

November 15, 2020 Matthew 25:14-30

Grace and peace be to you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Martin Luther once said "I have so much to do that I shall spend the first three hours in prayer." it's a good way to start thinking about our lives isn't it. There are so many stressors and it's good to remember where our daily priorities should lie. It's good to center ourselves on the one who helps us get through these hard days. So, let us pray.

Dear father in heaven, we thank you for this day. We thank you for coffee, juice, and milk that gets us moving in the morning, we thank you for a place to sleep and a roof over our heads. We thank you for friends and family. We thank you for placing your hand of blessing upon us. We thank you for sending your son to this earth and giving us these Holy Scriptures to meditate on, learn from, and live into. In Jesus Holy Name we pray Amen.

Order of chapter 25 - Where chapter 25 takes place in the story of Jesus - Jesus is in Jerusalem for the last week of his life - teaching this is probably Wednesday or Thursday morning

Story 1 - ya'll think you know what's going on, but you don't

Story 2 here's what's going to happen and what I expect from ya'll

Story 3 - here's what's going to happen when I get back

Story 2 - Here's what's going to happen and what I expect from ya'll

First line is here is what is going to happen - "For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them;

A man, Jesus, is going on a long journey, aka going to heaven to be with the father until the time comes for him to return, summons all his slaves to him.

No, I truly believe that "slaves" is the right term here. It's chosen for a reason. It's not servants or followers, its slaves. Its show the difference between the 2 it shows the relationship that these 2 have the slaves are owned by the man no matter where he goes or what he's doing, no matter what happens to him they are his slaves. And everyone around those slaves knows that too. Just because the man takes off doesn't just give them license to start a new life or do whatever they want.

We are in that relationship with our God. We have been bought with the blood of the lamb. We are wholly Gods. no matter where God goes does or says we take every step, take every breath at the will of our God. and we get to do it joyfully. Because our master because our God our creator blesses us.

We are blessed as the 3 slaves are blessed in this parable. Our God has given us immeasurable blessings. And becomes our job, our duty to use what we have been given for the benefit of our God and our Savior. Even more so, we are supposed to begin using these resources no matter the circumstances.

Whether you've been more or less than your neighbor.

Whether you think you have more or less opportunities than your neighbor

Whether you are afraid of whether or not you will fail. Maybe especially when we are afraid.

I've been challenged by a certain pastor who is a member of this congregation with this question: and what about the story of the 4th guy who was given 3 talents and lost it all and came back to the master with nothing?

And that's an interesting question to think about because how would our God, our king and master respond if we tried and apparently failed?

Well there's a quick answer to that in that we can point to every follower of God going through the entire bible. The people try and the people screw up and yet God still loves them and does what God can with what they have done.

And maybe that is the reason that Jesus chose to omit that 4th slave who lost it all from this parable, one of his last to his disciples and to us.

Because we can think about this parable in this way. No matter how we try to use the resources we have for the good of the kingdom it is not a waste, it is not a loss. No matter what we do for our neighbors, our friends, our sisters and brothers, no matter how small, it is not a waste because that movement, that work is something that God can magnify exponentially. That is how our God always works out of just a little comes a lot, out of famine comes abundance. We can trust our God in this. This is the faith that we hold onto. Our God watches over us and watches over and blesses what we do. When we live in the will of God, when we do the work of God's kingdom there is no wrong path.

There is this incredible line in our old testament reading today:

"The sacrifice has been prepared, the guests has been consecrated"

Because of what God has done for us in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, because of what God is doing for us today in transforming and renewing us, we are a consecrated people, we are a people set apart, we are a holy people. We do not cut down, we help grow, we do not destroy, we help build and create. We do not injure we help heal. This is a blessing of abundance that we live in every day. We get to look at every blessing around us and that it has been given by God. And we get to know that it is still God's.

I'm going to end with this quote from Luther.

"I have held many things in my hands, and I have lost them all; but whatever I have placed in God's hands, that I still possess."

Our lives on this earth are fragile things but we are blessed and protected by our God and Creator. We are watched and cared for by our good master who blesses every work of our hands and hearts. We are held in grace and know hope because of the trust we are able to know in our God. We love because God first loved us and all creation.