

Paradox 5: We Gain by Giving

Matthew 25:14-30

Bill Warrick October 23, 2011

*Note: Be aware and inform your group that this week's sermon and Chapter 6 from God's Unshakeable Kingdom are not as closely tied as in weeks past, so deal with each separately and let your group know that is where you're leading them. Additionally, remember that a "talent" in Matthew 25 is a first century unit of money but being a parable can also refer to our spiritual gifts, relationships, and resources.

1. What is something (talents, resources, relationships) you been entrusted with that you have been a good steward of? What are some that need improvement? Why and how? **Possible things include spiritual gifts, financial resources, your marriage, children and other key relationships.**
2. Look over all of Matthew 25. Identify the two different groups that are key in each of the 3 parables? **5 ready virgins and 5 that fell asleep. 2 servants who invested their given talents and 1 who buried his talent. Sheep and goats.** What were the differences in each parable between each group? **The 5 ready virgins were prepared and ready for the bridegrooms return; the 2 faithful servants invested their talents; the sheep served others and in turn, loved Christ. The goats did not. They hoarded their resources.**
3. The theme of the first parable seems to be readiness for Christ's return, while the second and third parables emphasize investing God's resources in others. What connection do you think Jesus may have intended by linking these parables together in one teaching? **It is so easy to think about investing in others at a later time in life. "Someday, when I have more" I will give it away." Jesus is saying, you don't know how much longer you have on this earth at any time, so give your life away beginning today!**
4. Ask the group to share anything they underlined as significant from the readings on page 83-87. Be ready if the group has not read, to review some of the key paragraphs aloud to prepare for the following questions. This will help set the tone for the following questions and transition from the Sunday message on Spiritual Investing, to the Chapter's theme on Inclusion in the Kingdom of all types and classes of people.
5. Go through the questions on page 88-89 in God's Unshakable Kingdom.
6. Select three of four application questions from 91-93 to discuss as a group.

Pray together. Encourage group members to prepare session 7 *Advancing the Kingdom* for next week.