

SBC – Feb. 12, 2023
Matt. 25:14-30 (NKJV)
“Parable of The Talents”

Prayer:

Slide # 1

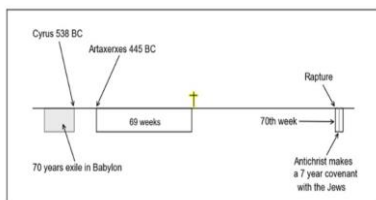
Theme: *Christ the King*

Outline:

- Chps. 1-2 The Advent of the King. (Proving His LEGAL right to the throne by His genealogy.)
- Chp. 3 The Forerunner of the King and the King’s baptism.
- Chp. 4 The Test of the King. (Proving His MORAL right to the throne by not yielding to temptation; and exhibiting His kingdom resume.)
- Chps. 5-7 The Pronouncements of the King. (Proving His JUDICIAL right to the throne as seen in the wisdom of His kingdom teaching.)
- Chps. 8-10 The Power of the King. (Proving His PROPHETICAL right to the throne by fulfilling prophecy.)
- Chps. 11-12 The Rejection of the King.
- Chp. 13 The Parables of the King.
- Chps. 14-16 The Revelations of the King.
- Chps. 17-20 The Instructions of the King.
- Chps. 21-23 Formal Rejection of the King.
- Chps. 24-25 The Predictions of the King.**
- Chps. 26-27 The Passion of the King.
- Chp. 28 The Resurrection of the King.

Daniel 9:24-27 is the prophetic seedplot of the Old Testament. There God gave an overview of His prophetic dealings with Israel from the time of Artaxerxes command to rebuild Jerusalem (Neh. 2) until the kingdom comes.

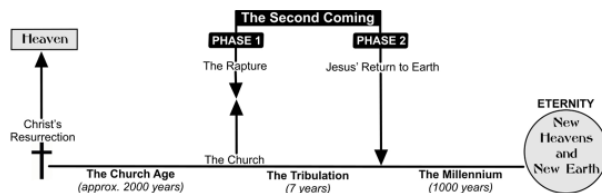
Slide # 2



In Daniel 9:24-27 we have very specific dating related to Israel. From the command to rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah's presentation in the Triumphal Entry would be 69 weeks (483 years). Then there would be an undefined amount of time in a GAP period which essentially corresponds with the Church Age. The Church Age was **a mystery** in the OT so it is left undefined. But at some point, there will be one more week (7-year period) of special dealings with Israel that will be fulfilled.

Matthew 24 intersects with this 70th week of Daniel showing that it connects closely to Christ's second coming. In Matthew 24 Jesus shows that there will be 2 phases to His second coming. He shows that the first phase (the rapture) is imminent as it will come unexpected as a thief in the night (Mt. 24:42-44) which in turn introduces the Day of the Lord judgment which also comes as a thief in the night (cf. 1 Thess. 5:1-2).

Slide # 3



After introducing the imminent unexpected first phase of His second coming Jesus proceeded to drive the point home of the importance of living ready with 3 parables.

Slide # 4

- Matt. 24:43-44 – Analogy of a Thief Coming in the Night (Introductory)
- Matt. 24:45-51 – Parable of two Servants
(one ready – one not)
- Matt. 25:1-13 – Parable of Ten Virgins
(five ready – five not)
- Matt. 25:14-30 – Parable of the Talents
(2 ready – 1 not)

As we now come to the parable of the talents we again have underscored that when the Lord comes some will be found as true disciples and some as false disciples. The warning is strong throughout all these parables that there are phony professors who don't really know the Lord and when He comes they will be exposed for what they truly are. The warning is strong!

It should be noted that while there are similarities between the parable of the talents in Matthew 25 and the parable of the minas in Luke 19 (Lk. 19:11-27) there are also a good number of differences, in effect making them 2 distinct and separate parables given on different occasions.

Matthew 25:14–30 (NKJV)

14 “For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them.

Verse 14 begins with the connector word “**For**” (Gk. *gar*). This conjunction closely links this parable to the preceding parable. The meaning of this parable is very similar to the previous with a slightly different emphasis.

The point of the parable of the 10 virgins and the parable of the talents is the same. The difference is a matter of emphasis. The emphasis of the first one is the importance of spiritual preparation whereas the emphasis of the second is the importance of spiritual service. – **Thomas Constable**

Thus, the parable of the talents amounts to an expansion on the emphasis of “readiness” being developed since Matthew 24:36.

The phrase “**the kingdom of heaven is**” is not found in the older manuscripts. The text simply says, “**For like a man traveling to a far country...**” This man in taking his leave called his servants and delivered his goods to them as a matter of stewardship.

Again, we should note this is a parable and in parables, there is ONE main point being made. Once again, the emphasis is on living ready in light of the Lord's return with the emphasis here being that living ready is displayed in faithful service.

The word “servant” is more literally “**slave**”. The three in view in this parable all claim to belong to the master. But the latter of the three shows that his identification with the master is ultimately superficial and not authentic as is clearly brought out at the end of the parable.

15 And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey.

A talent was the largest denomination of money in the Roman world. It is thought to have been worth about 6000 days' wages or about 20 years worth of wages for the average wage earner. So even one talent was worth a fortune.

This wealthy man gave one servant 5 talents, another 2 and another 1 as a matter of stewardship before he left on his journey.

By way of application the talents in the parable represent our God allotted resources in life including such things as time, money, abilities, opportunities, and position in life. It is whatever God in common grace has given.

By way of application we see that before God our life's resources are valuable and precious before Him. We ourselves are valuable because we are made in the image of God, and then what God has allotted to us as a stewardship has great value in the eyes of God. Everything about human life is important before God because its all of God and is to be used for God.

Note that the stewardship in view for each individual was "according to his own ability". We are not all give the same stewardship. Everyone is different – with differing abilities and a different life stewardship.

The issue is not how much we have, but how well we use what we have been given.

We should be careful to recognize that in this parable the mere possession of a talent is not evidence of salvation. The one-talent slave is clearly not saved; he is condemned to hell. ...From the parable of the talents we seem to be informed that unbelievers are entrusted with certain things, and that they will also give account for their stewardship. I believe that there are other texts of Scripture which indicate that God has entrusted (by common grace, in some cases) certain assets to all men, and that all men are accountable to God for how they use (or do not use) these resources which God has entrusted to them. - **Bob Deffinbaugh**

16 Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents.

17 And likewise he who had received two gained two more also.

18 But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money.

Remember the talents did not ultimately belong to the slaves. They were simply on loan from the master. They were simply stewards of what belonged to the master. Verse 14 says that the master “delivered HIS goods to them”.

So the issue becomes what is the slave doing with the masters talents to serve the purpose and good of the master. It's all about the master and his interests.

The first two used their God-given abilities to double what the master had entrusted to them. The third servant simply buried his lord's money yielding absolutely NO increase or gain for the master.

God didn't give you life and talents for nothing. He expects you to use it for His glory.

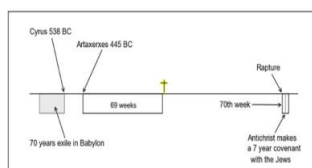
19 After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

Note the language here: “After a long time”.

This one statement fixes the interpretation of the parable to our own age. The Lord will be away during the great tribulation too, but those days are to be shortened (24:22). It is the present age that is marked by the prolonged absence of the Lord. – **John Phillips**

The idea of investing in the normal routine of life coupled with the language of a long delay does not fit the idea of the tribulation period.

Slide # 5 (Long Journey – GAP Period)



Note there is also “delay” in the previous two parables showing a common theme related to not knowing when the Lord will come.

Slide # 6

Matthew 24:48 (NKJV)

48 But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master is **delaying** his coming,’

Matthew 25:5 (NKJV)

5 But while the bridegroom was **delayed**, they all slumbered and slept.

Ever since the beginning of the Church age, the mantra has been that the Lord is going to return SOON. And yet, when there is seemingly a delay it is easy for people to get lax or think it is not going to happen any time soon. It’s easy to lose sight of imminency when a long time passes. That is the challenge of the Church age.

It is of such a nature that Peter felt compelled to write...

Slide # 7

2 Peter 3:8–9 (ESV)

8 But do **not overlook this** one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

9 The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

The lesson of this parable is that of serving the Lord responsibly while awaiting His return. Readiness for His return also entails responsible action while He is away, not for a limited time, but for a time of unstipulated length. – **Robert Thomas**

20 “So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’

21 His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

This man started as a slave who was a steward but being faithful in that role he received commendation from the master and was made ruler over many things and was invited into the joy of his lord.

It is interesting that he was given 5 talents which in value amounted to about 100 years' worth of work and yet the lord saw it as being "faithful over a few things". What a paradox. No matter how much we have been given in the great scheme of things it is "a little thing" entrusted to us for just a little time. And yet the ramifications of it are GREAT!

Being faithful with what God has given us results in being given an even greater role of service in the kingdom. We were created to serve! We see this from the very beginning as God put Adam in the garden of Eden to "tend and keep it" (Gen. 2:15). Even in the eternal state in Rev. 22:3 it says, "and His servants shall serve Him." Our reward in heaven will evidently relate to service and our position to rule. Actually, Revelation combines both of these ideas of being God's slaves and reigning.

Slide # 8

Revelation 22:3–5 (HCSB)

3 and there will no longer be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and **His slaves will serve Him.**

4 They will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.

5 Night will no longer exist, and people will not need lamplight or sunlight, because the Lord God will give them light. **And they will reign forever and ever.**

This parable suggests [rewards] involve enlarged opportunities to serve Him when the millennial kingdom is established and to experience the joy of the master as it is done. But it also ties those rewards to what the believer does presently, during the time the Master is away. – *The Moody Bible Commentary*

22 He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.'

23 His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

Note the one given only 2 talents and was faithful with them and is given the very same commendation and reward as the one faithful with 5.

Not all are expected to produce the same results, but all are to be faithful with what they have. – **Tim LaHaye**

There is a great lesson here. We are not in competition with others. We all are uniquely gifted and that is what we are accountable for. We are not accountable for the gifting of others – only for what God has given us. Paul in 2 Cor. 10:12 says, “measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, they are not wise.”

As Christians, we are all uniquely gifted. Our giftedness is like our finger print – unique to us. No one else has exactly what you have been given to serve God. This and this alone is what you are responsible for.

Slide # 9

1 Peter 4:10 (NKJV)

10 As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

24 “Then he who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed.

25 And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.’

Note all three of these examples called the master “Lord” including this one who is shown to be wicked and unfaithful. They all knew they had a stewardship responsibility. The difference is in how they responded to the responsibility.

This third servant in contrast to the first two is shown to be wicked (v. 26). This servant who was unfaithful offers nothing but an excuse for why he did not make a profit.

Slide # 10



The “blame game” is the oldest game in the world. How often we see the guilty party wants to turn it around and make the innocent party like they are the one who is guilty. This is the devil’s game and it is an old one going way back to the fall of mankind.

When Adam sinned he had the audacity to try and shift the blame first to God for giving him the woman and then to the woman for giving him the forbidden fruit (Gen. 3:12). Eve in turned blamed the serpent (Gen. 3:13). And the serpent had no where to go.

This wicked servant was full of excuses and in effect sought to blame the character of the master for how he had acted.

The servant’s great wickedness is seen in his defamation of the master’s character. There is absolutely nothing in the context to suggest the master was harsh, unmerciful, or unfair. This servant thinks the worst of the master’s character and has the audacity to say so.

Being “**hard**” (Gk. skleros) is the idea of harsh, severe, or difficult, instead of being gracious and kind (cf. Jn. 6:60; Acts 26:14; James 3:4; Jude 15).

He claims that he knew the master was one to reap where he had not sown and to gather where he had not planted. This impeaches the master’s character as being one who is unfair, exploiting people – who lacks mercy – and who is a taker and not a giver.

This just shows that in spite of his profession, he really didn’t know the master. He didn’t really know his character. At core, this slave’s problem was a wrongful view of his master.

Consequently, he says he acted out of fear and not out of love. He had the kind of fear born out of hostility instead of a godly fear which is loving reverence. He did not have the fear of reverential awe, but rather of irreverent contempt.

This slave represents the professing Christian whose limited knowledge of God leads him to conclude that He is distant, uncaring, unjust, and undependable. Instead of judging themselves in light of God’s inerrant Word, such people judge God in light their own perverted perceptions. – **John MacArthur**

Being full of excuses and insulting blame the slave, evidently in a self-justifying way then said, **“Look, there you have what is yours.”**

After all he hadn't lost anything. It was all still there – nothing gained – nothing lost – and he expected that was good enough. But with God total fruitlessness is a mark of the unregenerate. All living things grow. This is the pattern and the overall rule of life.

At least he understood that what he had been given belonged to his master. He said, **“you have what is yours.”** Many modern servants of God think that when God gives them something, it no longer belongs to God; it belongs to *them* and they can do with it as they please. – **David Guzik**

Prosperity gospel teachers have a theology that makes it all about them instead of it being all about God.

Slide # 11

- **Discernment:** When you finally realize that the prosperity gospel offers you everything that Satan offered Jesus Christ.

What did Satan offer Jesus? He offered Him bread, glory, and the kingdom the “easy way” which is outside the will of God and without the cross. Satan catered to SELFISM that caters to immediate gratification instead of waiting on God.

This wicked servant made it all about him, instead of all about the master.

The last 3 parables show that the fruit of preparedness and faithfulness indicates the character of those awaiting the Lord's return. In each parable character is manifested in works. We are not saved by works but we are saved by a faith that works.

[This last] slave portrays the unregenerate church member who has no spiritual fruit in his life and no spiritual worship in his heart. He is blind to the Lord's kindness, grace, compassion, mercy, honor, majesty, and glory because he has never surrendered to the Lord's sovereignty and grace. – **John MacArthur**

A life with no evidence of good works is not a life of authentic faith in Christ, for “faith without works is dead” (James 2:20).

– **Henry M. Morris**

26 “But his lord answered and said to him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed.

27 So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest.

The lord’s response was to identify this servant as being “**wicked and lazy**”.

The word “**wicked**” (Gk. poneros) emphasizes something being morally reprehensible. “**Lazy**” (Gk. okneros) emphasizes not being willing to do even the least little thing to further the master’s best interests. He was total unwilling to serve – to exert himself for the advancement of the master. He was all about self – and self only.

He had no excuse because he supposedly knew what the master was demanding.

In repeating the slave’s deprecation of him the master was not affirming it, but rather simply reasoning that if he really thought this that he should then at the very least have deposited it in the bank so that it might have gained some interest money.

This suggests that the man was not even consistent in his excuse. If this slave really BELIEVED his master was coming back and that he would have to give an account to a harsh master then at the very least he would put it in the bank so there could be some return. He lacked faith that would even motivate him on this level. Behind his wicked laziness was a total lack of faith.

If he didn’t really believe the master was coming back or doubted it, then burying his talent in the ground made more sense in terms of a self-serving agenda. He didn’t have to lift a finger. And if he put it in the bank there would be an official record that it belonged to the master. But if it was simply buried no one would know – and if the master failed to show up then the wicked servant could just dig it up and claim it as his own. This servant was wicked and lazy and illustrates a total lack of faith!

Judas was all excited about the kingdom and the prospects that were in it for him until Jesus started talking about dying. Then he changed gears and decided he would try and get out of it what he could. It was all about SELF! The wicked lazy servant was really all about SELF!

Footnote: The OT forbade the Jews from charging each other interest (Ex. 22:25; Lev. 25:35-37; Deut. 23:19; Ps. 51:5). However, they were allowed to exact interest from the Gentiles (Deut. 23:20).

**28 So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents.
29 'For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away.**

This reflects a fixed law in the spiritual realm. Christ applied this same principle in relation to kingdom insight as seen in His ministry of the parables in Matthew 13.

Slide # 12

Matthew 13:12 (NKJV)

12 For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.

This is simply saying that all those who are faithful will be given even more and those who were unfaithful with what they had will have even that taken from them.

Losers live for self. Losers are lazy. Losers are wicked. These are the eternal losers. The winners live for God and seek to advance His interests. The winners actively serve. The winners are good and faithful servants. These are the eternal winners. Are you an eternal loser or an eternal winner?

The master then said...

30 And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

This is consistently a metaphor of judgment on the lost in the gospel of Matthew (cf. Mt. 8:12; 13:42; 13:50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; also cf. Lk. 13:28). This language definitely shows that this person represents those who are not saved.

Everywhere else in Matthew, this language is descriptive of the eternal fate of the lost. The description all the way through is indicative of an unsaved person.

He is called “**wicked and lazy**”. He is “**unprofitable**” He will be cast into “**outer darkness**” where there is “**weeping and gnashing of teeth.**” It is very inconsistent to apply such severe language to a child of God because in Scripture it is consistently descriptive of eternal punishment in hell.

Yet, some reason that because he is called a “slave” he must therefore be representative of a true believer. But we should remember this is a parable that is making one main general point. And we should remember that in the earlier parable of the two servants the evil servant is also called a “slave” in the Greek and that wicked slave was also appointed “**his portion with the hypocrites**” where there shall be “**weeping and gnashing of teeth**” (cf. Mt. 24:48-51).

The point in all these parables is that there are true servants of the Lord and there are phony ones who have never truly been saved.

He is a counterfeit disciple, one who never actually knew Him. In Matthew’s gospel one finds true and false prophets, sheep and wolves in sheep’s clothing, houses built on sand and houses built on rock, wheat and tares, wise and foolish virgins, righteous and unrighteous servants; not all who are associate with Jesus are true disciples. – **The Moody Bible Commentary**

It’s like Jesus runs to the end of the story as to what will happen to the unfaithful at the end of the day if they don’t get right with God.

Those left behind at the rapture will face the Day of the Lord Judgment. All believers will be taken to be with the Lord in the rapture – only believers will be left behind to face the wrath of God.

According to Jesus, what will follow will be the worst time of tribulation ever seen by the world – so severe that unless those days were shortened “no flesh would be saved” (Matt. 24:21-22).

With just the 4th seal judgment (Rev. 6:8) and the 6th trumpet judgment (Rev. 9:15) – just between those two judgments one half of the earth’s population will die. That is not to mention all the other seal, trumpet, and climactic bowl judgments. No wonder Isaiah 24:6 says, “few men are left.”

If people don’t get saved and hold out in rebellion against the Lord the final end for them is what Jesus describes here in Matthew 25:30.

Outer darkness is a common description of hell in the NT. God is light (1 Jn. 1:5) and to be cast into outer darkness is to be completely banished from God's presence. Hell is a place of eternal darkness, but also a place of eternal pain and misery.

Weeping speaks of sorrow (the emotional agony of those in hell) while the gnashing or grinding of teeth speaks of pain (physical agony in hell). The picture painted is one of eternal misery.

Slide # 13 [Parable of the wheat and tares]

Matthew 13:41–43 (NKJV)

41 The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather **out of His kingdom** all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness,

42 and will cast them into the **furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.**

43 Then the **righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom** of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

The idea of this illustrative parable is that all true believers will produce results (elsewhere "fruits") in varying degrees.

- **Edward Hindson**

This is consistent with the whole gospel of Matthew. It is consistent with John the Baptist's message.

Slide # 14

Matthew 3:10 (NKJV)

10 And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore **every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.**

It is consistent with Christ's sermon on the mount...

Slide # 15

Matthew 7:21 (NKJV)

21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, **but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.**

It is consistent with Christ's parable of the sower and the soils. The seed that fell on the good ground (representing true) believers all yielded some fruit – some hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, and some 30-fold, but all brought forth fruit (cf. Mt. 13:23).

It is also consistent with what Christ taught in John 5.

Slide # 16

John 5:28–29 (NKJV)

28 Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice

29 and come forth—those who have **done good, to the resurrection of life**, and those who have **done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation**.

The problem with the wicked man in the parable is that he brought forth zero fruit. He had absolutely NOTHING to show for his life. This is the picture of the unbeliever. In the end, they have NOTHING to show. Their life was a total waste. Truly they are completely “unprofitable” servants no matter how much they professed to be a Christian. This person represents those who have no saving faith, no saving relationship, and consequently absolutely no fruit.

But someone says what about the “carnal” Christian who as seen in 1 Cor. 3 has his works burned up? But that makes the point that they did have works that could be evaluated. Yes, they are of an inferior quality that does not pass the test, but there was something there that could be examined. This wicked professor in the parable had absolutely NOTHING to even examine. He had zero to show for His life.

Besides that, I would point out that in 1 Cor. 4 Paul goes on to say...

Slide # 17

1 Corinthians 4:5 (NKJV)

5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. **Then each one's praise will come from God.**

Commentators grapple with this verse but many think this indicates there will be something God finds praiseworthy in all the lives of His children.

There is something of good fruit in the lives of all God's people. Each one will have some praise from God in terms of what they did for Him on earth. Certainly, ALL believers have the obedience of faith as Paul brought out in Romans 1:5 and 16:26 and the first thing that one ever does to please God is the act of saving faith as brought out in Hebrew 11:6.

Without faith it is impossible to please God but all true believers have come to please God in the act of saving faith. All true believers share in this God-pleasing reality. Thus, "each one's praise will come from God."

You know what you have to do to go to hell? NOTHING, nothing at all. Hebrews 2:3 says, "**how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?**" Exactly, that is the point of the parable of the talents.

There is an old poem that says, "**For all sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these: 'It might have been!'**" (John Greenleaf Whittier in Maud Muller)

[In] the last three parables...[t]he principle which underlies each is the same... The fruit of faithfulness and preparedness would indicate the character of those living in the days before His coming. In each parable, character is manifested by works. This thought forms the key to the [next] passage which deals with the judgment of the nations (Matthew 25:31-46). – **Stanley Toussaint**

It's not that we are saved by works – we are not (Eph. 2:8-9). We are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. However, as the Reformers were known to say, "**We are saved by faith alone, but the faith that saves does not remain alone.**" That is sound doctrine!

S.D. Gordon in an old book titled "Quiet Talks on World Winners" described a group preparing for an ascent on Mont Blanc in the Swiss Alps. He writes, on the evening before the climb, a French guide outlined the prerequisite for success, saying: "*You will only reach the top by setting aside all the unnecessary accessories and carrying only essentials. A young Englishman disagreed and proceeded along the path by himself. The following morning, not only carrying climbing equipment but a slightly colored blanket, large pieces of cheese, a bottle of wine, and bars of chocolate, and camera equipment.*"

Under the direction of the guide the group set off behind the Englishman and found along the way his blanket, his cheese, his wine, his chocolate and his camera. Finally they discovered him at the top, minus all his accessories.”

S.D. Gordon then made this application. “So many people when they find they can’t reach the top with their stuff, let the top go and pitch their tents in the plain and the plain is so very full of tents.” (Story as told by Dr. John MacArthur)

Indeed, the plain is very full of tents. And that’s a scary place to be when it is only to the faithful that the Lord will say, “Well done, good and faithful servant”. In order for Him to say “Well done” it has to be DONE!

Perhaps there are so many that are merely spectators because in truth many of them have never truly been saved. The warning about the unprofitable servant in the parable is to them! The warning of the parable is shocking and intended to jar mere professors out of their selfish state of apathy!

Those that truly know the Lord are expected to serve Him while waiting. And if there is no fruit in the life that is evidence that the person doesn’t really know Him.

While we are “fruit inspectors” (Christ said “You will know them by their fruits” – Mt. 7:16), we must leave off final judgment to God for in the end God alone is the final JUDGE Who knows those who are His (2 Tim. 2:19).

But the Bible does say, “Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves.” (2 Cor. 13:5).

Are you in the serving category of “Well done good and faithful servant” or are you in the unprofitable category of “wicked and lazy servant”? As Jesus said in Matthew 13, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!” (Mt. 13:43).

God help us to be true servants who serve the Master well!

God help us to live ready!