

Investing: Flesh Vs. Spirit

Part 2: Spending Jesus' Money (8/23/26)

Please turn to *Matthew 25:14-29*.

LAST WEEK: we read from *Galatians 6:4-8*.

- Whatever “seeds” we plant, we will harvest.
- Spiritually speaking: if I plant “Blue Spruce” I get BS which are hard to work with, prickly, and don’t make much money.
- If I plant “Fraser Fir” I get FF which are easy to work with, soft, and make the most money.
- Barring abuse, natural disasters, and things of that nature: the same applies to our lives.
- Many of the hardships we face are because of seeds we planted, period.
- Paul told the Galatians not to 1) be deceived and 2) mock God.
- DECEIVED is when we say reap a bad harvest and say “who/how did this happen?” or “why can’t I ever get ahead?” *It’s us refusing to see we planted the seed.*
- MOCKING GOD is to say “why are You punishing me?” or “why did You let this happen?” We’re trying to blame Him.
- The Lord offers two investment strategies: 1) the flesh, and 2) the Spirit.
- Planting seeds to the Spirit results in a Jesus harvest that brings love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, meekness, faith, and self-control!
- Planting seeds to the flesh results in the opposite of those things.
- We’ve been giving the winning investment strategy from the ultimate Insider: the Holy Spirit!
- We’ve been given the seed of Christ, which is the Word of God. If we plant with Him, we will harvest with Him!

TODAY **We’re all given “money”—by God Himself—to invest.** NOTE: today’s message is NOT about Salvation, its about ROI.

[Mat 25:14-18 ESV] 14 "For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and **entrusted to them his property**. 15 To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to **each according to his ability**. Then he went away. 16 He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. 17 So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. 18 But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money.

This is a parable of the first and second coming of Jesus. In this parable, Jesus is the “man going on a journey” and said journey is His death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven.

Luke's Gospel, chapter 19, *tells the same story with some other details* and reading both together reveals Jesus is comparing Himself to someone who owns land, home, and a business. Someone who employs servants who work for Him in His business.

Before He leaves to go to heaven, **Jesus makes His servants the managers of His money expressed in "talents."** *ONE talent was 20 years worth of the average laborer's wages.*

- One servant gets 5 talents: 100 years worth of money.
- One servant gets 2 talents: 40 years worth of money.
- One servant gets 1 talent: 20 years worth of money.

Please note verse 15: **each is given according to THEIR ability**. In other words, the Lord KNEW His servants. Knew their strengths, weaknesses, gifts, and skills. He didn't give any of them more than they could handle. The end of verse 15 states that the Lord "went away" *and this is where we are at...right now.*

Luke 19, which tells the same story but with different details, says it this way:

[Luk 19:12-13 ESV] 12 He said therefore, "A nobleman went into a far country to **receive for himself a kingdom and then return**. 13 Calling ten of his servants, he gave them ten minas, and said to them, **'Engage in business until I come.'**"

The NT Scriptures tell us **Jesus earned this Kingdom through His obedience to the end**. 2000 years after He rose from the dead, He ascended to Heaven in Acts 1 and we were all promised that He was coming back. The Bible goes on to tell us that, when He got there, He was seated on a throne of power and majesty at the right hand of God our Father and that Father put all enemies under Jesus' feet! *He has received His Kingdom!*

Right here, right now, today...you and I are His servants who've been given His money. We're in the "waiting for Him to come back" mode.

- What is this money and what are we supposed to do with it?
- Let's answer the last question first, which Jesus address in verse 13 of Luke: *"engage in business until I come [back]."*

We'll get back to that, now let's **address what the "money" is.**

- Time
- Energy
- Talents & Skills

Ben Franklin is famous for saying “**Remember that Time is Money**” and he was right. IDK how much time I’ve been given. My grandfather was 87, dad was 85, my stepmom 70 and my sister Melody only 15. I’m 58...I could go at the end of this day, I might have another 30 years in me. IDK when it’s going to happen, but here is what I do know:

[Eph 5:15-16 ESV] 15 Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, 16 **making the best use of the time**, because the days are evil.

[Col 4:5 ESV] 5 Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, **making the best use of the time**.

As we continue through the Parable of the Talents, we’ll see the **2nd Coming contains a reckoning where the Lord tells us to show what we did with the talents** He gave us. I don’t want to report that I spent most of time working, playing video games, eating, drinking, watching TV, doomscrolling, and getting into endless internet debates. ***NONE of those things create a heavenly ROI.***

Jesus will give me no kudos for the amount of Christmas trees I sold in life. He won’t credit me for having overcome and leveled up in my video games. He’s not in awe at my ability to binge watch an entire season of some TV show in 2 days, or doomscroll through Facebook AND Twitter in just one sitting. I get no pats on the back from Him for winning arguments against people on said platforms or posting pictures of myself in Florida.

As long as we’re drawing breath, it’s not too late to redeem the time we have left. Let’s start today.

ENERGY. **We’re only given a certain amount of energy to spend**, then we run out, go to sleep, wake up, and the tanks are refilled. In our whole lives, however long that is, we’re allotted a certain amount of energy to speak, think, feel, and do. ***What are we doing with it?***

Energy is money and I budget mine every day...so do you.

We spend x amount on work, x amount at home doing whatever, x amount on entertainment, etc. We also spend it overthinking, stewing, fantasizing, worrying, etc. Every time we engage in drama and gossip, we’re spending energy.

Colossians 3:23

“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.”

Romans 12:11

“Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord.”

Galatians 6:9

“And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.”

1 Corinthians 15:58

“Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.”

If we consistently **feel low on energy and passion**, we have an insider trading source—the same one Who revealed the sure-fire investment strategy we spoke of last week: the Lord.

Isaiah 40:29–31

“He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength... but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.”

Philippians 4:13

“I can do all things through him who strengthens me.”

Ephesians 6:10

“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.”

TALENTS/SKILLS. In the Parable of the Talents, **Jesus is smart enough to know what each of His servants is and is not capable of**...there's a reason I'm not on the worship team and didn't help to build this building!

When I was a child, **everyone told me that I was loud and my family used to call me “mouth”** ...and it wasn't a compliment. Growing up I would get in trouble for the things I said. I had teachers, my parents, grandparents, friends, and Boy Scout leaders all say to me *“so your mouth got you in trouble again, eh Scott?”*

I recall the first public speaking I ever did and hated it. I had to run to the bathroom afterward and throw up. Yet to my surprise all my teachers said *“you're a natural public speaker”* and I'd get really good grades for it. It was the first time in my life that my mouth was being used for something other than tearing others down, which I did a lot.

After getting Saved, **God said it was time to redeem the power of my tongue.** To take my natural talent for speaking and use it to glorify Him and speak His word, instead of the evil things I used it for. He is the One Who placed me up behind this pulpit and commanded me to preach His word.

What are your talents and skills? Are you using them for God? To glorify Him?

1 Peter 4:10–11

“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace... in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.”

Romans 12:6–8

“Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.”

As you and I woke up today, **it’s not too late to apply our talents and skills to glorify the Lord and help the Church.**

Last, **let’s remember that all this money—time, energy, and skills/talents—belong to JESUS...not us.**

[Luk 19:13, 15 ESV] 13 Calling ten of his servants, **he gave** them ten minas, and said to them, 'Engage in business until I come.' ... 15 When he returned, having received the kingdom, he ordered these servants to whom **he had given the money** to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by doing business.

[Mat 25:14-18 ESV] 14 "For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them **his property**. 15 To one **he gave** five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. 16 He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. 17 So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. 18 But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money.

Servants weren’t employees, they were purchased possessions. Does that bother you?

Jesus isn't just a long-haired hippie fellow Who preached love.

He's the Creator of the heavens and earth, the God of all, the King and Lord over everything in heaven, on the earth, and under the earth. His name is above all names, and everything and everyone bends the knee to Him in submission, subjection, and worship. He is high and lifted up, the Alpha & Omega, seated at the right hand of Father God in power and glory.

He owns us.

[Eph 1:13-14 NIV] 13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were **marked in him** with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of **those who are God's possession**--to the praise of his glory.

1 Corinthians 7:23

"You were bought with a price; do not become bondservants of men."

Our time, energy, and skills are money...money HE gave us. We don't own it, He does. He told us to manage His money until He comes back, upon which He asks each one of us: *"what did you do with the time, energy, and talents I gave you?"*

Welcome to being a Christian.

When Jesus returns, He expects as ROI—Return On Investment. The Parable in Matthew states the first two servants doubled Jesus' money and THEY are the ones who hear *"well done good and faithful servant!"*

We don't hear that for being Saved, we hear that when we present an ROI to our Lord and Master.

[Mat 25:19-23 ESV] 19 Now after a long time the master of those servants came [SECOND COMING] and **settled accounts with them.** 20 And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.' 21 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' 22 And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.' 23 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'

The 3rd dude buries the money Jesus gave him and let's look at his reasoning:

[Mat 25:24-25 ESV] 24 He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, 25 **so I was afraid**, and I went and **hid your talent in the ground**. Here, you have what is yours.'

Let's read this in the right context. **The 3rd servant is afraid and shifts the blame to his master, calling him "a hard man."** The word hard means strict, severe, someone who expects results and doesn't tolerate excuses.

How does this apply to the master "reaping where he didn't sow"? *He expects His servants to sow while He's gone!* Remember He told them to continue "engaging in the business" until He returned, which was farming/agricultural of some kind.

The first two servants did exactly that: used the master's money to invest in seed and then went to the fields to plant it. When harvest time came, they had crops and sold them to double their Master's money.

The 3rd guy knew Master Jesus expected the same from him too and that the Lord wouldn't tolerate any laziness or excuses. ***He was afraid...so he shrank back***, did no work, and buried the Master's money.

He tried to give it back to Him **hoping it would satisfy Him**, so look what Jesus says:

[Mat 25:26-27 ESV] 26 But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? 27 Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest.'

ROI. Jesus rebukes the 3rd guy and uses his own words against him. **Dude knew Jesus would want an ROI** so, at the very least, he should have invested the money to earn some interest since he chose not to plant and harvest it. It would have, at least, been something.

It's time to stop being afraid. Jesus set us up to win, not lose. He knows us. He's already decided how much time, energy, and talent we have. He knows what we are and aren't capable of. He wants us to have lots of heavenly treasures that are waiting for us when we enter into the NJ.

Here's how the Apostle Paul **laid out this reckoning** that takes place at the 2nd coming:

[1Co 3:12-15 ESV] 12 Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw-- 13 **each one's work will become manifest**, for the **Day will disclose it**, because it will be revealed by fire, and **the fire will test what sort of work each one has done**. 14 If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, **he will receive a reward**. 15 If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, **though he himself will be saved**, but only as through fire.

It's not too late for any of us sitting here today or watching online.

It's not too late to redeem our time, energy, and skills to engage in Kingdom business.

It's not too late to unbury our talent and go invest it.