

Sermon Series: Re-Finance: Ancient Wisdom for Modern Money Management

To be used with: Session Five: Invest Money Wisely

Sermon Title Possibilities: Investing Wisely

Scripture: Matthew 25:14-30

Connection with Unit Theme: To complement the small group study *Re-Finance: Ancient Wisdom for Modern Money Management* these sermon outlines will use different Scripture passages related to the small group study theme, so the pastor can reinforce the study from the pulpit.

Introduction:

Warren Buffett shocked the world when he announced he was going to give away 99% of his wealth. At the time he was the wealthiest man in the world. Perhaps what was more shocking, though, is who Buffett chose to give a majority of his wealth to—Bill Gates. Why in the world would Buffett give his money to the other wealthiest man in the world? Buffett said it was simply because Gates had shown himself a faithful steward of his own fortune. Buffett believed that of all people Gates would be positioned to do the most good with his money. While we might disagree with his choice of what will do the most good in the world, certainly Buffett models for us a biblical principle.

In Matthew 25:14-30 we read of the parable of the talents. This parable is about so much more than good financial investments—this is about eternity. But the way we invest our resources (like money) has an impact on eternity. Our investments reflect our hearts.

I. Because the Lord expects us to multiply we must invest wisely

A steward is one who is entrusted with someone's stuff. When we think about this in the Bible we see that God owns everything. Everything we have has been a gift of God. It is not ours to keep—instead we are stewards of the resources God has given us. He calls us to invest wisely. We see in this parable that God expects his children to multiply what they have been given.

It is true that we do not know the future. This truth can cause many to bury their treasure out of fear. We assume that rather than be wrong we'd better just play it safe. It seems the Lord has a different view.

In his book, *If You Want to Walk On Water You've Got to Get Out of the Boat*, John Ortberg highlights this text by saying:

One of the most sobering aspects of the story is that the servant is judged, not for doing bad things, but for doing nothing. He didn't steal or embezzle or defraud. He merely buried his gift...Therefore our lives are not about self-preservation and fulfillment, but are to be acts of stewardship. To fail to be good stewards of what God has given us is a form of robbing him.

The Lord expects us to pursue multiplying the gifts that He has given us. This includes our finances. And this is not simply so that we can live in luxury—this is for the sake of His Kingdom.

II. Because investing is about more than retirement we must invest wisely

It is clear from the parable of the talents in Matthew 24:14-30 that Jesus is talking about more than investing in Wall Street. The context of this is the return of Christ. When Jesus comes back he isn't going to be looking at our bank accounts, he will be looking at the way we used our bank accounts for the kingdom of God. He cares about the way we use our talents and resources because He is concerned with our hearts, and what we do with our resources is a reflection of our hearts. Because of this we must invest wisely. What are you investing in? Are you using your resources to further the Kingdom or your own personal Kingdom? Are you attempting to get the most out of your resources—even at times taking risks for the sake of the Kingdom?

III. Because the Lord will judge our investments we must invest wisely

Ultimately this passage isn't about the faithful servants but about the unfaithful servant. The faithful servants serve as a foil for the judgment of the unfaithful servant. He is judged because he was wicked and lazy. His excuses were lame. What was really going on was that he didn't trust the master and so he buried what he was given. His disdain for the master was displayed in His indifference. Because of his heart the third servant is judged.

If we are only worried about our own souls and we are indifferent to the kingdom of God this is reflective of a heart that has not experienced grace. Such a heart will not fare well on judgment day because such a heart has never actually come to know Jesus Christ.

Conclusion:

Scripture testifies that God has given us everything that we need for life and godliness. You have what you need to make a difference for the Kingdom. So what is holding you back? This is a call to do as William Carey said: "Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God." We are to do this with our lives and with our wallets.

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