



## The Parable of the Talents

### WEEK 4 DISCUSSION GUIDE

## OVERVIEW

In the fourth message of the series entitled, *Parables*, we will learn what Jesus teaches about financial stewardship.

## DISCUSSION

Financial distress and anxiety can steal our peace and cause extreme pressure in our families. God wants us to experience financial freedom in life and live in His peace and rest. Jesus teaches *The Parable of the Talents* in **Matthew 25:14-16**: ***“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. 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. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents.”*** Jesus paints a picture of the importance of wisely stewarding what He gives us. He wants us to do a good job stewarding our time, talent, and treasure.

### Four Stewardship Principles

#### 1. God owns everything.

A steward is a manager over something owned by another. Since God is the owner, He has rights to everything. As stewards, we have responsibilities. We may receive benefits while maintaining our responsibilities, but the Owner retains ownership. Instead of asking, “What do I want?”, we should ask, “God, what would you have me do?”

- An “owner” desires a “steward” to be faithful and responsible. Can you share an experience, as either an owner or a steward, when faithfulness and responsibility were not honored? Examples could be tenants, landlords, borrowers, lenders, service providers, caregivers, etc. How was trust affected?

#### 2. God wants us to invest wisely and generously.

In **Matthew 25:16**, the steward used what God gave him wisely, and it multiplied. A steward handles someone else’s stuff with the owner’s goals in mind. God calls us to take responsibility for overseeing, managing, and developing the resources He entrusts to us. God wants us to invest in both the natural realm in growing resources and also in the spiritual realm by building His Kingdom.

- Why should we ask God about spending, saving, investing, and giving?
- What are practical ways to include God in our financial decisions?

3. God holds us accountable as stewards.

**Matthew 25:20-21:** *“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.’ 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...”*

In the same way the owner in this parable came back to see what his servants did with the resources they were entrusted with, God will one day take an inventory of what we did with the resources and opportunities He placed in our lives (**Romans 14:12**). As we faithfully steward and sow, God supernaturally multiplies, blesses, and expands us.

- We learned that God holds us accountable for the things He’s entrusted us with. Does this knowledge change the way you want to steward your resources? Explain.

4. God requires action.

**Matthew 25:24-25:** *“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. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.’”*

God wants us to put His resources to work. He doesn’t want us to hide them away in fear—but confidently sow the resources He gives us to steward. Under the mounting weight of uncertainty, it’s easy to slowly become irrational about our possessions. We lose sight of Who really owns them, and we tend to live in over-analysis and fear. The moment we give into fear, we become our own source.

- What fear is holding you back from living generously? What steps can you take today to overcome this fear?

## LIFE CHALLENGE

This week, plan time to look over your finances and evaluate your stewardship of what God’s given you. Ask yourself the following:

1. Am I stewarding my resources how God would want me to steward them?
2. What fears do I have about my finances?
3. How can I trust God better in this area and grow more in financial freedom and generosity?

Ask God to help you during this time, and take action to be a better steward!

## PRAYER REQUESTS & CLOSE IN PRAYER