PUT THIS MONEY TO WORK UNTIL JESUS RETURNS

Luke 19:11-27

Key Verse: 13

"So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. ‘Put this money to work,’ he said, ‘until I come back.’"

Today’s passage, the parable of the ten minas, reminds us of the parable of the talents found in Matthew’s Gospel (Matthew 25:14-30). Though there are differences between them, both parables have the same core message: Jesus will return as King and Judge, and each of us will be accountable to Him. In Matthew’s Gospel, the parable focuses on Jesus’ relationship with his servants. In Luke’s account, however, Jesus' kingship is at its basis, directly supporting his ultimate purpose to “seek and to save the lost.” Today’s parable also prepares the way for Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem as King. Through this story, Jesus dispels his followers’ mistaken expectation that his Messianic Kingdom would arrive immediately on earth. Instead, he teaches them to wait for His return, and while doing so, to stay actively engaged in the work that he instructed us to carry out until he comes.

Today, many people are focused on the upcoming presidential election, wondering what kind of leader will guide the nation. We hope and pray for a compassionate president, who promotes justice, values faith, and creates a healthy spiritual environment. But while earthly leaders come and go, Jesus remains our Eternal King, and his kingdom will never end (Luke 1:33). He will return in glory as Judge, and we will all stand before Him. Our ultimate focus, then, should be on Jesus, our true King. Today, let us pray that we may discover what kind of King Jesus is and how we can faithfully prepare for his return. Amen

1. # “Put this Money to Work.” (11-13)

This passage picks up right after the event that happened in Zacchaeus’ house. Let us read verse 11. # **“While they were listening to this, he went on to tell them a parable, because he was on his way to Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once.”** Just moments earlier, the crowd had heard Jesus declare salvation for Zacchaeus (verses 9-10). Zacchaeus’ transformation must have come as a big surprise for all. Of all people, he seemed the least likely to repent and show compassion to the poor. Yet, his heart changed. His value system changed, and this revealed the power of Jesus’ grace and mercy for the lost.

Seeing this, along with Jesus’ powerful words and miracles, people started to grow hope in their minds that God’s kingdom was about to appear as Jesus approached Jerusalem. They envisioned a new era where the Roman rulers would lose their power, and a new King of Justice, Jesus, would rule. They hoped religious leaders would repent of legalism and embrace grace and compassion. They dreamed of seeing all the sick healed, the demon-possessed freed, the hungry fed, and everyone to be freed from Roman oppression.

However, they wanted all these transformations to happen “at once,” hoping Jesus would make everything perfect while they simply watched and enjoyed the benefits. They overlooked the hard work and sacrifices that real change required. They didn’t hear Jesus’ words about going to Jerusalem to suffer, die, and rise again. Their desire for easy solutions blinded them so they could not the reality of the cross and the struggles involved. Even so, Jesus patiently shared a parable to help them understand what it truly means to live fruitfully as God’s people.

# Look at verse 12. **“He said: “A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return”** Here, “the man of noble birth” represents Jesus. The distant country refers to His suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven, where He now reigns as King. His return signifies his second coming as Judge. Before leaving, this noble man calls ten servants, giving each a mina. What did he want them to do with the mina? Let us read verse 13 together, # today’s key verse. **“So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. ‘Put this money to work,’ he said, ‘until I come back.’”** In the parable, these servants represent all who follow Jesus, me and you.

A mina, worth about three months' wages, was given to each servant equally. Notice that they never asked for it, but they were given it. It was like they received a seed money to invest with, but without any performance evaluation or credit check. The noble man didn’t intend for them to use it on themselves; rather, he expected them to work responsibly with it. Jesus’ instruction makes us think about the purpose of our lives. Jesus teaches us about stewardship and how to live for something greater. When Jesus speaks of “money” and “mina,” what does he refer to? Of course, it can be money. But, what is something that we all received from God despite our different backgrounds and circumstances? God has given us *our lives*. Each life, created in God’s image, has immense potential to bear fruit. In Genesis, God commands, **“Be fruitful and increase in number…”** (Gen 1:28a). To be truly fruitful, Jesus says we must invest our lives in God’s purposes, even at a cost. Jesus explains this in John 12:24 saying, **“Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds”** Investing in God’s work brings guaranteed reward. Jesus promises, **“Whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it.”** (Luke 9:24).

Moses from the Old Testament made a decision to leave his noble and royal life in the palace for a life of faith and service to God. Then God credited it to him and used him as a main character in His redemption history. What about Jesus? # Jesus invested his life by sacrificing himself for sinners like us, becoming our Savior King. And we have received salvation through his selfless investment. The “mina” also symbolizes each person’s unique talents and gifts. Some are talented in writing, others in teaching, listening, or leading. Some are talented in singing, playing musical instruments, programming, cooking, running businesses, and etc. Please take a moment and look around you. # So many talents, gifts, and strengths we are blessed with! Amen! Praise the Lord! If you are not sure, ask someone around you. They will be able to tell you. I believe all of us, who are created by our sovereign God, have talent and gifts. Each of us is unique, and our gifts shouldn’t be compared with others but used individually for Jesus’ purpose.

Many of our brothers and sisters have put their “minas” to work to glorify God, even in preparing for this worship service. Jesus commanded, “Put this money to work until I come back.” What is your mina? Are you using it well for God? If so, may He bless you to continue; if not, let’s pray to dedicate our lives to His glory. Practically, let us honor and worship God with our unique gifts, time, and opportunities and serve others, stepping out of our comfort zones, and sharing our faith. Let’s ask ourselves: “How can I use what God has given me this week?” Whether through acts of kindness, service, or prayer, may we take a step forward, trusting that God will bless our dedication. Amen.

1. # “Well done, my good servant!” (14-27)

Look at verse 14. The story describes how some people openly rejected the noble man’s rule, saying, **“We don’t want this man to be our king.”** This represents those who refuse to accept Jesus as King, especially the religious leaders who rejected his message altogether. They desired a victorious, powerful ruler without suffering, but Jesus made it clear that he came to suffer and die for our sins. His kingship would not be political or militant but one of humility, sacrifice, and love for everyone. Despite the opposition, the noble man was made king, then, made his return—symbolizing Jesus’ second coming as King and Judge. When Jesus returns, everyone will stand before His judgment seat to receive what they’re due for their lives, whether good or bad (2 Corinthians 5:10). There will be no escaping or hiding, and Jesus will evaluate each life thoroughly.

# The first servant reported joyfully. Look at verse 16. “**The first one came and said, “Sir, your mina has earned ten more.”** Then the King praised him: **“Well done, my good servant! Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.”** This reward highlights the servant’s faithfulness and his fruitful work. Apostle Paul said that there is a promise for a crown of righteousness for those who finish the race (2 Timothy 4:8), and John mentions the crown of victory for the faithful in Revelation 2:10. The second servant, who earned five minas, received similar recognition and was entrusted with five cities. The King’s rewards exceeded anything the servants could imagine.

These two servants were successful because they highly valued their master’s trust. This inspired them to give their best effort, full of courage and spirit. They used every opportunity to increase their investment. Their attitude stemmed from recognizing the king’s sovereignty and obeying him out of love, not obligation. Jesus said, **“Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching”** (John 14:23a). Serving God often requires perseverance, especially when facing opposition, but labor in the Lord is never in vain (1 Corinthians 15:58).

# Look at verse 20. **“Then another servant came and said, “Sir, here is your mina; I kept it laid away in a cloth. I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man.”** Can you hear the difference between the first two and the third servant? It seems that fear and a negative view of his master paralyzed the third servant, preventing him from taking any action. Instead of compassion, the master responded sternly: **“I will judge you by your own words, you wicked servant!”** The king called him a "wicked servant" because, unlike the others, he didn’t use or invest the mina he was given, showing laziness and fear instead of faithfulness. His lack of action revealed a lack of respect and trust in the king’s authority, which led to his condemnation. The king ordered the mina taken from him and given to the one with ten minas. # Jesus explained in verse 26. **“He replied, “I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what they have will be taken away.”** This gospel principle may seem unfair, but it is clear that God rewards faithfulness. Finally, Jesus addressed those who openly rejected Him as King, saying, **“…bring them here and kill them in front of me”** (v. 27). Accepting Jesus as King is a matter of life and death.

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# In conclusion, today’s parable calls us to examine how we are living in the preparation of Jesus’ return as King and Judge. Like faithful servants, we’re entrusted to use our gifts, time, and opportunities for God’s purposes, serving actively and courageously. This may mean stepping out to support someone, dedicating time to prayer, or using our talents to help others and build God’s kingdom. Let’s ask ourselves if we’re using our “minas” faithfully or holding back out of fear or complacency. May we commit today to live out our faith fully so that, upon his return, we may hear Jesus say, **“Well done, my good servant!”** Amen.