

The Gospel According to Luke

Luke 19:11-27

Reading: Luke 19:11-27

Sermon #81

June 14, 2020

Jesus The True King

Jesus is still in the house of Zaccheaus as He begins to tell this parable of the king, his 10 Servants and 10 Minas to all who are present. His audience knows the background to the parable, but I did not; until I studied. So, let me share the background that I believe will enrich your understanding of this parable.

In 4 BC, King Herod the Great died and was to be succeeded by his son Herod Archelaus (ar·khel·ah·os). His name means “prince of the people” but his rule showed the opposite. Archelaus was extremely brutal and everyone remembered the event at the Passover in 4 BC, the same year his father died. In those days there was a division among the people over who should be Herod the Great’s successor to the throne. None of the choices were good and it basically came down to Archelaus or his brother Antipas. Archelaus was King Herod’s choice having named him, as successor in his will shortly before he died. However, the people did not like Archelaus because of his poor leadership and cruelty. During the Passover celebration in that same year, there erupted opposition to Archelaus’ rule. This protest was answered as he sent in soldiers and 3,000 Jews were slaughtered.

Because Archelaus needed to secure Rome’s approval to be officially crowned king, he traveled to Rome to meet with Caesar. What Archelaus did not know was that there was also a group of Jewish diplomats that preceded him and had already met with Caesar. Their job was to convince Caesar that Archelaus was unfit to be king because of his cruelty; they succeeded. Rather than being made king, Archelaus was given a lesser title and he would be Governor and answerable to Caesar, for it was Caesar who would now rule over Palestine as a vassal state.

The fact that Archelaus was denied kingship made him all the crueler. Archelaus was removed by the Roman Emperor Augustus in 9^{AD} when the Judaeen province was put under direct Roman rule. He died in 18^{AD}.

So, even though this horrific event of slaughtering 3000 people at the hand of Archelaus was 36 years prior to Jesus telling this parable, the people certainly had heard of it and some may have even witnessed it. This is the background to the last parable Jesus now uses to teach the truths of God. I want us to understand that while this parable contains issues of money and investing and making a profit, money is the lesser subject. It's true subject and lesson is about understanding who our King is, the delay in the Kingdom of God ruling all the earth, about our devotion to Christ our true King, living for His glory and serving faithfully.

Let me prepare our hearts and minds with prayer.

My brothers and sisters, now hear God's Word for Canyon Bible as Patrick reads Luke 19, verses 11 to 27. Please stand. "As they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. 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." ¹⁴ But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, "We do not want this man to reign over us." 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. ¹⁶ The first came before him, saying, "Lord, your mina has made ten minas more." ¹⁷ And he said to him, "Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities." ¹⁸ And the second came, saying, "Lord, your mina has made five minas." ¹⁹ And he said to him,

“And you are to be over five cities.”²⁰ Then another came, saying, “Lord, here is your mina, which I kept laid away in a handkerchief;²¹ for I was afraid of you, because you are a severe man. You take what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.”²² He said to him, “I will condemn you with your own words, you wicked servant! You knew that I was a severe man, taking what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow?²³ Why then did you not put my money in the bank, and at my coming I might have collected it with interest?”²⁴ And he said to those who stood by, “Take the mina from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas.”²⁵ And they said to him, “Lord, he has ten minas!”²⁶ “I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.²⁷ But as for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slaughter them before me.””

Kingdom Parable (v.11)

Luke conveniently gives us the purpose for Jesus telling this parable in verse 11, Jesus “proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they, the people in the crowd listening, supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately.” So, the purpose in telling this parable is much the same as the purpose in chapter 17 when the Pharisees asked Jesus “when the kingdom of God would come?” (v.20) Jesus’ pattern so far has been when asked, “when the kingdom would come?” or teaching anything about His second coming, He highlights two things and avoids predicting the times and events. Remember what Jesus said concerning His second coming, “But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.” (Matthew 24:36) Rather than letting His audience to get sidetracked, as many do today trying to determine the hour and day, He directed their attention on two things: the cross; what the cross required and what it would mean, and secondly, their need, as

children of God believing Him to be the Messiah that they must be prepared when He comes back. That was the focus in the parable found in chapter 17 and Jesus keeps the same focus here.

They did not understand fully the things Jesus was teaching, but we, because of the Scriptures, know that the cross is only days away and Jesus wanted His followers to know the reality of what it would mean for their lives to be a true child of God and His return as King of kings was not going to be immediate. Even though all that He was teaching was not making sense to them at this point; once He rose from the dead and ascended to heaven everything He had taught would begin to come into focus.

Waiting For The Kingdom (v. 12-14)

The first thing Jesus wanted them to understand was the Kingdom of God would not commence immediately. Reading at verse 12, Jesus “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.”¹⁴ But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, “We do not want this man to reign over us.”’” As soon as everyone heard verse 12, they would have been thinking of Archelaus and Rome. However, the nobleman or the One of noble birth is not Archelaus, but the Lord Jesus, Himself. Being the Son of David, Jesus is a nobleman. While our Lord is far away, He is receiving His kingdom, so that when He returns, He will set it up the Kingdom of God on earth and reign for 1000 years until the final battle - when good defeats evil for all eternity. Remember Archelaus returned without a kingdom but Jesus’ returns as King and this has been guaranteed from eternity past.

The king of this parable, which those listening, assume is Archelaus, knew that while he was away, he would still need to make sure his servants stayed

faithful, so he places 10 of his servants in charge of keeping the treasury going while he was away seeking his kingship. This makes sense to those listening, but Jesus was not speaking of Archelaus. Understanding that Jesus is the nobleman and the returning King is a key principal this parable teaches is that there will be an interval between Jesus' first and second coming. A faithful servant will be busy with the King's business while waiting for His return. An unfit servant will try to get out of serving and avoid carrying out the Master's business. The chief charge given by the King is stated in verse 13, **“Engage in business until I come.”**

For an earthly king who is going away for a time his concern is for his city, security of his kingdom and financial stability. So, he commands his servants, keep doing business until I return. The charge was not to make a certain percentage or return on the money, certainly not a return of a thousand-fold, but to use the mina for the king's benefit. The charge was to engage in business. In the ancient world, as still happens in places today, there was a market place and buying and selling and bartering took place. People traded, bought and sold for a profit. The bench or table of the money lenders were found in every community. There were no banks, as we know them, in ancient Israel. The word “bank” for a money institution comes from the Greek word for “bench” or table (**tetrapod**) of the money lenders.

These servants understood that the money they had been given was not theirs and that the profit they received would not be theirs either. The issue at hand, was a test to determine if the servants were devoted to the king or not. Likewise, your salvation is not your credit, but the credit of Jesus. The Gospel is like the minas and you are called to invest it to expand the Kingdom of God.

In the case of Archelaus, most did not like him because of his cruelty. In this parable from verse 14 we know that, **“his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We do not want this man to reign over us.’”** But why would this

be the case for Jesus? He was of noble birth, in other words, He was qualified to be king. He was not a hard and cruel master but one who loved his servants to the point of dying for their salvation. He healed them and taught them, He fed them and showed them the Kingdom of God. However, for the most part, the outcome was the same. The Jews did not desire to follow Jesus. He was not what they expected or wanted. They wanted a King who would make them prosperous and powerful and overthrow Rome. Jesus came as a humble man teaching repentance and faith. Like the people under Archelaus and the noble of this parable the people sent delegations denouncing Jesus as King and desired his death.

The picture in this parable is of 10 servants who had all been given the same amount of money, each one a mina. The challenge would be living in a city full of townsmen who are not devoted to the King and did not want him to reign over them. How will these servants fare living among such a wicked people? Will they continue to serve their Master or will they succumb to the will of the people while they wait for their Master's return? This is the very condition of the world for the followers of Jesus since He began His ministry.

It is no accident that Jesus tells this story now because, as was mentioned earlier, the cross is getting very near. Jesus' concern is, will His followers remain faithful while His is away receiving His kingdom? Will they continue to engage in the business of the King or will their lack of love for Him cause them to fail? Upon His return, not only will Jesus know His true servants from the false, but so will everyone else.

Kingdom Rewards (v. 15-19)

This parable speaks of the returning King bestowing rewards to His servants. The rewards bestowed are generous when compared to the investment returns. The

rewards are based on their willingness to be obedient and “Engage in business until I come.” Reading at verse 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. ¹⁶ The first came before him, saying, ‘Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.’ ¹⁷ And he said to him, ‘Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.’ ¹⁸ And the second came, saying, ‘Lord, your mina has made five minas.’ ¹⁹ And he said to him, ‘And you are to be over five cities.’” So, this King is not a wicked King but a kind and rewarding King. Verse 15, makes clear that upon the King’s return there will be an examining of His servants’ faithfulness. Paul instructs in his 2nd letter to the Corinthians, “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.” (5:10) Again, the principal concern is not percentage of profit but did they engage in business? Were they faithful to carry on the Master’s affairs while He was gone?

For us, as believers in Jesus Christ and as servants of Christ, we too, have been entrusted with a mina. Our mina is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. How are we doing? Are we engaged in the business of our King? While our King is gone, are we faithful in investing the mina of the Gospel entrusted to us? Are we faithful in telling others? Jesus will be responsible for the results, but we are commanded to be faithful in our duty to serve His Kingdom by investing the Gospel in people’s lives.

In verse 16 the king has returned and He calls His servants to make an accounting, “The first came before him, saying, ‘Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.’” The King had to be pleased with a 1000% profit. A Mina was equal to 100 denarii and a denarii was the wage for 1 day’s labor for the average worker. He had turned 100 days of wages into 1,000 days or enough to hire a man for over

2.75 years. That is an amazing return. As amazing of an investment return this was it still did not compare to the King's reward for his faithfulness. Verse 17 tells us the King says, 'Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.' To rule over 10 cities far exceeds the return on the mina. The King did not reward in relationship to the result, but on faithfulness. The King continues with rewards in verse 18, "And the second came, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made five minas.' ¹⁹ And he said to him, 'And you are to be over five cities.'" This servant's profit was 500% and that is still quite amazing. Again, we see the King's reward exceeds the servant's investment return. The King is generous for their faithfulness. King Jesus is even more generous than the king of this parable; for we inherit more than the earth has to offer, we inherit eternity with the King of kings.

Denied The Kingdom (v.20-23)

Fear often leads to wrong behavior. The king calls the 3rd servant a "wicked servant" in verse 22. As I read about this 3rd servant we need to understand his reasoning for failing to invest his mina was fear of the king. Taking up the parable again in verse 20, "Then another came, saying, 'Lord, here is your mina, which I kept laid away in a handkerchief; ²¹ for I was afraid of you, because you are a severe man. You take what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.' ²² He said to him, 'I will condemn you with your own words, you **wicked servant!** You knew that I was a severe man, taking what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow? ²³ Why then did you not put my money in the bank, and at my coming I might have collected it with interest?'" The point is that this servant was afraid that if he had invested the mina the king entrusted to him, he might have lost it. He believed wrong things about the King and in his wrong thinking he disobeyed the King's command to engage in business. This man was also judged **not** because he only had

what he started with but because he was afraid of the king and afraid that he would lose what the King had entrusted to him. In complete defiance to the king's orders he hides his mina away until the day the king returned. My dearly beloved the lesson is for us to not hide the Gospel away. Freely give it away. Invest it in others and you will see a return. The wicked servant did not see the King as righteous and generous but hard and ruthless. He thought this king was like Herod and his son, Archelaus.

The 3rd servant's thought process was something along the lines of; if I make any profit the king will just take it but if I do not lose the mina, he gets his money back and I will be OK. However, if I lose what he gave me I will suffer. The servant tries to skirt his failure and shift the blame to the king because he believes wrongly the king is a harsh man, he justifies his failure by his fear and his fear was of the king. The truth is this servant did not know his king, because if he had he would have known it was obedience and faithfulness the king desired not a set outcome. Had he understood his king he would have gladly obeyed. We, my brothers and sisters, cannot blame our King for our failure to be obedient. The cost of failing to be obedient is high and the reward for obedience is almost beyond belief.

The servant could have placed the money in the "bank" or with money lenders and earned interest. So, the king calls this servant "**wicked**". Subsequently, wickedness stems from unbelief and disobedience. Would not Jesus label unbelief and disobedience as wicked? Do you view God as a severe King? Do you view the Son of God as One who takes what is not His or someone who is cruel and harsh? If so, then you do not know the King of kings.

The simple truth is it takes love and devotion to the King to produce faith and faith produces obedience. The first two servants obeyed **not** out of fear like the third servant but out of love and devotion. They understood that everything they had belonged to their king and He is entitled to their obedience. Is your life marked by

love and faithfulness and obedience to Jesus? Do you understand everything, including your very life belongs to Him? You are a steward of the King of kings and called to use His resources to advance God’s Kingdom. It does not get any plainer than this. Reward or punishment, the choice is before each person – obedience or disobedience – what will your life be?

Choose Wisely (v. 24-27)

We come to understand by this parable that the faithful are rewarded and the wicked are judged. Reading beginning at verse 24, the king “said to those who stood by, ‘Take the mina from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas.’”²⁵ And they said to him, ‘Lord, he has ten minas!’”²⁶ The king responded, “I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.”²⁷ But as for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slaughter them before me.”

Here, the one servant who proved trustworthy and useful even received another mina from the unfaithful servant in which to invest for his Master. The one who proved wicked was no longer entrusted with the mina that he hoarded and was judged. This is the principle that if one is faithful with a little he will be given more. This biblical principle goes against everything our society deems fair and just. In our society, it seems, most everyone believes that all people should be treated the same regardless of their diligence. Those who refuse to work, according to how our society operates, deserve to live like the people who do work. This is unbiblical and goes against the principals America was founded on. Paul understood the principal of work and obedience go hand-in-hand and are the outward signs of what we value and love, as he wrote to the church in Thessalonica, ⁶“**Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the**

tradition that you received from us.” Paul is saying, brothers and sisters in Christ are commanded by Christ to be productive and live by the “traditions” or apostle’s teachings or the scriptures. ⁷“For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle when we were with you, ⁸ nor did we eat anyone’s bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you. ⁹ It was not because we do not have that right, but to give you in ourselves an example to imitate. ¹⁰ For even when we were with you, we would give you this command: If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat. ¹¹ For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies. ¹² Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living.” (2 Thessalonians 3:6-12) God does indeed call those who do not believe or who are idle and live by the rules of the world – “wicked”.

Here in our parable, we see that the wicked servant and all who oppose this King are destroyed. Literally, in the original language, it reads *hew them down, slay them utterly*. The unbelieving world is opposed to Jesus and this makes them guilty before God for their sins and they will be utterly destroyed.

What about us? As those who call themselves believers, we are entrusted with the Gospel of eternal truth and salvation. What does Jesus demand of us? Right before our Lord ascended to the Father, He left these words to all His followers for all generations until His return. Jesus pronounced, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” Because Jesus is King and has the authority, He commands all believes to ¹⁹“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18-20) Here is kingdom business that

Jesus has entrusted us with. We are to engage in investing not a mina but in the Gospel. We are to make disciples and teach them all that our King commanded and taught. Someday King Jesus will return and all accounts will be settled.

My beloved, you have heard this morning the words of God. There is no middle ground, as the Lord made clear to John, who wrote these truths, ¹¹ “I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. ¹³ And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. ¹⁵ And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.” (Revelation 20:11-15) The day of reckoning may not happen while one lives here on earth, but it will happen before the great white throne for unbelievers and the mercy seat of God for true believers in Jesus as the Christ.

The time is coming when our Lord will return. We must not concern ourselves with trying to figure out when and where, but we need to take time to examine ourselves; our faith, our loyalty and our obedience. Are we good and faithful servants, investing the Gospel in others or are we wicked servants who hoard the Gospel, meaning one does not heed the command of our Lord and King, for He commands **“Engage in Kingdom business until I come.”**

It is my prayer for each of us and for us as a church, we are those who share the Gospel on a regular basis, that we are obedient and faithful to engage in kingdom business for the glory of our King! Amen and amen!