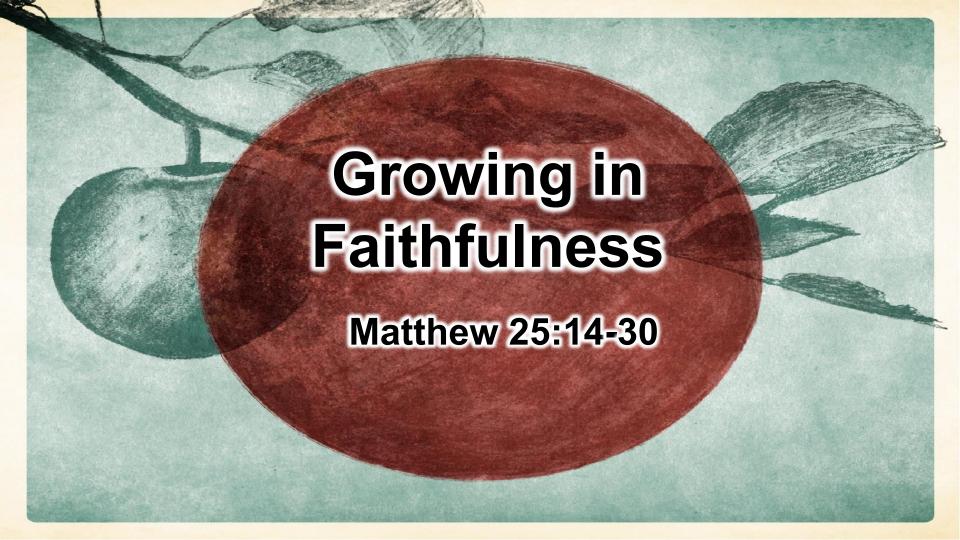


God did this because he wanted you Gentiles to understand his wonderful and glorious mystery. And the mystery is that Christ lives in you, and he is your hope of sharing in God's glory. 28 We announce the message about Christ, and we use all our wisdom to warn and teach everyone, so that all of Christ's followers will grow and become mature. 29 That's why I work so hard and use the mighty power he gives me. Colossians 1:27-29 (CEV)

Theme verse:

"...all of Christ's followers will grow and become mature." Colossians 1:28b (CEV)



## Introduction

- a) Growing in Christian character
- series on Growing in Christian Character
- regeneration and transformation upon conversion

- a) Growing in Christian character
- compassion, humility, obedience, reverence and gratitude
- parable of the talents recorded In Matthew 25:14-30

Matthew 25:14-30

"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. <sup>15</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents.

<sup>17</sup> And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. <sup>18</sup> But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. <sup>19</sup> After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. <sup>20</sup> "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.'

<sup>21</sup> 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.' <sup>22</sup> 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.' <sup>23</sup> 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.'24 "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. 25 And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.'

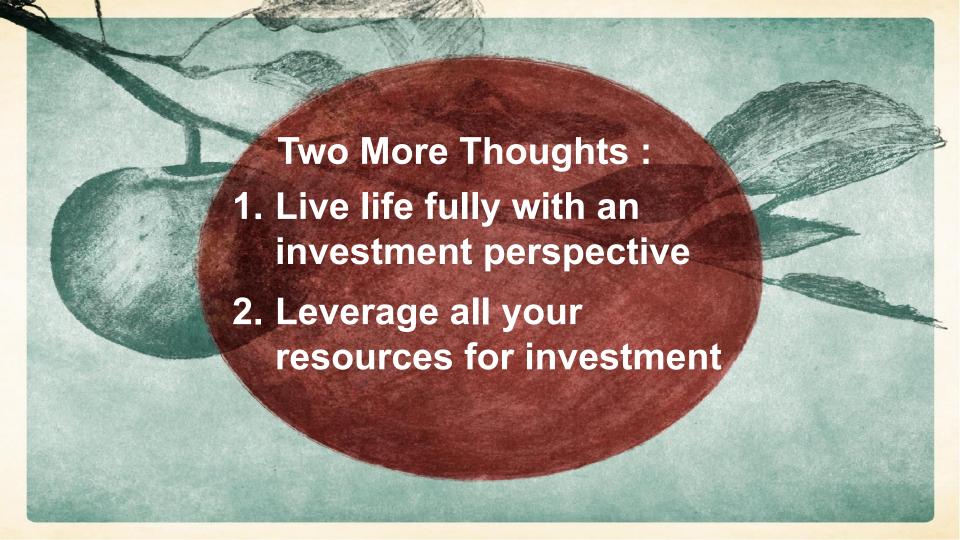
<sup>26</sup> "But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. <sup>27</sup> So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. <sup>28</sup> So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents.

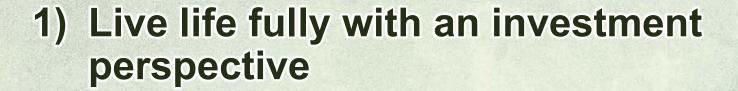
<sup>29</sup> 'For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. <sup>30</sup> And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Matthew 25:14-30 (NKJV)

## b) Faithfulness in servanthood

- The master of the three servants was looking principally for the character quality of faithfulness.
- He had greater future plans for the servants.
- dependent on the servants' faithfulness





Same thing but different perspective

Different people can do the same things in life but with different perspective.

- 1) Live life fully with an investment perspective
  - Each of us has one life to live but the way we live may be vastly different.



- 1) Live life fully with an investment perspective
  - In this parable Jesus is inviting us to look at living life with an investment perspective.
    - long-term investment and not short-term gambling

1) Live life fully with an investment perspective

 We live this 70 to 80-year life span that we have, one day at a time, and what we do each day impacts the remaining years and more.

- 1) Live life fully with an investment perspective
  - Understanding long-term investment that involves daily effort
    - long-term perspective linked to daily activity is applicable to many other areas of our life
    - regular physical exercise

- 1) Live life fully with an investment perspective
- an investment in your health
- also invest in our spiritual health



<sup>6</sup> If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed. 7 But reject profane and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness. 8 For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. 9 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance. 1 Timothy 4:6-9 (NKJV)

1) Live life fully with an investment perspective

. . . godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.



1 Timothy 4:6-9 (NKJV)

- 1) Live life fully with an investment perspective
  - Metaphor of investment: how should we live

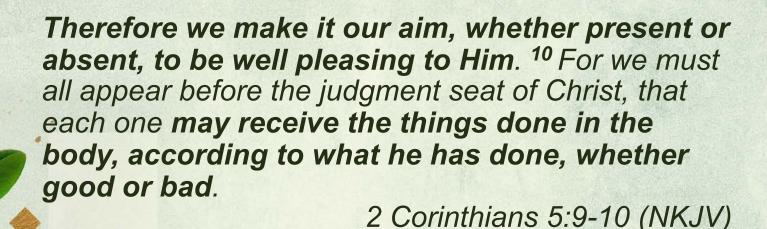
how we should live our life well by investing all we have in life on a daily basis, year after year, for a good return on investment in future

- 1) Live life fully with an investment perspective
- \* "After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them."

  Matthew 25:19 (NKJV)
  - **Commercial terms**
  - » profit and influence in the market place
    » get grand branding for ourselves

- 1) Live life fully with an investment perspective
- Kingdom terms
  - » purpose and impact on human destiny give God's blessings to others
  - We should live with a sense of purpose and our life must make a difference to others around is.

- 1) Live life fully with an investment perspective
- sons and daughters of God
- royal priests in God's temple
  - citizens of the Kingdom of God servants of the King.
  - If we live life as faithful servants of God then we can say that we live well.

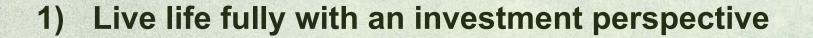


Therefore, whether we are at home [on earth] or away from home [and with Him], it is our [constant] ambition to be pleasing to Him. 10 For we [believers will be called to account and] must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be repaid for what has been done in the body, whether good or bad [that is, each will be held responsible for his actions, purposes, goals, motives - the use or misuse of his time, opportunities and abilities].

2 Cor 5:9-11 (AB)

1) Live life fully with an investment perspective

Living well encompasses our actions, purposes, goals, motives, the use or misuse of our time, opportunities, abilities and other resources.



Sense of meaning and purpose in life

 We are wired to live with a sense of purpose and meaning. 1) Live life fully with an investment perspective

 greatest attraction of Christianity is to find meaning, purpose and destiny of life in Jesus

clear sense of purpose and meaning although offered prestige and money

- 1) Live life fully with an investment perspective
- Faithfulness is a very important character quality
- living well requires disciplined investment day to day over the long haul

I invest by the way I do life. I serve directly in God's work in and through His church. I serve indirectly by being salt and light in this world. I leverage all my resources for investment.

## 2) Leverage all your resources for investment

- Time as a resource: invest wisely
  - choice to decide how to use our time
  - power to work round our limitations

- 2) Leverage all your resources for investment
- use all the time you have on earth and deploy all the resources that you have been given wisely
- make our days count for God
- wise to do that and in doing that we grow in wisdom

2) Leverage all your resources for investment

So teach us to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom. Psalm 90:12 (NKJV) Look carefully then how you walk! Live purposefully and worthily and accurately, not as the unwise and witless, but as wise (sensible, intelligent people), <sup>16</sup> Making the very most of the time [buying up each opportunity], because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup> Therefore do not be vague and thoughtless and foolish, but understanding and firmly grasping what the will of the Lord is.

Ephesians 5:15-17 (AB Classic Edition)

- 2) Leverage all your resources for investment
- Different ability, capacity and mental acuity

And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability. Matthew 25:15a (NKJV)

- 2) Leverage all your resources for investment
- all the resources that would come our way in life
- wide ranging
- there for you to recognize and use

- 2) Leverage all your resources for investment
- From Holland Road to Hougang Street 22
  - endowed with abilities, capacity and mental acuity
  - God then entrust resources to us according to our endowment.

## Conclusion

But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. 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 (NKJV)