

The Value of a Talent Part IV

Accountability

Luke 19:15 (NLT) "After he was crowned king, he returned and called in the servants to whom he had given the money. He wanted to find out what their profits were."

Luke 19:20-22 (NLT) "But the third servant brought back only the original amount of money and said, 'Master, I hid your money and kept it safe. I was afraid because you are a hard man to deal with, taking what isn't yours and harvesting crops you didn't plant.' 'You wicked servant!' the king roared. 'Your own words condemn you. If you knew that I'm a hard man who takes what isn't mine and harvests crops I didn't plant."

In context, Jesus is teaching a principle about faithful stewardship of what God entrusts to people — not merely money, but responsibility, opportunity, truth, gifts, influence, and faith itself.

I. The Fear of God

We are reluctant to talk about hell today. We would like to motivate people to embrace Jesus out of love, not fear! Most of the teaching today is geared towards the Love of God, and rightly so!

John 3:16-17 (NASB 2020) "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but so that the world might be saved through Him."

However, sometimes Scripture uses threats rather than loving appeals. In fact, some people simply will not respond to love at all, and Jesus knew this!

John 3:18 (NASB 2020) ...the one who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God...vs. 36 The one who believes in the Son has eternal life; but the one who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him."

This is a present-tense statement. Jesus was not coming to judge the world at that time; He came to save it!

II. The Misunderstanding

Many Christians unconsciously assume the progression is: Old Testament = Fear God – New Testament = Love God
But the New Testament itself never says that. Instead, it teaches: Fear God because He is holy and a judge. Love God because He is Father and Savior.

Go to research...

The two are not opposite; they are complementary.

1. Jesus taught both love and fear:

Matthew 22:37 (NASB 2020) And He said to him, "'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.'..."

Yet the same Jesus said:

Matthew 10:28 (NASB 2020) And do not be afraid of those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Notice that Jesus did not say: "Don't fear God anymore because God loves you." Instead, He taught both truths simultaneously. The God who loves you is still the God who possesses ultimate authority over eternal destiny.

2. If fear were merely an Old Testament concept, we would expect it to disappear after Pentecost. Instead, we find:

Acts 9:31 (NASB 2020) So the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria enjoyed peace, as it was being built up; and as it continued in **the fear of the Lord** and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it kept increasing.

The early church experienced both comfort & fear. Not one replacing the other.

Paul says his evangelistic urgency flows from his awareness of God's judgment.

2 Corinthians 5:11 (NASB 2020) Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade people...

3. Love actually deepens fear rather than eliminates it.

1 Peter 1:17 (NASB 2020) *If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth;*

1 Peter 1:22 (NASB 2020) *Since you have purified your souls in obedience to the truth for a sincere love of the brothers and sisters, fervently love one another from the heart...*

The more believers understand grace, the more carefully they live.

4. The paradox of mature Christianity. The mature believer grows in both love and fear.

The closer a person comes to God, the more they discover two truths at once: God is infinitely loving, and God is infinitely holy.

The result is not less fear but a different kind of fear—one that produces worship rather than panic.

That is why Paul can say: Philippians 2:12-13 (NASB 2020) *So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to desire and to work for His good pleasure.*

2 Corinthians 7:1 (NASB 2020) *Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let's cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*

Hebrews 12:28-29 (NASB 2020) *Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let's show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; for our God is a consuming fire.*

The New Testament vision is not fear versus love. It is love-filled fear and fear-filled love—the response of redeemed people standing before a holy Father.

III. We, as believers, will be judged by Christ

There are two judgments in the Bible. They are the Judgment Seat of Christ (Bema Seat) for believers (those who love and follow Jesus as Lord) and the Great White Throne Judgment for those who do not believe in (trust) Jesus Christ.

A.) The Great White Throne is judgment for the sins of those who did not receive Christ.

Revelation 20:11 (NASB 2020) *Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled, and no place was found for them.*

Revelation 20:14-15 (NASB 2020) *Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the Book of Life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*

B.) Bema Seat is a judgment to determine our reward/loss for our service as Christians, not for sins.

Romans 14:10-11 (NASB 2020) *But as for you, why do you judge your brother or sister? Or you as well, why do you regard your brother or sister with contempt? For we will all appear before the judgment seat of God. For it is written: "AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD, TO ME EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, AND EVERY TONGUE WILL GIVE PRAISE TO GOD."*

2 Corinthians 5:10 (ESV) *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.*

Or Suffer Loss

1 Corinthians 3:14-15 (ESV) *If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.*

****God is raising an army, not an audience!**

The amount of time the NT mentions judgment/hell:

- Gehenna ("hell") – 12 times in the NT
 - 11 by Jesus in the Gospels
 - 1 by James (James 3:6)
- Hades – 10 times
- Tartarus – 1 time (2 Peter 2:4)

That yields roughly 23 explicit references to terms translated as 'hell'.

If you count passages about judgment, the number rises dramatically. References to judgment/hell appear well over 100 times throughout the New Testament.

- the Day of Judgment,
- God's wrath,
- condemnation,
- eternal fire,
- destruction of the wicked,
- outer darkness,
- separation of sheep and goats,
- the Great White Throne judgment,

How much did Jesus speak of this subject? Jesus speaks more often about judgment and hell than any other New Testament figure.

Key examples include:

- Matthew 5:22, 29–30
- Matthew 10:28
- Matthew 13:40–42, 49–50
- Matthew 18:8–9
- Matthew 23:33
- Matthew 25:31–46
- Mark 9:43–48
- Luke 12:4–5
- Luke 16:19–31

By book (approximate emphasis)

- Matthew contains the greatest concentration of Jesus' warnings about judgment and Gehenna.
- Revelation contains the most detailed descriptions of the final judgment and the lake of fire.
- Paul's letters speak frequently of wrath, judgment, and condemnation, though he uses the word "hell" rarely.