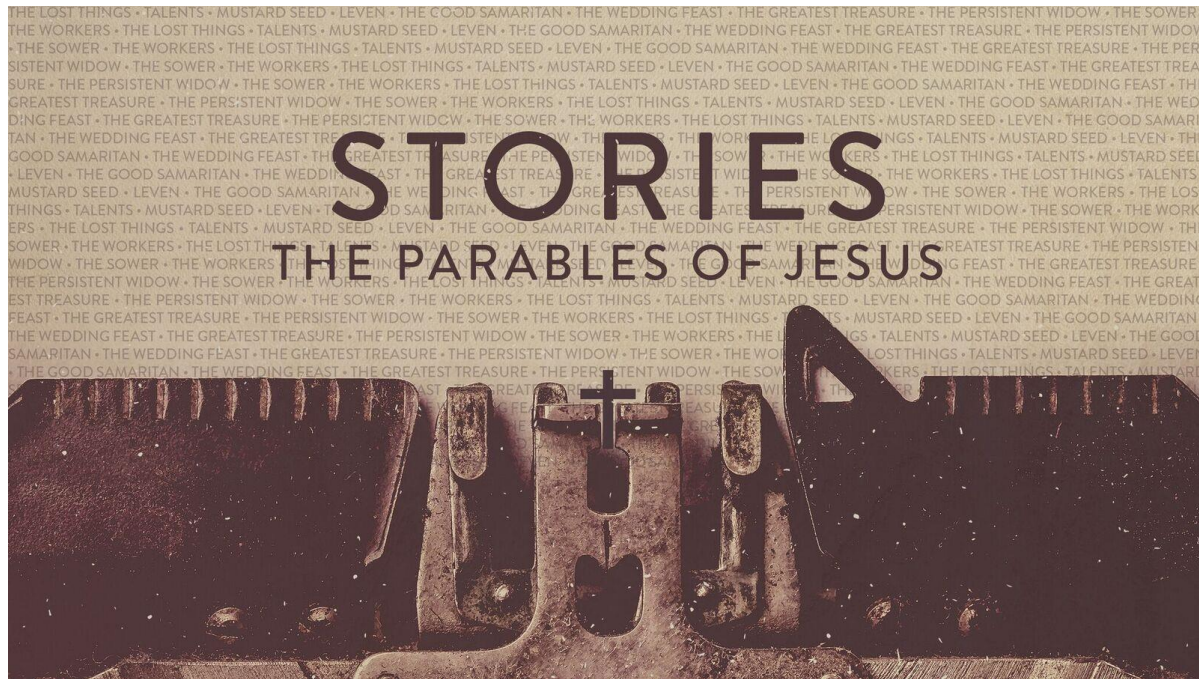


STORIES



It is Time to Take Some Risks

Reading Plan

Week 2

April 8, 2018

SUNDAY

Find your seat at a Sunday service and take some notes!



MONDAY

READ: Matthew 25:14-30

REFLECT: As you look back at these verses, ask “Who”, “What” and “Why”? Who are the characters in this story? What happened in the story? Why did Jesus tell this story?

PRACTICE: Think about what God has given you to steward—not just money but talents, skills, time. How can you invest that for Him in the years He gives you to live? What will you gain by taking that risk?

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: Matthew 25:1-13

REFLECT: Derek said this parable emphasizes ‘watching’ while the parable of the talents emphasizes ‘working’. What are some similarities in these two parables? Why are both parables important?

PRACTICE: Pray and ask God how He wants you to get ready for Jesus’ return and what risks He might be asking you to take.

TUESDAY

READ: Matthew 25:14,15 and Romans 12:3-8

REFLECT: Why did one servant get 5 talents, one 2 talents, and one only 1 talent? How does this mirror the differences in the resources and gifts given to different members of our church and the church worldwide?

PRACTICE: Make a list of some of the resources (finances, spiritual gifts, talents, opportunities) you've been given to use for God.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: 1 Corinthians 12

REFLECT: Think about one of the smaller parts of your body (thumb, big toe, etc.) and picture how it would change your ability to function if it were injured or missing. How could your failure to use your gifts and resources affect the church?

PRACTICE: Prayerfully ask God to show you one new way you can bless others with what He has given you.

WEDNESDAY

READ: Matthew 25:16-25 and 1 Peter 4:10,11

REFLECT: When did the faithful servants begin to use what the master gave them? (Matt. 25:16) When the master came back after a long time how did he reward them? Notice each of them received the same reward though they were initially given different amounts.

PRACTICE: Think about some ways you've struggled with comparing your gifting and resources with those of other Christ-followers. What do these verses teach about that?

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: Romans 12:3-8; Colossians 3:12-17 and 23,24

REFLECT: What are some of the attitudes we should have in using our gifts for the Lord?

PRACTICE: Choose one of these attitudes and pray for God to help you consciously practice it as you look for ways to serve people today.

THURSDAY

READ: Matthew 25:24-29

REFLECT: John MacArthur calls this a parable of either maximizing or wasting opportunity. The servant who buried his talent wasted his opportunity and produced nothing. It would have taken less work for him to invest his talent with 'bankers' of the day instead of burying it. Pastor Derek says he buried it out of fear and failure to understand the character of the master. He was afraid to take a risk. Why is it impossible to fail when you step out to use your gifts and resources for God?

PRACTICE: Think back to the list you made on day 2 of gifts and resources God has given you and ask Him to show you one He wants you to use for His glory. Read and meditate on Deuteronomy 31:8 as you make a plan to step out in obedience to use what He has given you.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: Matthew 25:26-30 and John 15:4-6

REFLECT: Mark Batterson writes, "Jesus commends the two men who take a risk and make a return. But the servant who buries his talent and breaks even is called "wicked." Why? Because he wasn't willing to take a calculated risk. Maybe risk taking is at the heart of righteousness. Maybe righteousness has less to do with not doing anything wrong and more to do with doing things right. Righteousness is using our God-given gifts to their God-given potential."

PRACTICE: Listen to "I Surrender" by Hillsong <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s7jXASBWwwI> and make it your prayer as you ask God to move you further toward your God-given potential.

FRIDAY

READ: Matthew 25:31-46

REFLECT: These are hard, but important words of Jesus. Jesus' teaching is that if we are real Christ-followers we will be using our gifts and resources to make a difference in our world (Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, ends of the earth.) If you aren't investing your life at all for Him, you need to ask yourself if you've ever admitted your sin, asked Jesus to forgive your sin, and invited Him to take control of your life—this is what it means to become a Christ-follower. If you are not sure about this, you can make this decision now.

PRACTICE: If you want to use your gifts but need help learning how to do that, please consider registering for the upcoming CORE class where you will have the opportunity to complete a spiritual gifts survey and learn more about using your gifts. Also, your site will be hosting a "Find Your Calling" event this month! To find out more information or register for these events, check out the [Grace calendar](#)

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: James 2:14-26 and Philippians 1:6

REFLECT: James explains that our true faith will produce good works. If you haven't been using your God-given gifts at all, your faith might be dead (James 2:26) We can't get it backwards—good works will not produce faith BUT living faith will result in good works.

PRACTICE: Thank God for giving you gifts and resources and for His work in you that moves you to use them for Him. God doesn't need us to do His work but He invites us to join Him in His work in the world because He loves us and gives us the privilege and blessing of partnering with Him.

SATURDAY

Build Your Time with God Today!

Here are some suggestions:

-Review your time with God this week and spend a few minutes **journaling a prayer** of praise for who He is, of confession for areas in your life needing His transformation, of thanks for what He has done and of needs for what He can do.

-Review the Scriptures you read this week by listening to them on a Bible app or website.

-Check out a whoisgrace playlist on Spotify and spend some time in worship