

Friday, February 27, 2026

Matthew 25:14-34

We read today from Matthew 25:14-34. Read the passage now or at the end of this devotion. What can we learn today about the consequence of neglecting grace?

Close your eyes, breathe deeply (expand your stomach, not your chest as you breathe), and for 60 seconds, remain before God in a posture of gratitude. Say “thank you” again and again. Allow your mind to wander into the places where God has shown you his blessing and give him thanks. Close that moment by taking and holding a slow deep breath, hold it, and slowly let it out.

About 20 years ago, I stopped smoking cigars. Before that, about once a week on my day off, I would smoke a cigar on my back patio or have a stogie while playing golf with a friend. It was not an addiction (praise God!), but just something that I enjoyed from time to time.

There came a moment when I decided it wasn't good nor godly for me to smoke cigars anymore. As soon as I made that decision, I took my humidor, with about 10 cigars in it, and dumped it in the green waste bin beside my house. There is a second of that action that is etched in my brain.

I watched a Cuban Monte Cristo #2 *piramide* tip out of my humidor and land in the grass trimmings of the dumpster. It is a legendary cigar known for its smoothness and flavor. Each cigar runs between \$40-50 depending on the market. It is sought after by those who enjoy cigars and having one was a privilege that led to my anticipation of enjoying it. I had received the cigar as a gift from a friend and had appropriately aged it for a couple of years waiting for the right moment to smoke it. Because of my lifestyle change, that moment never came. Some would argue that I should have given it to another cigar enthusiast. Perhaps, but at that moment, I could not couch contributing to another's behavior what I felt was wrong for me.

I fear that many believers are behaving as I did with this cigar, but what they are caching away anticipating the perfect moment to bring out is much more important.

Many are saving their grace to share at a moment that will never come.

“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? 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.’”

I expect that each one of us would affirm that the Great Commission of Matthew 28 is a command for each follower of Christ. We all have the job of making disciples and sharing the love of Christ. But the older I get, the more I realize just how many believers do not tell the story of Jesus and his grace to unbelievers in their lives.

“I’m waiting for the Spirit to move.” “The topic has never turned to things of faith.” “I invited a neighbor to church once, but they said ‘no’. I tried, but God didn’t give me the gift of evangelism.”

The challenge comes in that as time passes, “the moment” never comes. We can know the grace of Christ and cherish it for what it gives us, but never actually share with someone who cannot hear it any other way except from someone who has it themselves.

But if we know the grace of Christ, we've been given a bag of gold. Christ has given to us something of inestimable value and has left us to the work of building his kingdom. We cannot just bury our gold in the ground of our safe church communities, homogenous like-minded Christian cultures, and social groups that give us "safety from a sinful, broken world". Those activities are marked by lazy discipleship that are separated from the calling we've been given and the gift that has changed our lives.

There is consequence for this. Verses 28-30 should give every believer pause. A servant who received gold (grace), but did nothing to multiply it faces the rejection of the master. Take a second to let that sink in.

We have grace, the precious gold of God. Christ will return to judge what we have done with his gift. Have we been generous with it, sharing it boldly with those who do not have it? Have we buried it in safe social constructs, communities and institutions that are already wealthy with the gold of Christ? Have we forgotten to share what we have with a world enslaved in their poverty of grace?

May the Spirit equip us to boldly invest the gold, the grace that we have been given.

May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord turn his smile towards you and give you his peace.

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

I love you all. Blessings.

Feel free to share this devotion with others.

Some questions out of today's text and teaching.

How are you investing your gold in the lives of those who do not know Jesus? Have you squandered your gold and buried it hidden from the world? Pray that the Spirit emboldens you to multiply the investment of grace that he has given you.

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