

MUCH GIVEN, MUCH REQUIRED // Luke 12:41-48

Message from series, The Gospel of Luke

A final exam is coming in heaven with only one question: were you faithful? Faithfulness *is* success in the Christian life. How much can God entrust to you and you remain faithful? We are called to be servants and also stewards, and this stewardship of our lives is affected when we live in light of Jesus' return. We must guard ourselves against unfaithful service.

THREE PITFALLS OF UNFAITHFUL SERVICE

1. Guard against gross negligence (v.41-46)

In verses 42 to 46, Jesus tells a parable in which a master of a house is going away and leaves his servants in charge. Jesus describes a servant who will say, "My master is delayed in coming," and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and get drunk" (v.45). This is a servant with a false sense of independence who is plotting a systematic takeover of the master's house. This is a servant who will not serve, and when the master returns, this servant will be cut to pieces and placed among the unfaithful (v. 46)—it will be revealed that this was a false servant, an analogue to the unbeliever who had never truly been a follower of Christ and who will be cut off.

2. Guard against willful disobedience (v. 47)

Jesus describes another servant "who knew his master's will but did not get ready or act according to his will." This servant has no pre-meditation, no intent to take-over; he just refuses to do what he knows he has been called to do. This is the camp that many of us find ourselves in. Why are we disobedient? Because we love ourselves more than God. What we have to have to overcome this is not another rule—we need different affections of the heart. We sin because we want to—we need new *wants* and then we will have new *wills*.

3. Guard against shameful ignorance (v. 48)

We may be tempted to "play dumb," to distance ourselves from God's word, thinking that if we don't know God's will we can't be held accountable. However, we cannot turn a blind eye. We must fight to know better. Never let it be said of you, "How did you not know?" How does a servant not know the master's will? He has failed to know the master. We must commit to spending time with the Master, so that we may know him and his will.

Three Points of Application

1. Bigger is not always better—with "more" should come more responsibility.
2. Contentment is key and king—trusting in the provision of God.
3. Pray for and support those in great responsibility.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do we live in light of Jesus' return? If we were called to account for our faithfulness as of today, how would we fare? How does this recognition influence how we will live tomorrow?
2. Is there any area of our lives in which we are acting in willful disobedience? How can we effect a change in our heart's affections?
3. What tools can we use to "fight to know better"? What role does Bible study, prayer, and godly counsel play in this fight?